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**Juvenile sex offenders in Western Australia: Offence history,  
treatment and recidivism**

Alfred Allan

*Edith Cowan University, a.allan@ecu.edu.au*

Maria M. Allan

*Edith Cowan University, m.allan@ecu.edu.au*

Katalin Kraszlan

*Edith Cowan University*

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Allan, A., Allan, M., & Kraszlan, K. (2001). *Juvenile sex offenders in Western Australia: Offence history, treatment and recidivism*. Joondalup, Australia: Edith Cowan University, School of Psychology.

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# **JUVENILE SEX OFFENDERS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA: OFFENCE HISTORY, TREATMENT AND RECIDIVISM**

Alfred Allan

B Com BA (Hon) MA (Clinical Psychology) LLB PhD

Associate Professor Allan has been the Director of Edith Cowan University's Forensic Psychology Program since the end of 1997.

Maria M Allan

BA (Hon) MA (Research Psychology) PhD

Dr Allan is a research associate of Edith Cowan University's Forensic Psychology Program.

Katalin Kraszlan

BA (Communication Studies) B Psych M Psych

Ms Kraszlan was associated with Edith Cowan University's School of Psychology when this research was undertaken and is currently working as a Research Officer for the Western Australian Department of Justice.

School of Psychology  
Edith Cowan University  
100 Joondalup Drive, Joondalup, Western Australia 6027

2001

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This project was partly funded by a seeding grant of the School of Psychology, Edith Cowan University, Perth, Western Australia.

The authors of the report thank the following individuals and institutions:

Peter Marshall of the Ministry of Justice's Policy and Legislation Directorate who advised and assisted us throughout the project.

Tanina Oliveri, Nigel Cameron, and Ann Highfield of Psychological Services, Juvenile Justice who assisted in the planning of the project, provided the supplementary data about the juvenile sex offenders assessed and treated by Psychological Services, Juvenile Justice and assisted in checking the integrity of data collected.

Terry Simpson, who did the bulk of the statistical analyses.

The Western Australian Ministry of Justice who gave us access to Children's Court and Police records.

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## **SECTION 1**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The aim of this research project was to provide a general description of different groups of juvenile sex offenders in Western Australia (WA), and to describe their offence histories and re-offending. It also aimed to compare the juvenile sex offenders with all juvenile offenders in WA. The last aim was to identify variables, which could discriminate between juveniles who are convicted of later sex offences, and those who are not.

The sample consisted of 334 juvenile sex offenders convicted in the WA Children's Court (Court) from January 1990 until the end of June 1998. To achieve this, the research team obtained information from the Court and Police records as on 30 November 1998. The report also incorporates supplementary information provided by WA Psychological Services, Juvenile Justice (Psychological Services) who has been responsible for the treatment of juvenile sex offenders from the early 1990s. The supplementary information used in the report includes the Psychological Services file numbers of juveniles who were referred for assessment, the level of involvement with these juveniles (treated, referred for treatment, just assessed) and the dates on which the files were closed.

Comparative information about all juvenile sex offenders in WA was obtained from the annual statistical reports "Crime and Justice Statistics for Western Australia" published by the Crime Research Centre of the University of Western Australia (CRC) for the period 1990 to 1998 (Broadhurst, Ferrante, & Susilo, 1991; Broadhurst, Ferrante, & Susilo, 1992; Broadhurst, Ferrante, & Loh, 1993; Ferrante, Loh, & Broadhurst, 1994; Ferrante, Fernandez, & Loh, 1999; Ferrante & Loh, 1996a; Ferrante & Loh, 1996b; Ferrante, Loh, & Fernandez, 1998a; Ferrante, Loh, & Maller, 1998b). The term CRC-reports will be used in future to refer to this body of publications.

The mean age at sentencing for their index sex offences was 15.7 years. There were more Non-Aboriginal (35.6%) than Aboriginal offenders (29.3%), while the race classification was unknown for 35% of the offenders. There were only eight female offenders and they were excluded from the main analyses. Compared to juvenile offenders in general in WA:



- (a) the percentage of females in this sample was low;
- (b) the juvenile sex offenders appear to be younger on the date they are sentenced; and
- (c) Aboriginal offenders appear to be over-represented among the juvenile sex offenders.

Of the 326 male juvenile offenders in the sample, 97 were referred to Psychological Services (PS Group), while 229 had no contact with Psychological Services (Other Group).

Table 1 provides a summary of the offence histories of the total male juvenile sex offender sample. The following factors are relevant when these offence histories are interpreted. First, as the average age at sentencing was 15.7 years, and the age of criminal responsibility in WA is 10 years (section 29 of the Western Australian Criminal Code Act 1913), offenders had a mean of only 5.7 years to amass previous convictions. Second, the mean follow-up time from the sentencing dates until 30 November 1998 was 4.2 years for the total male sample. Almost half (47.5%) of the offenders had no convictions for past offences, and they had no concurrent convictions for non-sex offences at the time of sentencing for their index sex offences. However, a substantial number (73) of the 155 offenders concerned, was convicted of new offences after the index sex offence.

**Table 1: Summary of Offence Histories of Total Male Sample**

Categories in terms of Past and Concurrent Offences	Categories in terms of New Offences									
	No New Offences		New Sex Offences only		New Non-Sex Offences only		New Sex plus Non-Sex		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
No Past or Concurrent Offences	82	77.4	3	75.0	61	32.3	9	33.3	155	47.5
Past Sex Offences only	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5	0	0.0	1	0.3
Past Non-Sex Offences only	10	9.4	1	25.0	63	33.3	8	29.6	82	25.2
Concurrent Non-Sex Offences only	6	5.7	0	0.0	11	5.8	0	0.0	17	5.2
Offences in more than one Category <sup>1</sup>	8	7.5	0	0.0	53	28.1	10	37.1	71	21.8
Total	106	100	4	100	189	100	27	100	326	100

<sup>1</sup> Seven of the 71 offenders in this category had convictions for past sex offences. None of the seven had new sex offence convictions and they can therefore be among the eight with No New Offences or the 53 with New Non-Sex Offences only.

About a quarter (25.2%) of the total male sample had no other convictions during the study period, or before it, while 11.7% had other sex offence convictions. Three offenders only had new sex offence convictions in addition to their index sex offence convictions, but the majority of the offenders (74%) had convictions for non-sex offences as well. (As will be discussed in paragraph 3.3.2 it is possible that some of the non-sex offences were directly or indirectly related to sex offences.)

Juvenile sex offenders with past or concurrent non-sex offence convictions were more likely to re-offend. While 77.4% of those with no further convictions came from the group with no past or concurrent non-sex offence convictions, only 33.2% of those with further convictions were from this group.

Seven of the male juvenile sex offenders had previous convictions for sex offences, while 31 were convicted of new sex offences after their index sex offences, giving a recidivism rate of 9.5%. When all their sex offence convictions were taken into account, Rape was the most common type of sex offence, followed by U16 offences. In comparison, the incidence of the other types of sex offences (Incest, Indecent Acts and Other sex offences) was low. (See paragraph 3.3.2 for definitions of these offence categories.)

In respect of non-sex offences, 27.6% of the offenders had concurrent convictions, 48.2% previous convictions, and the recidivism rate was 66.3%. When all their non-sex offence convictions are taken together, the most common offence category was the category of Other offences (such as disorderly behaviour, breach of court order and resisting police), followed by Burglary. Convictions for Violent offences and Homicide were consistently low.

There were notable differences between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal offenders and also between the PS and Other Groups. Relative to the Non-Aboriginal Group, the Aboriginal Group had more convictions for non-sex offences (concurrent, past and new) as well as for past and new sex offences. All offenders with past sex offences were from the PS Group and they also had a higher recidivism rate for new sex offences than the Other Group (12.4% versus 8.3%). When all their sex offence convictions are taken together, Rape appears to be the most common offence in the Other Group, and U16 offences in the PS Group.

If all their non-sex offences are taken together, there is not a conspicuous difference in the offence patterns of juvenile sex offenders and that of all juvenile offenders in WA. For juvenile sex offenders and juvenile offenders in general, Burglary/Theft was the most frequent offence type, followed by Other Offences, while Drug Offences and Offences against the Person were the least frequent.

There were some significant and notable differences between offenders who had no convictions for new sex offences (Non-Recidivist Group) and those who were convicted of new sex offences (Recidivist Group). A stepwise logistic regression analysis was performed with these variables, namely follow-up time, level of involvement with Psychological Services, race and the number of convictions for previous non-sex offences. Only follow-up time and level of involvement with Psychological Services were related to sex offence recidivism. Follow-up time was significantly longer in the Recidivist than in the Non-Recidivist Group. A higher percentage of offenders in the Recidivist Group than in the Non-recidivist Group was treated, or only assessed, by Psychological Services. In contrast, a higher percentage of offenders in the Non-Recidivist Group was assessed and referred for treatment or had no contact with Psychological Services.

The results of the logistic regression analysis indicated that the Recidivist and Non-Recidivist Groups did not differ significantly in respect of race<sup>2</sup> and the number of convictions for previous non-sex offences, when the differences in follow-up time and level of involvement with Psychological Services were taken into account.

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<sup>2</sup> Race was not included as a factor to test any theory that different race groups are more or less likely to be involved in offending or re-offending. However, as will be discussed in Section 2, research has demonstrated that Aboriginal people (including juveniles) are over-represented as offenders and victims in WA. The reasons for this state of affairs are complex, but likely to be related to factors beyond the scope of this research project, such as socio-economic disadvantage, displacement, alcohol, solvent and petrol abuse, and family breakdown.

## **SECTION 2**

### **INTRODUCTION**

During the 1998-1999 financial year, 3164 sexual offences were reported to the Western Australian Police Service (2000). It has been demonstrated that the majority of incidents of sex offending are not reported to the police (Allan, 1993; Amir, 1971; Finkelhor, 1985) and that official statistics may only reveal the tip of the iceberg. If one adds to this the evidence of the potential long-range effects of sex abuse on victims' lives it is not surprising that society demands that something should be done to reduce sexual victimisation. Many people working in the field believe that the most effective way of reducing sexual victimisation is to focus attention on prevention and the treatment of individuals at risk of offending and re-offending (Kenny, Keogh, Seidler, & Blaszczyński, 2000; Stops & Mays, 1991).

Consequently, many programs have been developed for the treatment of adult sex offenders since the 1970s. In the United States of America (USA) the number of such programs increased from one in 1980 to approximately 1000 by 1995 (Nisbet & Seidler, 2001). In Western Australia (WA) the treatment programs of the Ministry of Justice (Ministry) for adult sex offenders have existed since the late 1980s, and in their current form since the early 1990's (P. Marshall, personal communication, June 8, 1998). A number of projects investigated these programs, including the recidivism rates among offenders who participated in them (Bouse & Spurgeon, 1995; Forster, 1997; Sweeny, 1997; Wehner, 1995).

