

## **SHAPING THE FUTURE**

2019 ATSA Conference | Friday November 8 | 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

**F-41**

### **Exploring the Lived Experiences of Intimate Partners of Sex Offenders: A Phenominological Inquiry**

Amy F. Miller, PhD, LMFT  
Obmar Counseling

Currently in the United States there are 747,408 registered sex offenders (RSOs) (NCMEC, 2015) with 265,000 under the supervision of a corrections agency. Many of these men and women have intimate partners who play a role in their everyday life. Past studies have focused on the lived experiences of the members of the offenders' support system in general, including the negative effects they experience through their association with the offender. This study was designed to fill the gap in the research that does not focus specifically on the intimate partners. Utilizing an interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) I offered an in-depth examination of this topic. Based on interviews with 4 partners of RSOs four major themes emerged related to their experiences: Intimate Partners and tier relationship with; Law Enforcement, the Outside World, Themselves, and Their Intimate Partners. My sample came from individuals who are currently in a relationship with a registered sex offender in Broward County, Florida. The findings are discussed regarding possible applications for treatment providers, the legal system, and the correctional system to better serve this population.

#### **Learning Goals:**

*By attending this presentation, participants will...*

- Learn about the lack of research focusing on the intimate partners of Sexual Offenders.
- Gain an understanding of what the lived experiences are for intimate partners of Sexual Offenders.
- Become aware of the usefulness in including intimate partners within treatment programs/models that are tailored specifically towards the Sexual Offender population.

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**Dr. Amy Miller** is the clinical director of Obmar Counseling. In 1995 Dr. William Rambo started the Fifth Street Counseling Program for Sexual Offenders. He pioneered a treatment approach that focused on making sense of the offenders story within the context of their lives. In 2010 Dr. Miller joined Dr. Rambo in his Sex Offender Treatment Program as a graduate intern. She has continued to work with him for the last 8 years until his passing in 2018. She now serves as the Clinical Director for the treatment program Dr. Rambo established 28 years ago.

As a researcher, Dr. Miller has focused her attention on making sense of the lived experiences of the intimate partners of Sexual Offenders and made it the subject of her dissertation. She hopes to expand her research of this population to showcase a broader view within the United States and use her findings to create supplemental curriculums requiring the inclusion of intimate partners within all sexual offender treatment programs.