

Relapse Prevention Model

Abstinence

A clearly defined abstinence plan for what behaviors, feelings, and thoughts, an offender avoid. This should include a safety plan that descriptions of the places and situations that will be avoided in effort to maintain accountability toward this abstinence plan. An accountability plan will define how the offender intends to remain in compliance with these plans and what steps will be taken in the event of a violation of these plans.

Seemingly Unimportant Decisions (Carelessness)

Sex offending is NOT a spontaneous behavior, though it may appear so at first because the behaviors and situations sometimes occur within short time periods. The ability to carefully plan every activity ahead of time, and communicate those plans, will lead to a safer lifestyle. Carelessness and spontaneity move the offender closer to reoffending. It is vitally important that sex offenders learn to CHECK THINGS OUT with others before taking action.

High Risk Situations

High risk situations are everywhere - even ordinary activities such as going to church or the movies have led to relapse because of offenders failure to recognize the risk within the situation. Once the risks have been identified, the offender can make safety plans and use "tools" to manage those risks. A common mistake is to assume that because nothing happened their was no risk - this leads to carelessness in the future.

Lapse (First Mistake)

Often the first mistake is not an outright reoffense but a violation of abstinence, safety, and accountability rules. If offenders, and their families, Offenders, and their families, can avoid costly mistakes by learning to recognize these early errors and impose accountability around them.

Abstinence Violation Effect (Giving Up)

Once the abstinence plan is violated, there is tendency to give up and stop trying. Examples of this are abundant in the number of failed New Year's Resolutions, and the life histories of people with addictive behavior problems. Learning to recognize the Abstinence Violation Effect and recommit to an Abstinence Plan can prevent small mistake from leading to large mistakes. Another version of the abstinence violation effect occurs when offenders are so distressed that they "choose" not to care anymore.

Relapse

Relapse follows the abstinence violation effect and intervention efforts are geared towards halting further acting out and imposing accountability. Rigorous attention to abstinence, accountability and safety, along with assertive intervention to early warning signs are the best method for preventing the occurrence of further abuse.