Initially these programs were mostly for the treatment of adult sex offenders, as the sex offences of juveniles were trivialised (Berliner, 1998; Ryan, 1998; Stops & Mays, 1991). The behaviour of sexually abusive male youths was dismissed as sex curiosity and experimentation, in other words, normal behaviour for sexually maturing adolescents (Lab, Shields, & Schondel, 1993; Stops & Mays, 1991). However, when Davis and Leitenberg (1987) reviewed research publications and official statistics in the mid 1980s, they found that adolescents accounted for, conservatively judged, about 20% of sexual offences committed in the United States. They also refer to research that indicate that approximately 50% of adult sexual offenders reported that they commenced their sex offending careers as adolescents. One of the studies Davis and Leitenberg (1987) refer to was

by Groth, Longo and McFadin (1982), who used an anonymous questionnaire to survey a sample of 83 convicted rapists and 54 convicted child molesters. The modal age at first offence in both groups was 16, with the age at first offence for their total sample ranging from 8 to 50. Figures quoted by Sipe, Jensen and Everett (1998) indicate that this was still the case in the United States in the late 1990's. The situation is similar in British Columbia, Canada. Gingell (1993) found that the majority of juvenile sex offenders treated by Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services (YFPS) in British Columbia in Canada was 15 to 16 years of age when they were convicted. However, 75% of the juvenile sex offenders reported that they had committed sex offences prior to the offences they were charged with (Gingell, 1993). In Victoria two thirds (67%) of the juvenile sex offenders who participated in the Male Adolescent Program for Positive Sexuality (MAPPS), reported that their sex offending began when they were aged 14 or younger (Community Change Consultants, 1998a). About half of this younger group (i.e. 31% of the total 1996/1997 group) reported offences between the ages of 8 and 12 years. In 1994 12.9% of sex offenders in New South Wales were males under the age of 16 (Nisbet & Seidler, 2001).

It follows that early therapeutic interventions with juvenile offenders may be an effective way to reduce the total number of sex offences. Many programs were consequently developed for the treatment of juvenile sex offenders (Community Change Consultants, 1998a). In Australia, treatment programs were introduced for juvenile sex offenders in New South Wales in 1991 (T. Keogh, personal communication, September 14, 1998) and in Victoria when MAPPS was established in 1993 (Community Change Consultants, 1998a).

WA Psychological Services, Juvenile Justice (Psychological Services), was also formed in the early 1990s with the specific brief to provide services to all young offenders (including sex offenders) and non-offenders at risk of offending, (Oliveri, 2000). A young offender is defined as a person who committed an offence before reaching the age of 18 years (Young Offenders Act 1994). A juvenile sex offender is a person who committed sex offences before reaching the age of 18 years. (In this report juvenile, adolescent and young sex offender will be used interchangeably). Clients can be referred to Psychological Services by the WA Children's Court (Court), Ministry staff or, as part of the diversion alternatives, the Police or Court may refer to the Juvenile Justice Teams who may then refer to Psychological Services, or offenders may be self-

referred<sup>3</sup>. Consequently, not all Psychological Services clients have been convicted of crimes. Treatment can take the form of a combination of individual, group and family therapy (N. Cameron, personal communication, September 7, 1998). For a number of reasons Psychological Services does not treat all the juveniles referred for assessment. These include: geographical factors; prior engagement with another agency; the offence is considered to be less serious; and the risk of re-offending is adjudged to be low (T. Oliveri, personal communication, March 23, 2001). Psychological Services does not exclude sex offenders who deny their offences, from treatment. Oliveri (2000) reported that 17% of the 147 clients referred to the unit from 1991 to the end of 1998 were “resistant deniers” and that 42% demonstrated some denial or minimisation.

An examination of the Court records reveals that from January 1990 until the end of June 1998, 402 juveniles, charged with about 1000 sex offences, appeared before the Court as defendants. Three hundred and thirty four of these were found guilty, of whom 97 were referred to Psychological Services for evaluation. At the end of June 1998 there had not been an empirical investigation of this group to determine their characteristics, offence histories, recidivism rates or factors that may predict recidivism (N. Cameron, personal communication, September 7, 1998). In fact, there is a dearth of systematic studies and publications dealing specifically with juvenile sex offending in WA. Consequently, there is no clear description of juvenile sex offenders as a group, or of their offence histories, or predictors of sex offence recidivism, in WA.

A number of factors has been mentioned in the literature as possible predictors of juvenile sex re-offending. These include factors that are difficult to study, such as employment status, stability of living arrangements, anti-social behaviour and anti-social personality disorder, social competence, and deviant sexual arousal (Community Change Consultants, 1998b). Other factors may be relatively easier to study. For example, Broadhurst (1992) identified prior criminal record, age and race as crucial determining factors in sex re-offending among adult sex offenders in WA. Community Change Consultants (1998b) believe that age, prior criminal record and treatment are important in the case of juveniles.

Regarding age, Community Change Consultants (1998b), after a literature review, concluded that younger offenders are more likely to re-offend. Sweeny (1997), who examined a group of adult

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<sup>3</sup> Psychological Services is not the only agency that deals with juvenile sex offenders. Family and Children's Services,

offenders in WA, also found that younger offenders in her sample were more likely to re-offend. In the case of Aboriginal adult sex offenders in WA, Forster (1997) found recidivist offenders were significantly younger at first sexual offence than non-recidivist offenders.

Juveniles with a history of previous sex offences also have a higher propensity to re-offend (Community Change Consultants, 1998b). However, this may not be true for all cases.

After a review of the official records of juvenile sexual assaulters and child molesters, Sipe, Jensen and Everet (1998) concluded that the pattern of recidivism appears to be offence-specific.

Juvenile, non-violent sex offenders, are much less likely to repeat sex offences than are violent juvenile sex offenders.

Community Change Consultants' (1998b) literature review suggests that non-completers of treatment programs have a higher recidivism rate than completers. This implies that treatment has a positive effect on recidivism. However, a study in America found that young offenders who participated in a specialised sex offender treatment program fared no better than those who participated in a normal, non-offence specific intervention program (Lab et al., 1993). The problem with this study, as the authors acknowledge, is that offenders were not referred to programs on a random basis, and may therefore not be comparable. Best practice in offender rehabilitation programs implies that admission to these programs will not be random. For example, the risk principle (Andrews & Bonta, 1994) suggests that intensive treatment programs should only be offered to medium to high risk offenders. The responsivity principle implies that there should be a good fit between the characteristics of the relevant program and the characteristics of specific offenders (Bonta, 1995). This means that the selection to programs will be biased to those offenders who are most likely to be responsive to the specific treatment program. The lack of randomness implies that it will usually not be very useful to compare a treated sample with a non-treated sample. A possible exception would be where the demand for treatment exceeds the ability to provide treatment, and it is ethically acceptable to provide treatment randomly.

Research such as that of Lab, Shields and Schondel (1993) that found that the juveniles treated in the specialised program they evaluated did not have lower recidivism than those in general programs, led to a debate about the policy to differentiate between juvenile sex offenders and

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the Disability Services Commission, the health system and other non-government agencies may also intervene.

juvenile non-sex offenders (Berliner, 1998; Lab et al., 1993; Milloy, 1998; Oliver, Hall, & Neuhaus, 1993; Ryan, 1998). This debate goes beyond treatment, and also focuses on the question of whether juvenile sex offenders are in fact a distinct group. For example, research suggests that juvenile sex offenders often engage in non-sex criminal conduct, and that the recidivism rates for these crimes are notably higher than those for sex offences. Milloy (1998) argues that pure sex offenders are rare, even among juveniles. (Also see Rasmussen (1999) and Rubinstein, Yeager, Goodstein and Lewis (1993).) Juvenile sex offenders often have histories of non-sex offences as well. While recidivism rates for sex offences range from 2% to 14% (even when followed up into early adulthood) juvenile sex offenders are more likely to commit further non-sex offences than sex offences. Milloy (1998) questioned “the use of the label sex offender for a group whose activities range from nuisance-type crimes to very serious violent offences, which account for a relatively small proportion of their offending patterns” (p. 655). She thought that the label of sex offender may have “little value and significance in understanding their total offending patterns” (p.655) and that policy makers should consider the need for a different approach to intervention. She emphasised the need to identify those offenders who are at high risk of further sex offending, and also suggested that research be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of specialised versus non-specialised interventions for low risk juvenile sex offenders. While scholars such as Ryan (1998) strongly support an offence specific approach to sex offending, some of the others who believe such an approach makes sense, concede that it is necessary to investigate whether such a specialised approach is necessary or sufficient (Berliner, 1998).

Research in WA has consistently demonstrated that Aboriginal people (including juveniles) are over-represented as offenders and victims in WA (CRC, 1996). There has been a number of empirical investigations of Aboriginal adult sex offenders in WA (Broadhurst & Loh, 1997; Broadhurst & Maller, 1991; Forster, 1997). Broadhurst and Maller (1991) found that the sex offence recidivism rate for adult Aboriginal sex offenders in WA was higher than that of non-Aboriginal sex offenders. A study that does not deal with juvenile sex offenders in particular, but provide some information about them, is that of Broadhurst and Loh (1997) who studied recidivism among sex offenders in WA between 1984 and 1994. The ages of the offenders in their sample ranged from 13 to 80 and they found that juvenile offenders have a greater risk of re-arrest generally, but that they do not have a high risk of repeat sex offending.



In order to identify predictors it is necessary to do a recidivism study. However, the definition of recidivism is controversial. It is generally acknowledged that reconviction is not an ideal method of determining re-offending rates, as offenders may re-offend repeatedly without being convicted again (Groth, Longo & McFadin, 1982). Davis and Leitenberg (1987), however, believe that there is often no other measure available than the re-conviction rate. They point out that studies that attempt to follow-up sex offenders and obtain the information from them will be very expensive, and will probably not be very reliable as they will have to depend on self-report measures. A comparison of the recidivism rates found in different studies must also be approached with caution. The methodological design of the different studies and the inclusion and exclusion criteria used by the programs being studied to decide who will be admitted to treatment, may also influence the recidivism rates found in a specific study. Recidivism rates are also likely to vary depending on the follow-up time (Community Change Consultants, 1998b), with an increase in follow-up time usually leading to an increase in recidivism (Furby, Weinrott, & Blackshaw, 1989). However, after their study of a group of adult Western Australian sex offenders, Bouse and Spurgeon (1995), concluded that future studies should consider the first twelve months after release as a critical period for re-offence.

## **2.1 Aims**

This research project aimed to achieve the following in respect of different groups of Western Australian juvenile sex offenders. Firstly, the study aimed to use information recorded in Court and Police records to provide a:

- (a) general description of them;
- (b) description of their offence histories; and
- (c) detailed description of their re-offending.

Secondly, it aimed to compare WA juvenile sex offenders with a general population of juvenile offenders in WA. A third aim was to determine which variables, if any, could discriminate between juveniles who are convicted of later sex offences, and those who are not.

