



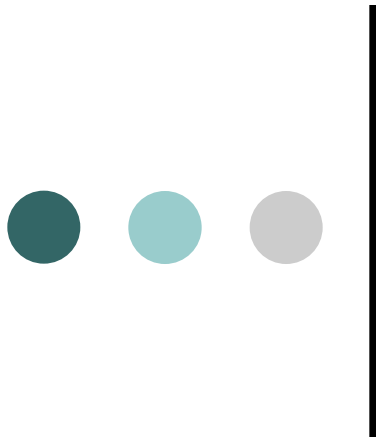
# DOC Town Hall Meeting

Kris Goldstein, Chief VTPSA

Amy Holloway, Director Victim Services

Heather Allin, Co-Director VCPTSA

September 11, 2013



*“Knowing that someone  
has committed a sexual  
offense, tells us very little  
about who he or she  
really is.”*



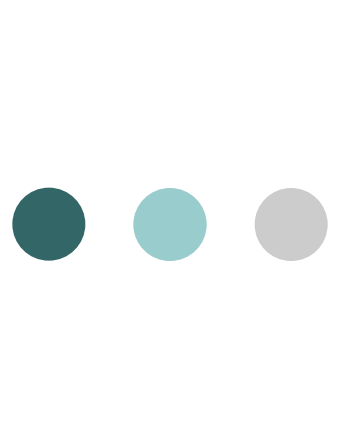
# Common Misconceptions

- Sex offenders are all the same
- Sexual victimization rates are on the rise
- Sex offenders tend to target strangers
- Knowing where offenders live makes me safe
- Sex offender recidivism rates are high
- Nothing works



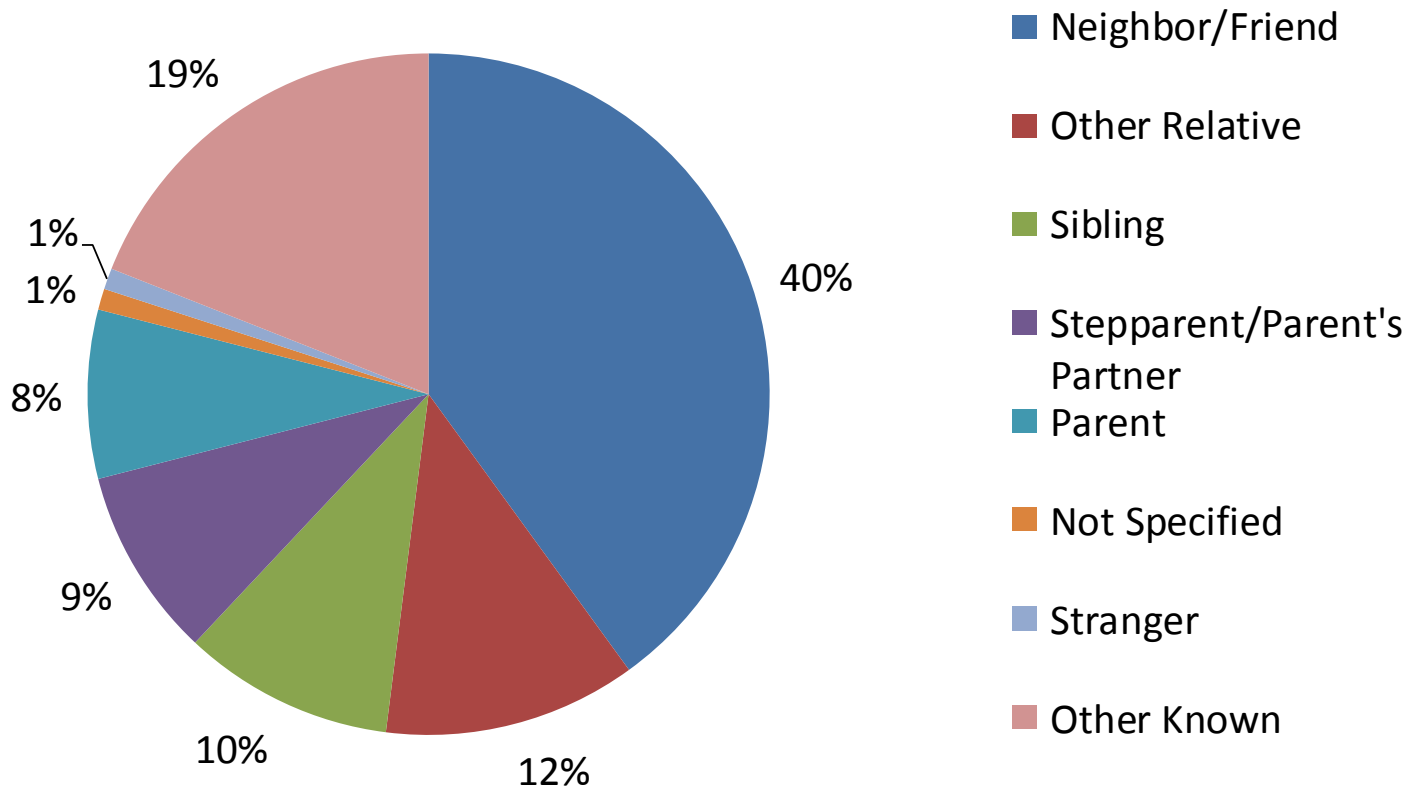
# Not All Sex Offenders Are the Same

- Motivations
- Victim types
- Level of force
- Risk to reoffend
- Management needs

