

SHAPING THE FUTURE

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'Double Freak': The Experiences of Females Living with a Sexual Interest in Minors

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Preventative efforts to stop the sexual abuse of children are vastly growing, with an increasing number of organisations aimed at working with potential offenders to prevent sexual crime. Yet, most of what we know about individuals with a sexual interest in children comes from convicted samples. Despite this, there are a considerable number of individuals living in the community who self-identify as sexually attracted to minors, but who do not want to offend, and are actively seeking support and treatment to prevent this from happening (e.g. Dombert et al., 2015). Furthermore, the majority of research is focused on males, with very little consideration given to the experiences of females with a sexual interest in minors. Thus understanding the experiences and issues faced by this population could inform the types and level of support needed. This research explores the lived experiences of five females living with a sexual interest in minors through semi structured interviews. The analysis explores a number of themes relating to realisation, acceptance and coping with their sexual interest, a comparison to males with a sexual attraction in minors, and the importance of and barriers to disclosure of their sexual interest. These are considered within the context of potential support for females with a sexual attraction to minors and viable prevention strategies for those at risk of offending.

Rebecca Lievesley is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology and member of the Sexual Offences, Crime and Misconduct Research Unit at Nottingham Trent University. She has worked and researched within the Criminal Justice System for around 10 years, currently engaged in various research projects including an investigation of reoffending and desistance in those serving short sentences, an evaluation of anti-libidinal medication for individuals convicted of a sexual offence and help seeking prior to committing a sexual offence. Rebecca is also a co-founder and trustee of the Safer Living Foundation, a charity established to reduce sexual (re)offending through rehabilitative initiatives and prevent further victims of sexual crime.

Rosie Kitson-Boyce is a lecturer and researcher in forensic psychology at Nottingham Trent University and a Chartered Psychologist. She was worked and researched within the Criminal Justice System for around 12 years. Rosie has recently completed her PhD, which focused on the experiences of the both the Core Members and the volunteers involved in the prison-model of Circles of Support and Accountability established by the Safer Living Foundation charity. Rosie's research focuses on the reintegration of individuals who have previously been convicted of sexual offences and considers the role social support can have in the desistance from future sexual crimes. She has published in international journals and disseminated research at international conferences.