## SECTION 3

### METHOD

#### 3.1 Sample

The study is a retrospective evaluation of the official files of 334 juvenile sex offenders who were convicted in the WA Children's Court from January 1990 until the end of June 1998.

#### 3.2 Procedure

The Ministry provided the research team with a computer data file containing the unique identification numbers, but no names, of all offenders who had been charged with sex offences contained in the Western Australian Criminal Code Act 1913<sup>4</sup> during the research period. (No names were recorded at any stage of the study.) The data file also included details of the relevant offences and the offenders' biographical information. A review of these records revealed that 334 of the offenders charged during this time were convicted of sex offences.

The Ministry also obtained for the research team the criminal histories of the offenders, as recorded by the WA Police. The team used the Police records of offenders as they were on 30 November 1998. These criminal histories contain only offences of which a person has been convicted, including spent convictions and convictions where "no conviction is recorded". They do not include cautions or referrals to Juvenile Justice Teams. Sentences are also recorded. Police criminal histories were obtained to supplement Court records, which were thought not to be complete for some earlier cases, and to provide information on new offences committed by juvenile sex offenders after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Psychological Services provided anonymised data from its records, which had the Court ID number added. In effect, Psychological Services indicated which of the offenders had been referred for assessment and the level of involvement in each case, that is whether offenders were assessed only, assessed and treated, or assessed and referred elsewhere for treatment.

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<sup>4</sup> Note that some sex offences are contained in legislation other than the Criminal Code Act 1913, for example wilful exposure, contained in the Western Australian Police Act 1892.

### **3.3 Data Collected**

Data about the following variables were collected from the three sources mentioned.

#### **3.3.1 General**

- (a) Children's Court identification number (CHIPS Party ID)
- (b) Gender
- (c) Race (Aboriginal; non-Aboriginal; unknown)
- (d) Date of birth
- (e) Psychological Services file number where relevant
- (f) Level of involvement with Psychological Services where relevant
- (g) Date on which Psychological Services closed its file where relevant

Psychological Services was the only information source for the last three items. Information on race was available from Court records (but incomplete) and from Psychological Services. Information about the other items was available in all the sources, i.e. Court records, Police records, and Psychological Services records, allowing cross checking.

#### **3.3.2 Offences**

Information was collected about index sex offences, past offences (sex and non-sex), concurrent non-sex offences, and new offences (sex and non-sex). The operational definitions of these offence groups are:

- Index sex offences - for offenders referred to Psychological Services, the sex offence convictions for which they were referred; for all other offenders, the first sex offence they were convicted of during the research period.
- Past offences - convictions with sentencing dates prior to the sentencing date of the index sex offences. The terms past and previous will be used interchangeably in this report. Because of the way the groups were identified, it would be virtually impossible for the Other Group to have had previous convictions for sex offences.
- Concurrent non-sex offences - convictions for non-sex offences where the sentences were imposed on the same date as the sentences for the index sex offences.

- New offences - any convictions for which sentences were imposed after the sentencing date of the index sex offences, but before or on 30 November 1998.

Specific data that were collected included:

(a) Offence date

For all sex offences the data provided by the Ministry from the Court's computer database included the date of the actual offence, and this was used to calculate the age of offenders at the date of their index sex offences. However, this date was not available in all cases. Where it was unavailable the age at charge was used, and if this was missing then the age at sentencing was used.

(b) Sentencing date

For all sex offences on the Court records, the sentencing dates were taken from Court records. The Police records provided the sentencing dates for all past non-sex offences, for past sex offences before the beginning of January 1990, all new non-sex offences, and new sex offences that occurred after the end of June 1998.

(c) Type of offence

For all sex offences on the Court records, information about the type of offence was taken from Court records. The Police records provided information about all past non-sex offences, past sex offences before the beginning of January 1990, all new non-sex offences, and new sex offences that occurred after the end of June 1998.

When recording these sex offences the Court's coding system was used. The Court uses a coding system, based on the WA Criminal Code Act (1913) that makes very fine distinctions. During the period 1 January 1990 to 30 June 1998 the Criminal Code Act (1913) changed on a number of occasions, with consequent changes in the coding system. To simplify the analyses the researchers grouped related sex offences together in five categories. The categories and their definitions, which in each instance include attempts to commit the relevant offences, are:

- Incest - any type of sex offence against a lineal family member.
- U16 - any type of sex offence against a person under the age of 16, who is not a lineal family member.
- Rape - all forms of coercive penetration of a person over the age of 16, who is not a lineal family member of the offender.
- Indecent Acts - as a general rule any type of sex offence, except penetration, against a person aged 16 or older, who is not a lineal family member of the offender. This category also included cases that involved sexual penetration of a male between 16 and 21 by another male and wilful exposure, but the latter would only have been found in Police records.
- Other - all sex offences that do not fit into any of the other categories, e.g. sex offences against animals.

When interpreting the results of this study, it should be kept in mind that these sex offence categories are crude and can overlap. For example, the Police can charge a juvenile who has raped his younger sister with Rape rather than Incest or an U16 offence.

The non-sex offences were recorded in the following categories:

- Homicide - this category included homicide, manslaughter and attempts.
- Violent - i.e. violent offences other than homicide.
- Burglary - including aggravated and home burglaries.
- Stealing - this category included stealing, receiving and fraud.
- Motor Vehicle Stealing.
- Traffic.
- Drug.
- Other - this category included offences such as disorderly behaviour, breach of court orders, and resisting police.

The researchers realise that some of the so-called non-sex offences may have been related to a sex offence. In some cases these crimes may have been directly related to a sex offence, for example, a burglary to commit rape. In other cases, there may have been a sexual motivation, but it is not clear in the offence, for example, theft where underwear is stolen from a washing line. It is

also possible that some of the offences may have in effect been incomplete sex offences, for example, a burglary or assault may commence with the intent to rape, but never reach that stage.

(d) Number of convictions

A conviction is a finding by the court that a person is guilty of the offence charged. The number of convictions is therefore the number of charges of which a person was convicted. It does not represent the number of occasions on which a person committed an offence, nor the number of victims. Numerous charges can arise from one incident. The number of convictions (past, concurrent or new) was recorded for all sex and non-sex offences. Information about non-sex offences was obtained from the Police records, and information about sex offences from both the Court and Police records.

(e) Sentence

In respect of the index sex offences and, where applicable concurrent non-sex offences, the type of sentence, and where applicable, further information such as length of incarceration or relevant orders, was collected from the Court records.

The following categories, in order of seriousness, were used to analyse the sentences imposed:

- Incarceration.
- Conditional Release Orders.
- Intensive Supervision.
- Community Service Orders.
- Community Based Orders.
- Probation.
- Good Behaviour Bonds.
- Dismissed, but recorded on offender's Police record.
- No Punishment.
- Referrals to Juvenile Justice Teams.
- Other.

For a more meaningful analysis, sentences were collapsed in the following four categories:

- Incarceration - Imprisonment and Detention in a Juvenile Detention Centre.
- Supervised Orders - Conditional Release Orders, Juvenile Community Service Orders and Supervision Orders.
- Unsupervised Orders - Good Behaviour Bonds, Dismissals, No Punishment Imposed and Referred to Children's Panel.
- Other - this category included sentences such as Adult Community Service Orders, Referred to Juvenile Justice Teams, Probation, and Youth Community Based Orders. It also included a few other sentences that were used occasionally as well as cases where the sentence was unknown.

(f) Re-offending and follow-up time

Re-offending was defined as any offence (i.e. both sex and non-sex) recorded in either the Court or Police records during the follow-up time, that is the period between the sentencing date for the index sex offences and 30 November 1998. Recidivism rates were calculated based on all offences, but also separately for sex and non-sex offences.

The researchers did not adjust follow-up time to account for the time offenders spent in custody as they did not have access to the relevant information. In an attempt to compensate for this, offenders who were supervised (Incarceration and Supervised Orders) and those unsupervised (Unsupervised Orders and Other) were grouped together for some analyses of re-offending (see paragraph 3.3.2(e) above for definitions).

### **3.3.3 Discrepancies between information sources**

As can be expected with a retrospective study of this nature, there were instances where the three sets of official records that were used as sources for this study differed. When this happened the team tried to reconcile the information from the differing sources. However, this was not always possible and in these cases the following procedures were followed.

- (a) Where the biographical information provided by the different sources differed, preference was given to the information provided by Psychological Services, if it was involved. If

Psychological Services was not involved, the police information was given preference rather than that of the Court, unless it was clearly wrong.

- (b) Where the Police record recorded a conviction that did not appear in the corresponding Court record, such a conviction was added to that obtained from the Court record.
- (c) Where a conviction for a sex offence was noted in the Police records but did not appear in the Court records, this would be noted as an additional sex offence (past, index or new depending on the relevant sentencing dates) if there was no similar conviction in the Court records, one month before or after the date on the police record.

### **3.4 Terminology used in Results Section**

In reporting the descriptive data a distinction is made between the following main offender groups:

- PS Group - all offenders referred to Psychological Services for evaluation.
- Other Group - all offenders not assessed by Psychological Services.
- Aboriginal Group - all offenders recorded by Psychological Services and/or the Court as being Aboriginal.
- Non-Aboriginal Group - all offenders recorded by Psychological Services and/or the Court as being non-Aboriginal.

In respect of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Groups a further distinction is made between:

- Aboriginal PS Group.
- Aboriginal Other Group.
- Non-Aboriginal PS Group.
- Non-Aboriginal Other Group.

Where indicated the PS Group is broken down into a:

- Treated Group - all offenders treated by Psychological Services.
- Referred Group - all offenders that Psychological Services referred to other sources for treatment.
- Assessed Group - all offenders that Psychological Services assessed, but neither treated nor referred.



For the logistic regression analyses the following groups are distinguished:

- Recidivist Group - all offenders who are convicted of new sex offences after their index sex offence convictions.
- Non-Recidivist Group - all offenders with no new sex offence convictions after their index sex offence convictions.

Information will be provided separately for the different offence groups, i.e. index sex offences, concurrent offences, past sex offences, past non-sex offences, new sex offences and new non-sex offences, from the perspective of offenders and from the perspective of convictions.

(a) Offenders

The following information will be provided for the total male sample, as well as the relevant offender groups defined above:

- In respect of their index sex offences, the total number of offenders in the different offender groups. For all offence groups other than index sex offences, the number of offenders convicted of such offences, and what percentage they constitute of the total number of offenders in the relevant offender group.
- For sex offences, the number of offenders who were convicted of offences in each of the sex offence categories, i.e. Rape, Incest, etc. and what percentage they constitute of the total number of offenders in the relevant offender group.
- For non-sex offences, the number of offenders who were convicted of offences in each of the non-sex offence categories, i.e. for Burglary, Violent offences etc. and what percentage they constitute of the total number of offenders in the relevant offender group.

(b) Convictions

The following information will be provided for the total male sample, as well as the relevant offender groups defined above:

- The total number of convictions for the different offender groups.
- For sex offences, the number of convictions for offences in each of the sex offence categories, i.e. Rape, Incest, etc. and what percentage that constitutes of the total number of convictions in the relevant offender group.