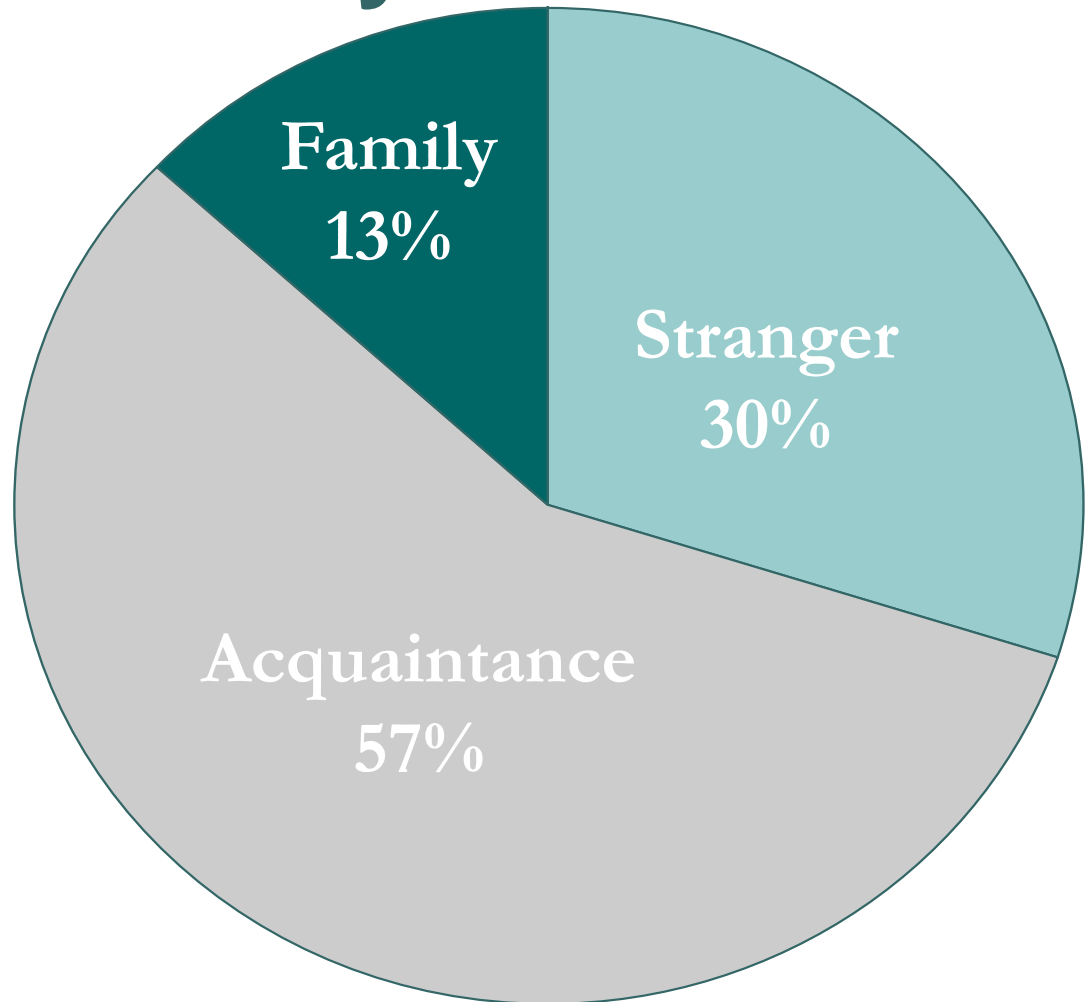


Stranger Danger?

# 98% of Child Victims in VT Say They Were Abused by Someone They Knew (VT DCF, 2009)



# About 70% of Adult Victims Say They Were Abused by Someone They Knew



Bureau of Justice  
Statistics, U.S.  
Department of  
Justice,  
July 2000



# I'm safe, I know where they live

## New Arrests for Sexual Offenses

- Vermont
- 887 sex offenders
- *McGrath, Lasher, & Cumming* (2012)

13%  
had prior  
sex offense arrests

87% of people arrested for  
sex crimes were individuals who  
had not been previously convicted  
for a sex crime.



