



Phoenix Program: Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Protocol-II (J-SOAP-II) 2013 to 2015 Outcomes

Introduction to the Phoenix Program

The Phoenix Program is an intensive campus-based program that specializes in family-driven treatment of male youth ages 12-17 who demonstrate sexually abusive behaviours, and usually have been identified by the criminal justice system or other social services agencies as posing a risk to their communities. The Phoenix Program can accommodate 8 beds on a fee-for-service basis and is located on our Bowness campus. Many of these youth referred to the Phoenix Program have their own histories of sexual exploitation or victimization such as neglect, caregiver abandonment, maltreatment/trauma in various forms such as physical, sexual and emotional abuse by immediate and extended family members significant family disorganization, multiple caregivers and breakdowns of extended family placements. For these reasons, healing from childhood trauma is often an overarching goal throughout treatment. Further to this, the vast majority of adolescents with sexually intrusive behaviours also come with a myriad of other social issues that contribute to reduced individual health including poor communication skills, a lack of empathic skills and an inability to demonstrate accountability for their actions. Specialized treatment based on the Halton Trauma Centre's Safe T Program, focuses on building capacity for sexual health and is individually tailored to meet the needs of each child and family. A major component of this treatment is the aim to reduce the risk of referred youth demonstrating sexually intrusive behaviours in the future (Wood's Homes, 2016).

The Phoenix Program uses a range of assessment and outcome measures to assess risk, inform treatment plans, and track change during treatment. Upon intake into the Program, a high risk plan is developed that becomes part of the client's treatment goals which includes understanding of developmental needs and what are the immediate risk behaviours. To aid staff in developing a treatment plan at intake, and to understand the potential risk to the community at discharge, the Phoenix Program has used the Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Protocol-II (J-SOAP-II) since 2013.

Overview of the Juvenile Sex Offender Protocol – II (J-SOAP-II)

The J-SOAP-II consists of 28 questions that are organized into two sections:

- 1) Static or Historical Scales which measure those factors that are *not* likely change over time with treatment such as past offences and number of victims:
 - a) sexual drive/preoccupation (e.g. number of victims, degree of planning in offense, victimization history) and
 - b) impulsive/antisocial behavior (e.g. school behavior problems, caregiver consistency, anger),

- 2) Dynamic Scales measures those factors that are expected to change during treatment such as motivation for change and remorse:
- a) intervention (e.g. remorse, guilt, motivation for change) and
 - b) community stability (e.g. living situation, management of sexual urges) (Prentky et al., 2003).

Use of J-SOAP-II in Phoenix

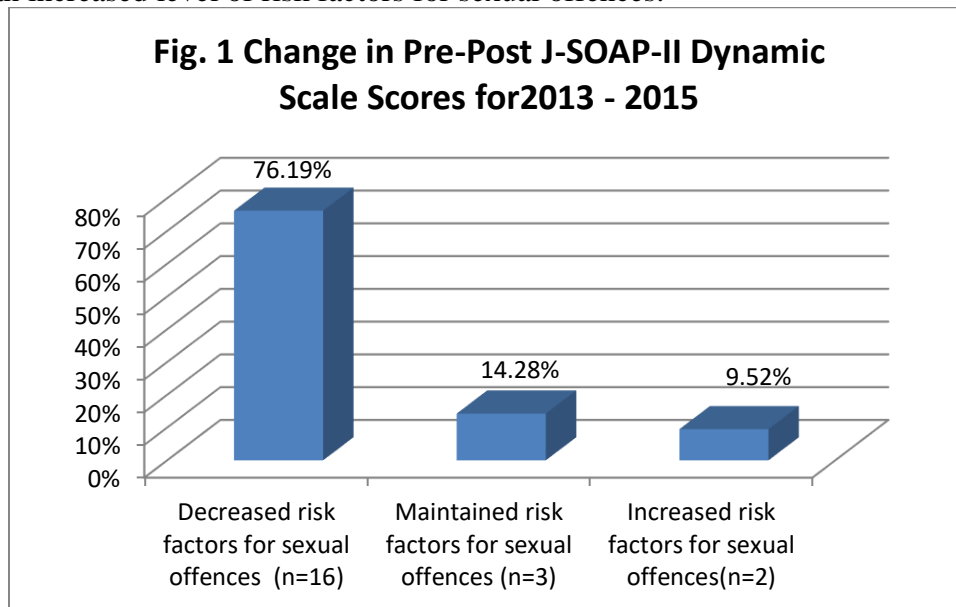
The J-SOAP-II assessment scale is completed within 30 days of admission and immediately following discharge at Phoenix. Used as an assessment tool, higher scores for the static and dynamic scales indicate that additional or more intensive treatments such as sex-offence and delinquency-focused interventions are needed, while lower scores suggest less intrusive or alternative treatment approaches (Prentky et al., 2003).

Static scale scores typically remain the same or worsen during treatment as new behaviours or historical events are disclosed. Dynamic scale scores, however, are responsive to treatment interventions and can show either positive or negative change over time. The dynamic scale may be used as an indicator of risk for recurrence of sexual offending. Comparing aggregate scores for pre and post measures of the dynamic scales is an indicator of the potential risk of reoffending at discharge. This data will be the primary focus of this research brief.

Initial Findings

A total of 34 male youth, averaging 16 years of age, participated in the Phoenix Program from 2013 to 2015. Of this group, 21 youth or 62%, completed pre and post J-SOAP-II measures (Wood’s Homes Research Department, 2014; Wood’s Homes Research Department, 2015; Wood’s Homes Research Department, 2016).

Figure 1 shows that 76.19% (n=16) of clients with completed pre/post measures while treated at Phoenix demonstrated a reduced score in risk factors for sexual offences (See Figure 1). Slightly over 14% (n=3) of clients maintained the same level of risk for sexual offences, and 9.5% (n=2) indicated an increased level of risk factors for sexual offences.



Conclusions and Considerations for Future Research

Over the past three years, 76.19% of youth involved in treatment at Phoenix who completed the pre and post measures of the J-SOAP-II indicated fewer risks for sexual offending at discharge.

This emerging data is very promising, however two points are important to consider when interpreting these outcome data:

- 1) Complete data on pre and post scores are available for 62% of youth who participated in treatment at Phoenix. Completion rates ranged from 33.3% in 2013, 90% in 2014 and 66% in 2015. These missing data may have a significant impact upon J-SOAP-II findings. A further review is required to determine how youth who completed pre/post measures compared to youth who did not complete both measures.
- 2) J-SOAP-II scores at discharge reflect change during treatment that would inform potential risk for recurrence of sexual offending in the community. Longitudinal follow-up is needed to examine the actual risk of reoffending.

Citations

Prentky, R., & Righthand, S. (2003). *Juvenile sex offender assessment protocol-II (J-SOAP-II) manual*. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

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