- For non-sex offences, the number of convictions for offences in each of the non-sex offence categories, i.e. for Burglary, Violent offences etc. and what percentage that constitutes of the total number of convictions in the relevant offender group.

This procedure was necessary as one offender may have been convicted of more than one type of sex offence, and/or more than one type of non-sex offence, and the number of charges may be different for each type of offence and will also vary among the offenders.

### **3.5 Statistical Analysis**

Frequency tables, and on a few occasions means and standard deviations, were used for descriptive purposes. Logistic regression techniques were used to determine which of the variables make a significant independent contribution in the prediction of recidivism.

## SECTION 4

### RESULTS

#### 4.1 Biographical Information of Juvenile Sex Offenders

Of the 334 juvenile sex offenders convicted during the research period, 97 were referred to Psychological Services for evaluation. They treated 73 of this group, and referred 12 to other resources for treatment. Eight females and 229 males constituted the group of 237 offenders that were not referred to Psychological Services for evaluation.

As authors such as Berliner (1998), Milloy (1998) and Ryan (1998) debated whether there are differences between juvenile sex offenders and juvenile offenders in general, the research team decided to compare the characteristics of the present sample of juvenile sex offenders with that of all juvenile offenders dealt with by the Court in WA from 1990 to 1998, the period that overlaps with the research period. This information was obtained from the annual statistical reports "Crime and Justice Statistics for Western Australia" published by the Crime Research Centre of the University of Western Australia for the period 1990 to 1998 (Broadhurst et al., 1991; Broadhurst et al., 1992) (Broadhurst et al., 1993) (Ferrante et al., 1994) (Ferrante et al., 1999; Ferrante & Loh, 1996a; Ferrante & Loh, 1996b; Ferrante et al., 1998a; Ferrante et al., 1998b). The term CRC-reports will be used in future to refer to this body of publications. The information, as compiled by the research team from these reports, is provided in Tables 3, 6 and 8.

A few comments about the information in the CRC-reports are appropriate at this stage. The information about gender, race and age is based on distinct persons (as defined by the CRC) dealt with by the court. The term distinct persons means that an individual is only counted once in a year period, even if he or she has appeared before the court a number of times. This causes a problem in two instances. Firstly, when the age comparisons are reported, it is not clear what date the CRC used for the calculation of age in such cases. However, this is not a major problem as the maximum possible variation in age for these individuals is one year.

Secondly, the CRC-reports only publish biographical information on distinct persons charged, and some of these may not have been convicted and this may affect the race and gender comparisons. Offenders referred to Juvenile Justice Teams by the courts, where the charges were dropped, or where the outcome was acquittal, were thus included in the biographical information provided in the CRC-reports. The present study included offenders who were convicted, as well as those whom the Court referred to Juvenile Justice Teams, but not those against whom the charges were dropped, or who were acquitted. The biographical information for juvenile sex offenders in this study is therefore not totally comparable with that provided in the CRC-reports. However, the number of cases where the outcome is an acquittal or where the charges are dropped is relatively low. For example, the outcome was acquittal or charges were dropped in 3.6% to 5.8% of cases from 1995 to 1998 (CRC-reports). While this may have a more notable effect on age comparisons, the percentage distribution of different race and gender categories should not change much if the cases where the charges were dropped or where the outcome was acquittal, had been excluded.

#### 4.1.1 Gender

Table 2 shows the gender and race distribution of the sample. This study confirmed findings in other studies reviewed by Community Change Consultants (1998b) and Gingell (1993) that most juvenile sex offenders, as adult sex offenders, are male.

**Table 2: Gender and Race Distribution**

Characteristics		Total (n = 334)		Psychological Services						Other (n = 237)	
				Treated (n = 73)		Referred (n = 12)		Assessed (n = 12)			
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Gender	Male	326	97.6	73	100.0	12	100.0	12	100.0	229	96.6
	Female	8	2.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	3.4
Race	Aboriginal	98	29.3	23	31.5	7	58.3	9	75.0	59	24.9
	Non-Aboriginal	119	35.7	50	68.5	5	41.7	3	25.0	61	25.7
	Unknown	117	35.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	117	49.4

Note: The % refers to the Gender and Race distribution in the different offender groups.

A comparison of Tables 2 and 3 demonstrates that in both instances the majority of the juvenile offenders convicted of offences are male. However, the percentage of females among the juvenile sex offenders (2.4%) was much lower than the percentage of females reported for all juvenile offenders in WA that ranged from 18.7% - 22.5%.

**Table 3: Gender and Race Distribution (Percentages) of Juvenile Offenders in WA (distinct persons)**

Year	Race			Gender		
	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Unknown	Male	Female	Unknown
1998	20.3	36.7	43.0	80.0	20.0	0.0
1997	19.3	39.7	41.0	80.3	19.7	0.0
1996	16.8	40.7	42.5	78.3	19.7	2.0
1995	15.8	49.8	34.4	76.4	18.7	4.9
1994	17.9	51.9	30.2	77.3	19.5	3.2
1993	22.2	71.6	6.2	80.5	19.5	0.0
1992	20.4	70.7	8.9	81.3	18.7	0.0
1991	19.2	66.5	14.3	77.5	22.5	0.0
1990	20.0	50.7	29.3	77.6	22.4	0.0

Note: This table was compiled from figures provided in the annual statistical reports “Crime and Justice Statistics for Western Australia” published by the Crime Research Centre of the University of Western Australia for the period 1990 to 1998.

**4.1.2 Race**

A comparison of Tables 2 and 3 also demonstrate that Aboriginal offenders made up 29.3% of the juvenile sex offenders in this study, while the percentage of Aboriginal offenders ranged between 15.8% and 22.2% for all juvenile offenders in WA. Aboriginal offenders therefore appear to be over represented among the juvenile sex offenders. However, it is not possible to come to a firm conclusion in this regard as race was unknown for 35.0% of the offenders in this study, and unknown for between 6.2 % to 43% of the juvenile offenders in WA.

A further analysis of the data in Table 2 reveals that 40.2% of the PS Group, where the race of all the offenders was known, were Aboriginal. The majority of offenders in the Assessed Group were Aboriginal (67.7%). A possible explanation for this is that Aboriginal offenders mostly come from rural and remote areas, while Psychological Services operates mainly in the Perth metropolitan

area (T Oliveri, personal communication, August 14, 2000). Consequently, Psychological Services is unable to provide comprehensive treatment serviced in these areas.

### 4.1.3 Age

The actual dates on which the index sex offences were committed were available for 220 offenders. In this group the age at offence for males ranged from 9 years 10 months to 17 years 11 months. For females the age range was 11 years 3 months to 15 years 5 months. Table 4 shows the distribution of age at offence for both genders.

**Table 4: Age Distribution at Index Sex Offences**

<12 Years		12-14 Years		15-16 Years		17 Years		Total	
n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%
4	1.8	74	33.6	97	44.1	45	20.5	220	100

Unlike the date of offence, which was only available for 220 of the juvenile sex offenders, the date of sentencing was available for all the offenders. This allowed the research team to calculate the age at sentencing for all the offenders, with the exception of one whose date of birth was unknown. In this group of 333 offenders the age ranged from 9 years 10 month to 35 years 1 month for the male offenders, and 11 years 4 months to 23 years 5 months for female offenders. Table 5 shows the distribution of age at sentencing date for both genders. The relatively high ages at sentence are due to the fact that some people are charged many years after having committed sex offences.

**Table 5: Age Distribution at Sentencing for Index Sex Offences**

<12 Years		12-14 Years		15-16 Years		17 Years		18 Years		> 18 Years		Total	
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%
3	0.9	90	27.1	145	43.5	53	15.9	26	7.8	16	4.8	333	100

A comparison of Tables 5 and 6<sup>5</sup> reveals that in WA juvenile sex offenders appear to be younger than juvenile offenders in general on the date they are sentenced. While 71.5% of the sex

<sup>5</sup> The CRC-reports refer to date of hearing, but do not define this concept. As the CRC information is based on the date of finalisation and sentencing is the most final of the possible outcomes, this should not be a problem.

offenders were aged 16 or younger at the time of sentencing, the percentage varied between 45.1% and 61% for juvenile offenders in general.

**Table 6: Age Distribution at Hearing for all Juvenile Offenders in WA (distinct persons)**

Year	Age groups			
	≤14 Years	15 -16 Years	17 Years	≥18 Years
	%	%	%	%
1998	14.9	31.3	37.8	16.0
1997	14.2	31.0	36.8	18.0
1996	13.3	28.9	53.8	4.0
1995	16.2	32.5	49.2	2.1
1994	18.9	36.4	43.4	1.3
1993	19.2	34.3	44.9	1.6
1992	17.3	32.5	49.0	1.2
1991	Not provided in 1991 report			
1990	27.6	33.3	38.6	0.5

Note: This table was compiled from figures provided in the annual statistical reports “Crime and Justice Statistics for Western Australia” published by the Crime Research Centre of the University of Western Australia for the period 1990 to 1998.

Table 7 provides more detailed information about the age at offence (for those offenders for whom this was available) and sentencing. Except for the females, who were much younger, the average age at offence was very similar in the different offender groups. On average, the offenders were about 8 months older at the sentencing date than at the date of offence, and there was more variation in the age at sentencing.

**Table 7: Age at Offence and Sentencing for Index Sex Offences**

		n	Age at Offence (n = 220)		n	Age at Sentencing (n = 333)	
			Mean	Sd		Mean	Sd
Gender	Male	215	15.1	1.6	325	15.7	2.3
	Female	5	13.2	1.8	8	15.4	3.9
Race	Aboriginal	59	14.8	1.6	97	15.3	2.0
	Non-Aboriginal	104	14.9	1.7	119	15.7	1.7
	Unknown	57	15.3	1.4	117	16.1	3.1
Group	Psych Services	76	14.7	1.6	97	15.3	1.3
	Other	144	15.2	1.6	236	15.9	2.7
Total		220	15.0	1.6	333	15.7	2.4

Table 8 summarizes the mean age of juveniles dealt with by the Court in WA during the research period with reference to race and gender.

**Table 8: Mean Age at Hearing for all Juvenile Offenders in WA (distinct persons)**

Year	Total	Race		Gender	
		Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Male	Female
1998	16.5	15.5	16.3	16.3	17.1
1997	16.6	15.4	16.4	16.4	17.1
1996	16.6	15.5	16.3	16.5	16.9
1995	16.3	15.3	16.1	16.3	16.4
1994	16.0	15.2	15.9	16.0	15.9
1993	15.9	15.3	16.1	16.0	15.9
1992	16.1	15.3	16.2	16.1	16.0
1991	15.4	Not provided in 1991 report			
1990	15.9	15.2	15.6	16.0	15.5

Notes:

- This table was compiled from figures provided in the annual statistical reports "Crime and Justice Statistics for Western Australia" published by the Crime Research Centre of the University of Western Australia for the period 1990 to 1998.
- Gender was unknown for a small percentage of offenders, but Race was unknown for a much higher percentage of offenders.