# Static-99R: Percent of Offenders in Each Risk Category and 5-Year Sexual Reoffense Rates

## Low Risk

29% of sexual offenders

## Moderate-Low Risk

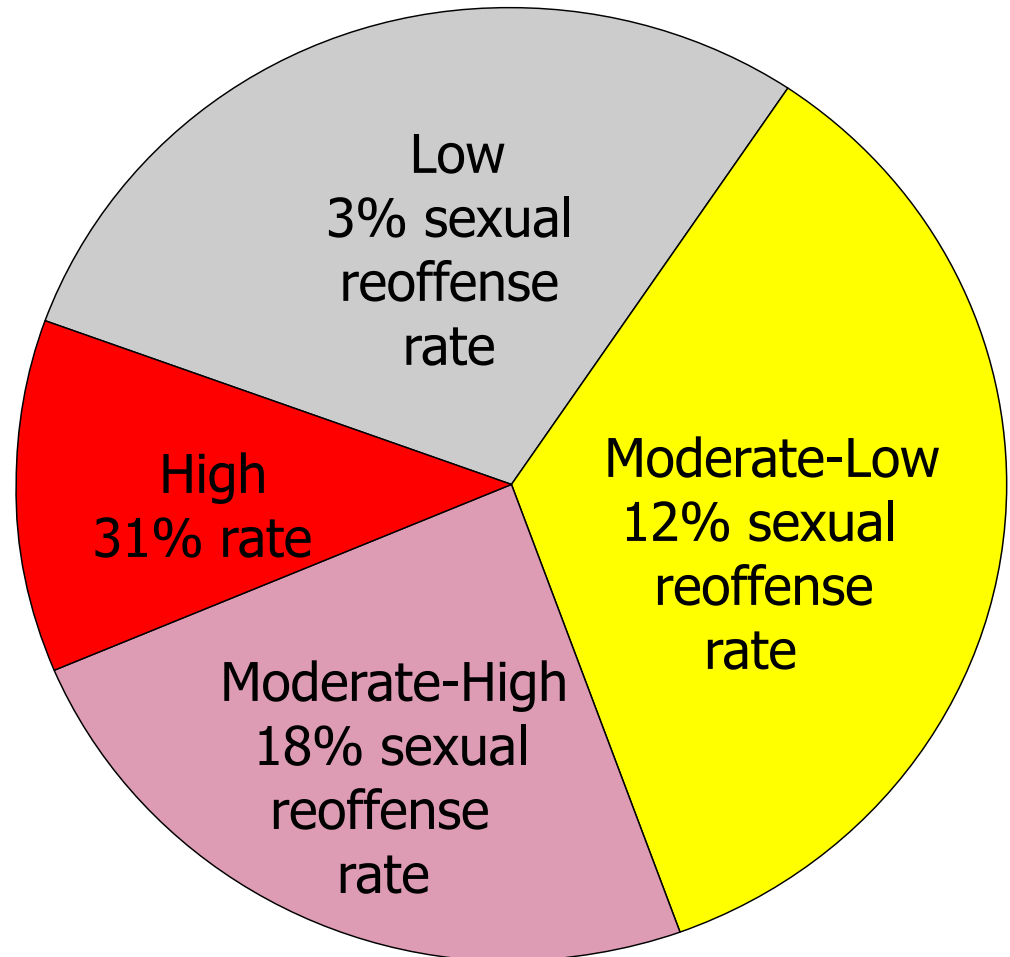
35% of sexual offenders

## Moderate-High Risk

24% of sex offenders

## High Risk

12% of sex offenders





# Sex Offender Review Committee

The Committee shall consist of five (5) members, composed of at least the Director of the DOC sex offender treatment program, the DOC Program Executive, a member from the Vermont Criminal Information Center, the Director of DOC or other Victim Services and a Vermont Sex Offender Treatment Provider.



# High Risk Designation

Must have a qualifying offense:

- Sexual assault as defined in 13 VSA § 3252;
- Lewd and lascivious conduct as defined in 13 VSA § 2601;
- Sexual abuse of a vulnerable adult as defined in § 1379 of 13 VSA;
- Second or subsequent conviction for voyeurism as defined in 13 VSA § 2605(b) or (c);
- Aggravated sexual assault as defined in 13 VSA § 3253;
- Kidnapping with intent to commit sexual assault as defined in 13 VSA § 2405(a)(1)(D);
- Aggravated sexual assault of a child in violation of 13 VSA § 3253a.
- An attempt to commit any offense listed in this section.



