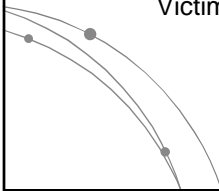


**The Myth of the Big Bad Wolf**

**How Children Really Become Victims of Sexual Abuse**

Sunny Reed, LMSW  
Idaho's Heart



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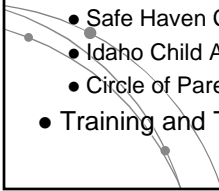
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**Idaho's Heart**

- About Me
- History of Idaho's Heart
- Purpose
- Current Priorities
  - Safe Haven Crisis Nursery
  - Idaho Child Abuse Prevention Coalition
    - Circle of Parents
- Training and Technical Assistance



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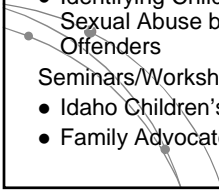
**References**

Books

- The Child Welfare Challenge: Policy, Practice & Research
- Predators: Pedophiles, Rapists & Other Sex Offenders
- Identifying Child Molesters: Preventing Child Sexual Abuse by recognizing the Patterns of the Offenders

Seminars/Workshops

- Idaho Children's Trust Fund
- Family Advocate Program



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## Sexual Abuse

- It's a difficult topic
- Recent Incidents
  - Internet Pornography
  - Child Enticement
  - Halbeslebens
- Attorney General's Report
- It's a controversial topic

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## Preconditions

According to Finkelhor (1984) there are four preconditions that need to be met before sexual abuse can occur:

- Motivation to Sexually Abuse
- Overcoming Internal Inhibitors
- Overcoming External Inhibitors
- Overcoming the Resistance of the Child

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## Little Red Riding Hood

- Several versions with lots of similarities
- "Stranger Danger"
- In some versions it works
- The reasons for the wolf's hesitation on the path varies
- Wolf became Grandma
- Red Riding Hood survives, sometimes Grandma does too

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## Terminology

- Exhibitionism: When an adult exposes his or her genitals to a child
- Voyeurism: When an adult watches a child undress, bathe, or use the bathroom
- Kissing: Lingered or intimate kisses
- Fondling: Of the child or has the child touch his or her body
- Fellatio or Cunnilingus: oral-genital contact

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## Terminology

- Vaginal or anal intercourse: Involving any object
- Pornography: The use of pictures, video tape, or film
  - Shown to the child
  - Taken of the child
  - Exposure to "adult only" channels?
- Legal definitions of sexual abuse depends on state law

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## Motivation to Sexually Abuse

- Three possible components
  - Emotional congruence: relating sexually to the child satisfies emotional need
  - Sexual arousal: the child comes to be the potential source of sexual gratification
  - Blockage: Alternative sources of sexual gratification are not available or are less satisfying

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## Overcoming Internal Inhibitors

- Even with emotional congruence, sexual arousal, and blockage, without the lessening of internal inhibitors, the motivation will not be unleashed
- Individual factors:
  - Alcohol
  - Psychosis
  - Impulse disorder
  - Senility
  - Family dynamics

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## Overcoming Internal Inhibitors

- Social/Cultural Factors
  - Social toleration of sexual interest in children
  - Weak criminal sanctions against offenders
  - Ideology of patriarchal prerogatives for fathers
  - Social toleration for deviance committed while intoxicated
  - Child pornography
  - Male inability to identify with needs of children

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## Presenting Symptoms

- Confusion of sex and love
- Sexual identity conflicts
- Fear of adult females
- Sexual addiction
- Previous history of abuse
- Other forms of abuse
- Substance abuse
- Sexual irresponsibility

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## Presenting Symptoms

- Poor stress management skills
- Compartmentalization
- Denial of involvement in or responsibility for abusive behavior, often with a high degree of defensiveness
- "Mama's boy"
- Isolation
- Egocentricity/narcissism

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## Presenting Symptoms

- Jealousy of daughter's association with boys
- Authoritarian parenting
- Low impulse control at home, with appropriately managed behavior elsewhere
- Highly manipulative manner
- Minimization of abusive behavior

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## Presenting Symptoms

- Rationalization
- Self-deception
- Poor relationship with parents
- Possessiveness
- Blurring of generational boundaries
- Low self-esteem
- Depression
- Paranoia

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## Presenting Symptoms

- Irrational reasoning or behavior
- Sexual validation
- Control issues
- Dysfunctional guilt
- Rigid moral or religious values
- Sexualization of emotions

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## Overcoming External Inhibitors

- Mother who is absent or ill
- Mother who is not close to or protective of child
- Mother who is dominated or abused by father
- Social isolation of the family
- Lack of supervision of child
- Unusual sleeping or rooming conditions

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## Overcoming External Inhibitors

- Social/Cultural
  - Lack of social supports for mother
  - Barriers to women's equality
  - Erosion of social networks
  - Ideology of family sanctity
- Divorce
- Adult Grooming

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## Overcoming the Resistance of the Child

- Child who is emotionally insecure or deprived
- Child who lacks knowledge about sexual abuse
- Coercion
- Social/Cultural
  - Unavailability of sex education for children
  - Social powerlessness of children
- Child Grooming

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## Treatment for Offenders

- There has been some success
- Successful components
  - Reeducation
  - Resocialization
  - Restitution
- Practice wisdom
  - Mutual cooperation
  - "Motivation" not necessarily required
  - Individual treatment as well as family therapy
  - Specific techniques by specialists

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## Current Program Challenges

- False Allegations
  - Sexual abuse is hard to prove
  - Special training should be given to ensure proper interviewing
- Treatment Effectiveness
  - Current recidivism is between 30-50%
  - Long term studies are needed
- Staffing

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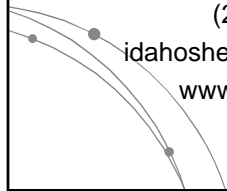
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Thank You!

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