A comparison of Tables 7 and 8 shows that the mean age of juvenile sex offenders in this study was 15.7 years at sentencing, while for all juvenile offenders in WA it varied between 15.4 and 16.6 years. Table 8 also shows that from 1990 to 1998, Aboriginal juvenile offenders in general were notably younger than non-Aboriginal offenders, but in this study there was not a big difference between these groups.

**4.2 Female Juvenile Sex Offenders**

Only eight juvenile females were convicted of sex offences in WA during the study period, three Aboriginal, while the race of the others was unknown. Psychological Services did not evaluate or treat any of the female offenders. They were convicted of their index sex offences between July 1992 and February 1996 and the mean follow-up time was 4.7 years. Four (50%) of them were convicted of Rape, three (37.5%) for sex offences in the U16 category, and one (12.5%) for an offence in the category of Other. With one exception, each of the offenders had only one conviction for a sex offence. One offender had two convictions in the U16 category. Four (50%) of the female offenders received sentences of Probation, two (25%) Community Service Orders



and one (12.5%) a Child Good Behaviour Bond. For the remaining offender, the sentence is unknown.

The female offenders had no previous convictions for sex offences, and no further convictions for sex offences after the index offence. While five (62.5%) of the female offenders were convicted of non-sex offences after the index sex offences, only two (25%) of them had convictions for past and concurrent non-sex offences. These two offenders each had one concurrent conviction for a Violent offence, while they together had four concurrent convictions in the category of Other offences. In respect of past offences, one of them had a few convictions for Stealing (1) and Other offences (2), while the second had 20 convictions for Burglary, Stealing, Traffic and Other offences. These two offenders had 102 convictions for new non-sex offences, including Violent offences, during the study period. (They were also the only offenders with new Violent offences.) The sex offences of these two offenders appear to be part of an overall longer term pattern of offending, whilst this does not appear to be the case for the rest of the female offenders.

The researchers did not include these female juvenile sex offenders in further analyses and in the rest of this report.

### **4.3 Index Sex and Concurrent Non-Sex Offences: Male Juvenile Sex Offenders**

#### **4.3.1 Number of offenders and convictions**

Table 9 shows that the mean number of index sex offence convictions per offender was 2.2, while the mean number of concurrent non-sex offence convictions was 1.2. However, only 90 of the offenders had convictions for concurrent non-sex offences, and if calculated separately, their mean number of convictions is almost double the mean of the index sex offences (4.2).

For both index sex offences and concurrent non-sex offences, the mean number of convictions was the lowest in the Aboriginal Other Group. In the PS Group, the mean number of index sex offence convictions was higher than in the Other Group. When looking separately at Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal offenders this was true as well.

**Table 9: Index Sex and Concurrent Non-Sex Offences: Number of Offenders and Convictions**

Group		Index Sex Offences		Concurrent Non-Sex Offences		
		Number of Offenders	Convictions per Offender	Number of Offenders	Convictions per Offender	
					Offenders with Concurrent Offences	All Offenders
		n	Mean	n	Mean	Mean
Total	Total	326	2.2	90	4.2	1.2
	Psych Services	97	2.4	33	4.0	1.4
	Other	229	2.1	57	4.3	1.1
Aboriginal	Total	95	1.7	44	3.8	1.8
	Psych Services	39	1.9	21	3.9	2.1
	Other	56	1.6	23	3.8	1.6
Non-Aboriginal	Total	119	2.5	25	4.5	0.9
	Psych Services	58	2.7	12	4.3	0.9
	Other	61	2.4	13	4.7	0.9

Note: The n in the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal rows may not add up to the respective Total rows, as the race of some of these offenders was unknown.

### 4.3.2 Sentences

Table 10 summarises the information about the sentences imposed for index sex offences, and where applicable concurrent non-sex offences, while more detail are provided in Table 11. Table 10 shows that custodial sentences were imposed in only 15.6% of cases, while the Other sentences category (e.g. good behaviour bonds, no punishment and probation) was used most frequently.

This would appear to indicate a tendency towards less intrusive sentences. However, the percentage of male juvenile offenders in general who were placed in custody<sup>6</sup> ranged between 4.9% in 1991 and 14.4% in 1998 in WA (CRC-reports). Compared to these figures for juvenile offenders in general, the proportion of juvenile sex offenders who were placed in custody is therefore relatively high (15.6% were incarcerated, and 11.4% was given conditional release orders) (Table 11).

<sup>6</sup> Defined by the CRC to include detention, governor’s pleasure, and conditional release orders.

**Table 10: Distribution of Sentences: Index Sex Offences and Concurrent Non-Sex Offences**

Categories of Sentences	Total						Aboriginal						Non-Aboriginal					
	Total		Psych Services		Other		Total		Psych Services		Other		Total		Psych Services		Other	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Incarceration	51	15.6	22	22.7	29	12.7	30	31.6	16	41.0	14	25.0	12	10.1	6	10.3	6	9.8
Supervised Orders	76	23.3	25	25.8	51	22.3	27	28.4	8	20.6	19	33.9	33	27.7	17	29.3	16	26.2
Unsupervised Orders	54	16.6	7	7.2	47	20.5	10	10.5	2	5.1	8	14.3	21	17.6	5	8.7	16	26.2
Other	145	44.5	43	44.3	102	44.5	28	29.5	13	33.3	15	26.8	53	44.6	30	51.7	23	37.8
Total	326	100	97	100	229	100	95	100	39	100	56	100	119	100	58	100	61	100

Notes:

- The % refers to the different categories of sentences in each offender group.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal columns may not add up to the respective Total columns, as the race of some offenders was unknown.

Table 10 demonstrates that there was some variation between the groups in respect of the types of sentences imposed. In general, the biggest difference in sentencing between the PS Group and the Other Group was in respect of Incarceration and Unsupervised Orders. The use of Unsupervised Orders was much lower in the PS Group (7.2% versus 20.5%), while the use of Incarceration was much higher in the PS Group (22.7% versus 12.7%). This is consistent with the fact that the mean number of index sex offence convictions was higher in the PS Group than in the Other Group.

What is also noteworthy in Table 10, is that a higher percentage of Aboriginal, than non-Aboriginal, offenders received a sentence of Incarceration (31.6% versus 10.1%). Per contra, the mean number of sex offence convictions in the Aboriginal Group (1.7) was less than that in the Non-Aboriginal Group (2.5). However, the mean number of concurrent non-sex offences was higher in the Aboriginal (1.8) than in the Non-Aboriginal (0.9) Group.

**Table 11: Distribution of Sentence Types: Index Sex Offences and Concurrent Non-Sex Offences**

Categories of Sentences	Total						Aboriginal						Non-Aboriginal					
	Total		Psych Services		Other		Total		Psych Services		Other		Total		Psych Services		Other	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Incarceration	51	15.6	22	22.7	29	12.7	30	31.6	16	41.0	14	25.0	12	10.1	6	10.3	6	9.8
Conditional Release Orders	37	11.4	10	10.3	27	11.8	15	15.8	4	10.2	11	19.6	11	9.2	6	10.3	5	8.2
Intensive Supervision	37	11.4	14	14.5	23	10.0	10	10.5	3	7.7	7	12.5	22	18.5	11	19.0	11	18.0
Community Service Orders	10	3.1	1	1.0	9	3.9	3	3.2	1	2.6	2	3.6	1	0.8	0	0.0	1	1.7
Community Based Orders	30	9.2	16	16.5	14	6.1	8	8.4	6	15.3	2	3.6	17	14.3	10	17.3	7	11.5
Probation	66	20.2	16	16.5	50	21.8	13	13.6	5	12.8	8	14.3	17	14.3	11	19.0	6	9.8
Good Behaviour Bonds	17	5.2	1	1.0	16	7.0	2	2.1	0	0.0	2	3.6	6	5.0	1	1.7	5	8.2
Dismissed, but Recorded	18	5.5	1	1.0	17	7.4	5	5.3	1	2.6	4	7.1	3	2.5	0	0.0	3	4.9
No Punishment	15	4.6	5	5.2	10	4.4	3	3.2	1	2.6	2	3.6	9	7.6	4	6.9	5	8.2
Refer JJT	11	3.4	7	7.2	4	1.8	1	1.0	1	2.6	0	0.0	9	7.6	6	10.3	3	4.9
Other	34	10.4	4	4.1	30	13.1	5	5.3	1	2.6	4	7.1	12	10.1	3	5.2	9	14.8
Total	326	100	97	100	229	100	95	100	39	100	56	100	119	100	58	100	61	100

Notes:

- The % refers to the different categories of sentences in each offender group.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal columns may not add up to the respective Total columns, as the race of some offenders was unknown.

**4.3.3 Index sex offences**

For the 326 male offenders in this sample, there were 716 index sex offence convictions. The index sex offences included convictions in only one category for 305 of the offenders, while 17 were convicted of offences in two categories, and 4 were convicted of offences in three categories.

Tables 12 and 13 indicate that although there was some variation between the offender groups, Rape was generally the most common type of sex offence in respect of offenders and convictions. U16 offences also had a fairly high incidence. The percentage of offenders convicted of Incest, Indecent Acts and Other sex offences, as well as the percentage of convictions for these offences, was much lower in all the offender groups.

**Table 12: Distribution of Different Types of Index Sex Offences: Offenders**

Group		Categories of Index Sex Offences										Total n
		Rape		U16		Incest		Indecent Act		Other		
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Total	Total	192	58.9	123	37.7	19	5.8	11	3.4	6	1.8	326
	Psych Services	46	47.4	42	43.3	7	7.2	10	10.3	4	4.1	97
	Other	146	63.8	81	35.4	12	5.2	1	0.4	2	0.9	229
Aboriginal	Total	67	70.5	24	25.3	1	1.0	4	4.2	2	2.1	95
	Psych Services	23	59.0	13	33.3	0	0.0	4	10.3	2	5.1	39
	Other	44	78.6	11	19.6	1	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	56
Non-Aboriginal	Total	54	45.4	55	46.2	13	10.9	7	5.9	3	2.5	119
	Psych Services	23	39.7	29	50.0	7	12.1	6	10.3	2	3.4	58
	Other	31	50.8	26	42.6	6	9.8	1	1.6	1	1.6	61

Notes:

- The columns include offenders with at least one index sex offence conviction for that type of offence, but the Total column provides the group size.
- The n in each column is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total column, as an offender may have index sex offence convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the Total column.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal rows may not add up to the respective Total rows, as the race of some offenders was unknown.

In the PS Group 90.7% of the offenders was convicted of Rape and under16 offences, and 99.2% in the Other Group, while 79% of convictions in the PS Group was for these two offences, and 91% in the Other Group. Tables 12 and 13 further demonstrate that the percentage of Rape was generally lower in the PS Group than in the Other Group, while the opposite was true for the U16 offences. The only deviation from this trend was for Aboriginal offenders, where the percentage of convictions for U16 offences was the same in the Aboriginal PS Group and the Aboriginal Other Group. These findings suggest that offenders in the PS Group tended to have younger victims than those in the Other Group (compare the definitions of Rape and U16 offences).