# High Risk Designation-cont.

A person who is convicted of any of the following offenses against a victim who is a minor:

- Kidnapping as defined in 13 VSA § 2405(a)(1)(D);
- Lewd and lascivious conduct with a child as defined in 13 VSA § 2602;
- Slave traffic as defined in 13 VSA § 2635;
- Sexual exploitation of children as defined in 13 VSA §§ 2822-2828;
- Procurement or solicitation as defined in 13 VSA § 2632(a)(6);
- Aggregated sexual assault of a child as defined in 13 VSA § 3253(a);
- Sex trafficking of children or sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion as defined in 13 VSA § 2635a;
- Sexual exploitation of a minor as defined in 13 VSA § 3258(b); or
- An attempt to commit any offense listed in this section.



# Criteria for High Risk Designation

- Must have a qualifying offense
- Score in the high range based on risk assessment tool
- Could have prior convictions for violence
- Could have a pattern of predatory behavior
- Ability to override or under-ride a designation



# Vermont Sex Offender Registry

- Two sex offender registries
  - Registry that contains information on all persons convicted of a registerable sex offense
  - Online registry that is a subset of the larger registry



# Qualifying offenses for internet registry

## ○ **Convictions for:**

- Aggravated sexual assault of a child
- Aggravated sexual assault
- Sexual assault
- Kidnapping with intent to commit sexual assault
- Lewd or lascivious conduct with a child
- Second or subsequent conviction for voyeurism
- Slave traffic
- Sex trafficking of children or sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion
- Sexual exploitation of a minor
- Any offense regarding the sexual exploitation of children
- A second or subsequent conviction for sexual offenses (recidivism).
- Individuals with an outstanding warrant for their arrest for a Registry violation.
- Individuals who have been designated as sexual predators.
- Individuals who have been designated "high risk offenders" by the Department of Corrections.
- Individuals who have not complied with or are ineligible for sex offender treatment as recommended by the Department of Corrections.



## What information is posted on the internet?

- Name and any known aliases
- Date of birth
- General physical description
- Digital photograph
- Town of residence
- Date and nature of conviction
- Name and telephone number of the local Department of Corrections office in charge of supervising the registrant.
- Whether or not the registrant has completed treatment
- Whether or not there is an outstanding warrant for the offender's arrest
- The reason for which the offender's registry information is accessible on the web site.
- Whether the offender has been designated "high risk" by the Department of Corrections.
- If the offender has not been subject to a risk assessment, a statement that the offender has not been so assessed and that such a person is presumed to be high risk.





For additional sex offender registry information -

Internet search –

“Vermont Sex Offender Registry”

802-244-8747

[http://vcic.vermont.gov/sex\\_offender](http://vcic.vermont.gov/sex_offender)



# Victim Services Program

Vermont Department  
of Corrections



# Mission of The Victim Services Program

***To help the Department build its capacity to meet the needs of crime victims/survivors and provide supportive direct services to them when the offender in their case is under the supervision or custody of the Vermont Department of Corrections.***



# Victim Services:

- General Support, Information, Parole Board Accompaniment
- VANS: Vermont Automated Victim Notification Service
- Victim Safety Wrap Around Program
- Victim Offender Dialogue Program
- Saving a Place at the Table
- Vermont Victim Impact Speakers' Program
- Homicide Co-Victim Support Group



# How to Contact Us:

- Toll Free: (888) 810-1847
- To Register on VANS
  - [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com)
  - (866) 976-8267



# Circles of Support & Accountability in Vermont



The community can  
contribute to public  
safety.



# Circles of Support & Accountability (COSA) in Vermont

- A group of 3-5 trained and supervised volunteers who enter into structured, voluntary and mutual relationships with an individual reentering the community after incarceration.
- The offender is referred to as the “Core Member.”





## COSA in Vermont-cont.

- COSAs are developed and convene prior to the Core Member's release and meet weekly for at least one year.
- Regularly scheduled Case Conferences include COSAs, Probation Officers, family, landlords.



# COSA Goals

- To improve community and victim safety.
- To improve the coordination of support, services, and community connections for core members.



## COSA Goals-cont.

- To establish and maintain clear expectations in regards to healthy and positive community behaviors.
- To repair the relationships between the core members and the community by facilitating restorative activities.



# Target Population

- Core Members must:
  - Present a moderate to high risk to reoffend either sexually or violently; **OR**
  - Present a moderate to high need for pro-social supports; **AND**
  - Be within 6-9 months of release; **AND**
  - Express a willingness to participate.



# COSA in Vermont Snapshot

- 40 COSAs currently meeting in the community across 15 Community Justice Centers
- Several in development awaiting Core Member release & others that continue to meet on a less regular/structured basis over the one year of standard practice.



# Vermont Center for the Prevention & Treatment of Sexual Abuse

- Jointly administered by DCF & DOC
- Coordinates and supports the state's systematic response to sexual assault and child sexual abuse
- <http://humanservices.vermont.gov/center-for-prevention-and-treatment-of-sexual-abuse>