The remaining sex offence categories (Incest, Indecent Acts, and Other offences) were far less common than Rape and U16 offences. These offences had a higher incidence in the PS Group than the Other Group, in respect of offenders (Table 12) as well as convictions (Table 13). In the PS Group 21.6% of the offenders was convicted of these offences, and 6.5% in the Other Group, and the percentages were very similar in respect of convictions. Looking at these offence

categories individually, the differences between the PS Group and the Other Group were small, usually less than six percentage points. However, 10.3% in the PS Group had convictions for Indecent Acts, while the percentage was only 0.4% in the Other Group.

Tables 12 and 13 demonstrate that the percentage of Indecent Acts and Other sex offences was very similar for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal offenders, but there were notable differences in respect of the remaining sex offence categories. Rape was more common among Aboriginal offenders (70.5% of offenders and 68.5% of convictions) than non-Aboriginal offenders (45.4% of offenders and 32.9% of convictions) while the reverse was true for U16 offences and Incest. While 10.9% of non-Aboriginal offenders were convicted of Incest, this is the case for only 1% of Aboriginal offenders. The difference was even more pronounced for number of convictions. Among non-Aboriginal offenders, 16.9% of conviction were for Incest, while 0.6% of conviction were for Incest among Aboriginal offenders.

**Table 13: Distribution of Different Types of Index Sex Offences: Convictions**

Group		Categories of Sex Offences										Total	
		Rape		U16		Incest		Indecent Act		Other			
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total	Total	360	50.3	264	36.9	69	9.6	14	1.9	9	1.3	716	100
	Psych Services	79	34.5	102	44.5	30	13.1	13	5.7	5	2.2	229	100
	Other	281	57.7	162	33.3	39	8.0	1	0.2	4	0.8	487	100
Aboriginal	Total	113	68.5	44	26.7	1	0.6	5	3.0	2	1.2	165	100
	Psych Services	48	64.0	20	26.7	0	0.0	5	6.7	2	2.6	75	100
	Other	65	72.2	24	26.7	1	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	90	100
Non-Aboriginal	Total	99	32.9	137	45.5	51	16.9	9	3.0	5	1.7	301	100
	Psych Services	31	20.1	82	53.3	30	19.5	8	5.2	3	1.9	154	100
	Other	68	46.3	55	37.4	21	14.2	1	0.7	2	1.4	147	100

Notes:

- The n in each column is the number of convictions, not the number of offenders.
- The % is of the Total column.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal rows may not add up to the respective Total rows, as the race of some offenders was unknown.

Tables 14 and 15 provide more detail for the PS Group. The results for the Referred and Assessed Groups should be treated with caution as the number of offenders in these groups is

small. When the Treated, Referred and Assessed Groups were compared, Rape and U16 offences, taken together, were the most common offences in all these offender groups.

**Table 14: Distribution of Different Types of Index Sex Offences for the PS Group: Offenders**

Psychological Services	Categories of Index Sex Offences										Total
	Rape		U16		Incest		Indecent Act		Other		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Treated	31	42.5	37	50.7	6	8.2	7	9.6	3	4.1	73
Referred	7	58.3	2	16.7	1	8.3	2	16.7	1	8.3	12
Assessed	8	66.7	3	25.0	0	0.0	1	8.3	0	0.0	12
Total	46	47.4	42	43.3	7	7.2	10	10.3	4	4.1	97

Notes:

- The columns include offenders with at least one index sex offence conviction for that type of offence, but the Total column provides the group size.
- The n in each column is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total column, as an offender may have index sex offence convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the Total column.

Convictions for Rape and U16 offences made out 75.6% to 94.1% of convictions for index sex offences in these offender groups, while 75% to 93.2% of offenders was convicted of these offences. However, there were differences between these offender groups. While Rape was the most common offence in the Assessed and Referred Groups, the most common offence in the Treated Group was U16 offences.

**Table 15: Distribution of Different Types of Index Sex Offences for the PS Group: Convictions**

Psychological Services	Categories of Index Sex Offences										Total	
	Rape		U16		Incest		Indecent Act		Other		n	%
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Treated	49	26.6	93	50.5	29	15.8	9	4.9	4	2.2	184	100
Referred	17	60.7	6	21.4	1	3.6	3	10.7	1	3.6	28	100
Assessed	13	76.5	3	17.6	0	0.0	1	5.9	0	0.0	17	100
Total	79	34.5	102	44.5	30	13.1	13	5.7	5	2.2	229	100

Notes:

- The n in each column is the number of convictions, not the number of offenders.
- The % is of the Total column.

For the remaining offence categories, the biggest difference between these groups was in respect of Incest. While none of the offenders in the Assessed Group had convictions for Incest, and only 3.6% of convictions in the Referred Group was for Incest, the percentage was 15.8% in the Treated Group.

**4.3.4 Concurrent non-sex offences**

Tables 16 and 17 provide information about the incidence of concurrent offences, in terms of offenders in Table 16, and convictions in Table 17. The top row of Table 16 shows that only 27.6% (90) of the total male sample had convictions for concurrent non-sex offences, and there were notable differences among the offender groups. The percentage of offenders with convictions for concurrent offences was higher in the PS Group than in the Other Group (35.1%

**Table 16: Distribution of Different Types of Concurrent Non-Sex Offences: Offenders**

Categories of Concurrent Non-Sex Offences	Total						Aboriginal						Non-Aboriginal					
	Total (n = 326)		Psych Services (n = 97)		Other (n = 229)		Total (n = 95)		Psych Services (n = 9)		Other (n = 56)		Total (n = 119)		Psych Services (n = 58)		Other (n = 61)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total with Concurrent Offences	90	27.6	34	35.1	56	24.5	44	46.3	21	53.8	23	41.1	25	21.0	13	22.4	12	19.7
Homicide	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Violent	19	5.8	10	10.3	9	3.9	10	10.5	7	17.9	3	5.4	3	2.5	3	5.2	0	0.0
Burglary	46	14.1	22	22.7	24	10.5	26	27.4	13	33.3	13	23.2	14	11.8	9	15.5	5	8.2
Stealing	23	7.1	9	9.3	14	6.1	15	15.8	7	17.9	8	14.3	4	3.4	2	3.4	2	3.3
Motor Vehicle Stealing	7	2.1	3	3.1	4	1.7	3	3.2	3	7.7	0	0.0	2	1.7	0	0.0	2	3.3
Traffic	5	1.5	2	2.1	3	1.3	1	1.1	1	2.6	0	0.0	3	2.5	1	1.7	2	3.3
Drug	4	1.2	1	1.0	3	1.3	2	2.1	1	2.6	1	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other	61	18.7	20	20.6	41	17.9	28	29.5	11	28.2	17	30.4	18	15.1	9	15.5	9	14.8

Notes:

- The rows include offenders with at least one concurrent conviction for that type of offence, and the Total row may be less than the group size.
- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total row, as an offender may have concurrent convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the group size, not of the Total row.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal columns may not add up to the respective Total columns, as the race of some offenders was unknown.



versus 24.5%) and higher in the Aboriginal Group than in the Non-Aboriginal Group (46.3% versus 21%).

For the total male sample, Other offences (minor offences like disorderly behaviour) was the most common category of concurrent non-sex offences (18.7% of offenders and 41.5% of convictions). This was followed by Burglary (14.1% of offenders and 27.5% of convictions). There was some variation in the offence patterns of the different offender groups, but the categories of Other offences and Burglary were always the most common. There were no convictions for Homicide, and only 5.8% of the offenders in the total male sample were convicted of Violent offences (9.3% of convictions). Among the offences found in the total male sample, the least common types of offences, apart from Homicide, were Motor Vehicle Stealing, Traffic and Drug offences.

**Table 17: Distribution of Different Types of Concurrent Non-Sex Offences: Convictions**

Categories of Concurrent Non-Sex Offences	Total						Aboriginal						Non-Aboriginal					
	Total (n = 326)		Psych Services (n = 97)		Other (n = 229)		Total (n = 95)		Psych Services (n = 39)		Other (n = 56)		Total (n = 119)		Psych Services (n = 58)		Other (n = 61)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Homicide	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Violent	35	9.3	20	14.7	15	6.2	22	13.1	13	16.1	9	10.4	7	6.3	7	12.7	0	0.0
Burglary	104	27.5	42	30.9	62	25.6	49	29.1	26	32.1	23	26.4	42	37.5	16	29.1	26	45.6
Stealing	42	11.1	13	9.6	29	12.0	26	15.5	11	13.6	15	17.2	7	6.3	2	3.7	5	8.8
Motor Veh Stealing	17	4.5	4	2.9	13	5.4	4	2.4	4	5.0	0	0.0	2	1.7	0	0.0	2	3.5
Traffic	15	4.0	8	5.9	7	2.9	1	0.6	1	1.2	0	0.0	11	9.8	7	12.7	4	7.0
Drug	8	2.1	1	0.7	7	2.9	2	1.2	1	1.2	1	1.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other	157	41.5	48	35.3	109	45.0	64	38.1	25	30.8	39	44.8	43	38.4	23	41.8	20	35.1
Total	378	100	136	100	242	100	168	100	81	100	87	100	112	100	55	100	57	100

Notes:

- The n in each row is the number of convictions, not the number of offenders.
- The % is of the Total row, not of the group size.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal columns may not add up to the respective Total columns, as the race of some offenders was unknown.

The most notable differences between the PS Group and the Other Group were in respect of Burglary, Violent offences and Other offences. Table 17 shows that the PS Group had more convictions for Burglary and Violent offences than the Other Group, while the opposite was true for

Other offences. This suggests that juvenile sex offenders with more serious concurrent offences are referred to Psychological Services.

When the Aboriginal Group was compared to the Non-Aboriginal Group, there were also notable differences. Table 17 demonstrates that Stealing and Violent offences were more common in the Aboriginal Group than in the Non-Aboriginal Group, while the opposite was true for Burglary and Traffic offences. There were no big differences in respect of the remaining offence categories.

#### **4.4 Past Offences: Male Juvenile Sex Offenders**

##### **4.4.1 Past sex offences**

Seven offenders (2.1% of the total male sample), all Aboriginal, had a total of ten previous convictions for sex offences. Of these, one offender was previously convicted of an Indecent Act, and another for an U16 offence. The other five offenders had eight Rape convictions. All seven offenders with convictions for past sex offences were from the PS Group (as expected, given the way the groups were identified). One of these offenders was from the Assessed Group, one from the Referred Group, and the remaining five from the Treated Group.

##### **4.4.2 Past non-sex offences**

The total male sample had 3282 previous convictions for non-sex offences. The mean number of convictions per offender was 10.1, but less than half of the offenders (157) had previous convictions for non-sex offences. When the offenders without previous convictions were excluded, the mean number of convictions increased to 20.9. Tables 18 to 20 provide more detail for the different offender groups, and different types of past non-sex offences.

While none of the offenders had previous convictions for Homicide, 17.5% of the total male sample had past convictions for Violent offences (Table 19). However, the percentage of convictions for past Violent offences was only 5.2% (Table 20). In respect of offenders and convictions, the most common offence category was Burglary, followed by Other and then Stealing (Tables 19 and 20). The percentages of offenders convicted of offences in the remaining categories were much lower

**Table 18: Past Non-Sex Offences: General Information on Number of Offenders and Convictions**

Average Number of Convictions per Offender	Total			Aboriginal			Non-Aboriginal		
	Total (n = 326)	Psych Services (n = 97)	Other (n = 229)	Total (n = 95)	Psych Services (n = 39)	Other (n = 56)	Total (n = 119)	Psych Services (n = 58)	Other (n = 61)
All Offenders	10.1	10.5	9.9	16.7	21.1	13.6	4.8	3.3	6.3
Offenders with Past Offences	20.9	24.8	19.5	26.4	31.6	22.4	13.1	12.9	13.2
Total Number with Past Offences	157	41	116	60	26	34	44	15	29

Note: The Total Number with Past Offences in the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal columns may not add up to the respective Total columns as the race of some offenders was unknown.

(Table 19). In all but one of the groups, more than 70% of convictions for past non-sex offences, was in the categories of Burglary, Other and Stealing (Table 20). In the Aboriginal PS Group, the percentage was 69.1%. Apart from Homicide (no convictions), the least common offence category

**Table 19: Distribution of Different Types of Past Non-Sex Offences: Offenders**

Categories of Past Non-Sex Offences	Total						Aboriginal						Non-Aboriginal					
	Total (n = 326)		Psych Services (n = 97)		Other (n = 229)		Total (n = 95)		Psych Services (n = 39)		Other (n = 56)		Total (n = 119)		Psych Services (n = 58)		Other (n = 61)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total with Past Non-Sex Offences	157	48.2	41	42.3	116	50.7	60	63.2	26	66.7	34	60.7	44	37.0	15	25.9	29	47.5
Homicide	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Violent	57	17.5	17	17.5	40	17.5	29	30.5	13	33.3	16	28.6	11	9.2	4	6.9	7	11.5
Burglary	115	35.3	33	34.0	82	35.8	55	57.9	25	64.1	30	53.6	23	19.3	8	13.8	15	24.6
Stealing	111	34.0	32	33.0	79	34.5	51	53.7	22	56.4	29	51.8	25	21.0	10	17.2	15	24.6
Motor Vehicle Stealing	65	19.9	18	18.6	47	20.5	32	33.7	14	35.9	18	32.1	12	10.1	4	6.9	8	13.1
Traffic	59	18.1	14	14.4	45	19.7	21	22.1	9	23.1	12	21.4	16	13.4	5	8.6	11	18.0
Drug	36	11.0	4	4.1	32	14.0	10	10.5	2	5.1	8	14.3	13	10.9	2	3.5	11	18.0
Other	118	36.2	32	33.0	86	37.6	46	48.2	19	48.7	27	48.2	32	26.9	13	22.4	19	31.1

Notes:

- The rows include offenders with at least one past conviction for that type of offence, and the Total row may be less than the group size.
- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total row, as an offender may have past convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the group size, not of the Total row.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal columns may not add up to the respective Total columns, as the race of some offenders was unknown.

was usually Drug offences, both in terms of offenders and convictions. The distribution of different types of non-sex offences did not differ much in the PS and Other Groups. Nor did the distribution of different types of non-sex offences in the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Groups (Table 20).

Tables 18 and 19 demonstrate that on average the PS Group had more convictions per person (24.8 versus 19.5). However, the percentage of offenders convicted of past non-sex offences was lower in the PS Group (42.3%) than in the Other Group (50.7%). This was the case for all categories of past non-sex offences, except Violent offences, where the percentages were the same. The most notable difference was in respect of Drug offences, where 4.1% of offenders in the PS Group had previous convictions and 14 % in the Other Group.

**Table 20: Distribution of Different Types of Past Non-Sex Offences: Convictions**

Categories of Past Non-Sex Offences	Total						Aboriginal						Non-Aboriginal					
	Total (n = 326)		Psych Services (n = 97)		Other (n = 229)		Total (n = 95)		Psych Services (n = 39)		Other (n = 56)		Total (n = 119)		Psych Services (n = 58)		Other (n = 61)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Homicide	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Violent	168	5.2	56	5.5	112	4.9	102	6.4	49	6.0	53	7.0	27	4.7	7	3.6	20	5.2
Burglary	978	29.8	328	32.4	650	28.7	465	29.4	265	32.2	200	26.3	160	27.8	63	32.5	97	25.4
Stealing	549	16.7	146	14.4	403	17.8	225	14.2	105	12.8	120	15.8	121	21.0	41	21.1	80	21.0
Motor Veh Stealing	323	9.8	121	11.9	202	8.9	200	12.7	114	13.9	86	11.3	36	6.3	7	3.6	29	7.6
Traffic	305	9.3	100	9.8	205	9.0	151	9.5	88	10.7	63	8.1	36	6.3	12	6.2	24	6.3
Drug	68	2.1	5	0.5	63	2.8	18	1.1	2	0.2	16	2.1	31	5.3	3	1.6	28	7.3
Other	891	27.1	259	25.5	632	27.9	422	26.7	198	24.1	224	29.4	165	28.6	61	31.4	104	27.2
Total	3282	100	1015	100	2267	100	1583	100	821	100	762	100	576	100	194	100	382	100

Notes:

- The n in each row is the number of convictions, not the number of offenders.
- The % is of the Total row, not of the group size.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal columns may not add up to the respective Total columns, as the race of some offenders was unknown.

Tables 18 and 19 further show that the percentage of offenders convicted of past non-sex offences was much higher for Aboriginal (63.2%) than non-Aboriginal (37%) offenders, and that the average number of convictions per person was also much higher (26.4 versus 13.1). In fact, the percentage of offenders convicted of past non-sex offences was much higher in the Aboriginal

group than in the non-Aboriginal Group in all the categories, except that of Homicide (no convictions) and Drug offences where the percentages were very similar (Table 19).

#### **4.5 New Offences: Male Juvenile Sex Offenders**

The mean follow-up time from the sentencing dates until 30 November 1998 was 4.2 years for the total male sample. The mean follow-up time was longer for the Other Group (4.6 years) than for the PS Group (3.2 years) and for the Aboriginal Group (4.1 years) than the Non-Aboriginal Group (3.1 years)<sup>7</sup>. These differences are important as an increase in follow-up time usually leads to an increase in re-offending (see section 2 and the literature referred to there). However, this may not be the case in the present study, as follow-up time includes time spent in custody (see paragraph 3.3.2), during which re-offending opportunities are limited. Table 10 shows that 15.6% of the offenders was incarcerated, with percentages varying between 9.8% (Non-Aboriginal Other Group) and 41% (Aboriginal PS Group) for the different offender groups.

Tables 21 to 23 provide general information about the incidence of new sex and non-sex offences. Tables 24 to 27 deal with new sex offences in more detail, and Tables 28 and 29 with new non-sex offences in more detail.

While almost a third (32.5%) of the sex offenders had no further convictions, the majority (66.3%) had convictions for further non-sex offences and only 9.5% for further sex offences (Table 21). The mean number of convictions for those who re-offended, was 15.8 for non-sex offences and 2.9 for sex offences (Table 22). Table 21 also shows that most offenders with further convictions for sex offences, also had further convictions for non-sex offences.

A higher percentage of those in the PS Group than in the Other Group had no further convictions (39.2% versus 29.7%) (see Table 21). Table 23 demonstrates that the same is true when the Treated Group is compared with the Other Group (38.4% versus 29.7%).

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<sup>7</sup> The researchers cannot explain the discrepancy in follow-up time among the different groups.

**Table 21: Incidence of New Offences: Offenders**

Categories in terms of New Offences	Total						Aboriginal						Non-Aboriginal					
	Total		Psych Services		Other		Total		Psych Services		Other		Total		Psych Services		Other	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
No New Offences	106	32.5	38	39.2	68	29.7	24	25.3	9	23.1	15	26.8	49	41.2	29	50.0	20	32.8
Non-Sex Offences Only	189	58.0	47	48.4	142	62.0	56	58.9	23	59.0	33	58.9	64	53.8	24	41.4	40	65.6
Sex Offences Only	4	1.2	2	2.1	2	0.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1.7	2	3.4	0	0
Sex plus Non-Sex Offences	27	8.3	10	10.3	17	7.4	15	15.8	7	17.9	8	14.3	4	3.3	3	5.2	1	1.6
Total	326	100	97	100	229	100	95	100	39	100	56	100	119	100	58	100	61	100

Notes:

- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- The % is of the Total row and represents offenders in the different Categories in terms of New Offences.
- The Total row is equal to the group size.
- The n in the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal columns may not add up to the respective Total columns as the race of some offenders was unknown.

**Table 22: Incidence of New Offences: Number of Offenders and Convictions per Person**

Offender Groups		New Sex Offences			New Non-Sex Offences	
		Number of Offenders	Convictions per Offender	Offenders with Convictions on more than one Occasion	Number of Offenders	Convictions per Offender
		n	Mean	n	n	Mean
Total	Total	31	2.9	6	216	15.8
	Psych Services	12	2.8	4	57	13.0
	Other	19	2.9	2	159	16.8
Aboriginal	Total	15	2.1	2	71	19.5
	Psych Services	7	1.7	2	30	14.4
	Other	8	2.5	0	41	23.2
Non-Aboriginal	Total	6	5.0	2	68	11.4
	Psych Services	5	4.2	2	27	11.4
	Other	1	9.0	0	41	11.3

Notes:

- The n in the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal rows may not add up to the respective Total rows as the race of some offenders was unknown.
- The Offenders with Convictions on more than one Occasion column refers to the number of offenders with convictions on more than one occasion, irrespective of the number of charges brought against them on a specific occasion. In contrast, the information in the Convictions per Offender columns is based on the total number of charges an offender has been convicted of, irrespective of whether he was charged on one or more occasions.

In the case of non-sex offences, re-offending was less common in the PS Group than in the Other Group. This is in accordance with the researchers' expectation given the shorter follow-up time for the PS Group. In the PS Group 58.8% was convicted of new non-sex offences, and in the Other Group 69.9% (Table 28). For those who re-offended, the mean number of convictions was 13 in the PS Group and 16.8 in the Other Group (Table 22). In the case of sex offences the opposite was true. Re-offending was more common in the PS Group than in the Other Group, in spite of the short follow-up time in the PS Group. In the PS Group 12.4% of offenders were convicted of new sex offences, and in the Other Group 8.3% (Table 24). It is worth noting that if the follow-up times for the PS and Other Groups had been similar, the difference in the sex offence recidivism rates may have been even more pronounced.

For those who re-offended, the mean number of convictions did not differ much in these offender groups, 2.8 in the PS Group and 2.9 in the Other Group (Table 22). A higher percentage of non-Aboriginal than Aboriginal offenders had no further offences (41.2% versus 25.3%) (see Table 21). Re-offending was more common among Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal offenders for sex offences as well as non-sex offences. This is in accordance with the researchers' expectation given the longer follow-up time for the Aboriginal Group. In the Aboriginal Group, 74.7% of offenders was convicted of new non-sex offences, and 57.1% in the Non-Aboriginal Group (Table 28). For those who re-offended the mean number of convictions was 19.5 in the Aboriginal Group and 11.4 in the Non-Aboriginal Group (Table 23). In respect of new sex offences 15.8% of offenders in the Aboriginal Group was convicted, and 5% in the Non-Aboriginal Group (Table 24). However, the mean number of convictions for those who re-offended was lower in the Aboriginal Group (2.1) than in the Non-Aboriginal Group (5) (Table 22).

Table 22 shows that only six of the 31 offenders with further convictions for sex offences, had further convictions on more than one occasion. Five of the six offenders had convictions on two occasions, and one on four occasions.

The detail for the PS Group in Table 23 shows that the general patterns in terms of re-offending were very similar in the Treated, Referred and Assessed Groups (and consequently similar to the pattern in the PS Group), but there were some differences between these offender groups. The Referred Group was different from the others in that none of the offenders had further convictions

for sex offences. The Assessed Group was different from the others in that re-offending (especially in respect of sex offences) was more common in this group. However, the results for the Referred and Assessed Groups should be treated with caution as the number of offenders in these groups is small.

**Table 23: Incidence of New Offences in the PS Group: Offenders**

Categories in terms of New Offences	Psychological Services							
	Total		Treated		Referred		Assessed	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
No New Offences	38	39.2	28	38.4	7	58.3	3	25.0
Sex Offences Only	2	2.1	2	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Non-Sex Offences Only	47	48.4	37	50.7	5	41.7	5	41.7
Sex Offences + Non-Sex Offences	10	10.3	6	8.2	0	0.0	4	33.3
Total	97	100	73	100	12	100	12	100

Note:

- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- The % is of the Total row and represents offenders in the different Categories in terms of New Offences.
- The Total row is equal to the group size.

**4.5.1 New sex offences**

Table 24 shows that only 31 of the male offenders were convicted of new sex offences, a recidivism rate of 9.5%. A further analysis of the 31 offenders with new sex offence convictions, reveals that none of them had any sex offence convictions before their index sex offence convictions. The recidivism rate was higher for the PS Group (12.4%) than for the Other Group (8.3%). Although the difference was smaller, it is clear from Table 26 that the recidivism rate was still higher when the Treated Group was compared with the Other Group (11% versus 8.3%).

As Tables 24 and 25 illustrate, Rape was generally the most common category of new sex offences in respect of offenders and convictions. U16 offences also had a fairly high incidence. The incidence of further convictions in the remaining sex offence categories was fairly low in all the offender groups. While the differences among them should be interpreted with caution, there were notable differences between the PS Group and the Other Group, and also between the Aboriginal Group and the Non-Aboriginal Group, in respect of Incest. There were no convictions for Incest in



**Table 24: Distribution of Different Types of New Sex Offences: Offenders**

Categories of New Sex Offences	Total						Aboriginal						Non-Aboriginal					
	Total (n=326)		Psych Services (n=97)		Other (n=229)		Total (n=95)		Psych Services (n=39)		Other (n=56)		Total (n=119)		Psych Services (n=58)		Other (n=61)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total with New Sex Offences	31	9.5	12	12.4	19	8.3	15	15.8	7	17.9	8	14.3	6	5.0	5	8.6	1	1.6
Rape	24	7.4	12	12.4	12	5.2	11	11.6	5	12.8	6	10.7	7	5.9	7	12.1	0	0.0
U16	14	4.3	5	5.2	9	3.9	7	7.4	4	10.3	3	5.4	2	1.7	1	1.7	1	1.6
Incest	1	0.3	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.8	1	1.7	0	0.0
Indecent Act	2	0.6	1	1.0	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.8	1	1.7	0	0.0
Other	1	0.3	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	1.0	1	2.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Notes:

- The rows include offenders with at least one new conviction for that type of offence, and the Total row may be less than the group size.
- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total row, as an offender may have new convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the group size, not of the Total row.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal columns will not always add up to the respective Total columns, as the race of some offenders was unknown.

the Other Group, but 12.1% of convictions in the PS Group was for Incest (Table 25). In the Aboriginal Group there were no convictions for Incest, but 13.3% of convictions in the Non-Aboriginal Group was for Incest (Table 25).

**Table 25: Distribution of Different Types of New Sex Offences: Convictions**

Categories of New Sex Offences	Total						Aboriginal						Non-Aboriginal					
	Total (n = 326)		Psych Services (n = 97)		Other (n = 229)		Total (n = 95)		Psych Services (n = 39)		Other (n = 56)		Total (n = 119)		Psych Services (n = 58)		Other (n = 61)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Rape	51	57.3	20	60.7	31	55.4	19	59.4	6	50.0	13	65.0	14	46.7	14	66.7	0	0.0
U16	31	34.8	7	21.2	24	42.9	12	37.5	5	41.7	7	35.0	11	36.7	2	9.5	9	100
Incest	4	4.5	4	12.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	13.3	4	19.0	0	0.0
Indecent Act	2	2.3	1	3.0	1	1.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.3	1	4.8	0	0.0
Other	1	1.1	1	3.0	0	0.0	1	3.1	1	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	89	100	33	100	56	100	32	100	12	100	20	100	30	100	21	100	9	100

Notes:

- The n in each row is the number of convictions, not the number of offenders.
- The % is of the Total row, not of the group size.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal columns will not always add up to the respective Total columns, as the race of some offenders was unknown.

**Table 26: Distribution of Different Types of New Sex Offences in the PS Group: Offenders**

Categories of New Sex Offences	Psychological Services							
	Total (n = 97)		Treated (n = 73)		Referred (n = 12)		Assessed (n = 12)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total with New Sex Offences	12	12.4	8	11.0	0	0.0	4	33.3
Rape	12	12.4	9	12.3	0	0.0	3	25.0
U16	5	5.2	3	4.1	0	0.0	2	16.7
Incest	1	1.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Indecent Act	1	1.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	8.3

Notes:

- The rows include offenders with at least one new sex offence conviction for that type of offence, and the Total row may be less than the group size.
- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total row, as an offender may have new sex offence convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the group size, not of the Total row.

The detail information about new sex offences in the PS Group is provided in Table 26 (offenders) and Table 27 (convictions). The recidivism rate was slightly lower in the Treated Group (11%) than in the PS Group (12.4%). While none of the offenders in the Referred Group were convicted of new sex offences the recidivism rate was very high (33.3%) in the Assessed Group. There were some similarities between the PS, Treated and Assessed Groups in respect of the frequency of different types of new sex offences. In terms of offenders (Table 26), Rape was the most common new offence followed by U16 offences. Rape and U16 offences were also the most

**Table 27: Distribution of Different Types of New Sex Offences in the PS Group: Convictions**

Categories Of New Sex Offences	Psychological Services							
	Total (n = 97)		Treated (n = 73)		Referred (n = 12)		Assessed (n = 12)	
	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%
Rape	20	60.7	17	65.4	0	0.0	3	42.9
U16	7	21.2	4	15.4	0	0.0	3	42.9
Incest	4	12.1	4	15.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Indecent Act	1	3.0	1	3.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other	1	3.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	14.2
Total	33	100	26	100	0	0.0	7	100

Notes:

- The n in each row is the number of convictions, not the number of offenders.
- The % is of the Total row, not of the group size.

common offences in terms of convictions (Table 27). The incidence of Incest, Indecent Acts and Other sex offences was much lower than that of Rape and U16 offences in each offender group.

### 4.5.2 New non-sex offences

Tables 28 and 29 demonstrate that in the total male sample the most common category of new non-sex offences was Other offences (48.5% of offenders and 33.8% of convictions), while the least common category was Homicide (1.5% of offenders and 0.1% of convictions). This was true in all the offender groups except one, namely the Aboriginal PS Group where the percentage of convictions for Burglary (30.0%) was slightly higher than for Other offences (29.6%). In respect of

**Table 28: Distribution of Different Types of New Non-Sex Offences: Offenders**

Categories of New Non-Sex Offences	Total						Aboriginal						Non-Aboriginal					
	Total (n=326)		Psych Services (n=97)		Other (n=229)		Total (n=95)		Psych Services (n=39)		Other (n=56)		Total (n=119)		Psych Services (n=58)		Other (n=61)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>Total with New Non-Sex Offences</i>	216	66.3	57	58.8	159	69.4	71	74.7	30	76.9	41	73.2	68	57.1	27	46.6	41	67.2
Homicide	5	1.5	3	3.1	2	0.9	3	3.2	3	7.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Violent	95	29.1	19	19.6	76	33.2	36	37.9	11	28.2	25	44.6	23	19.3	8	13.8	15	24.6
Burglary	105	32.2	30	30.9	75	32.8	49	51.6	22	56.4	27	48.2	22	18.5	8	13.8	14	23.0
Stealing	112	34.3	33	34.0	79	34.5	44	46.3	19	48.7	25	44.6	31	26.1	14	24.1	17	27.9
Motor Veh Stealing	72	22.1	18	18.6	54	23.6	31	32.6	10	25.6	21	37.5	16	13.4	8	13.8	8	13.1
Traffic	114	34.9	28	28.9	86	37.6	41	43.2	17	43.6	24	42.9	31	26.1	11	18.9	20	32.8
Drug	78	23.9	16	16.5	62	27.1	20	21.0	8	20.5	12	21.4	25	21.0	8	13.8	17	27.9
Other	158	48.5	44	45.4	114	49.8	62	65.3	25	64.1	37	66.1	45	37.8	19	32.8	26	42.6

Notes:

- The rows include offenders with at least one new conviction for that type of offence, and the Total row may be less than the group size.
- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total row, as an offender may have new convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the group size, not of the Total row.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal columns will not always add up to the respective Total columns, as the race of some offenders was unknown.

the remaining offence categories, there were some variations among the offender groups. The percentage of offenders convicted of Homicide was slightly higher in the PS Group (3.1%) than in the Other Group (0.9%), but percentages were higher in the Other Group than in the PS Group for all other categories of non-sex offences (Table 28). In respect of convictions, the biggest difference between the two offender groups was in respect of Burglary (Table 29). The percentage of convictions for Burglary was higher for the PS Group than the Other Group (26.8% versus 16.6%).

For all categories of new non-sex offences, except Drug offences, where the percentages were the same, a higher percentage in the Aboriginal Group than Non-Aboriginal Group was convicted of new offences (see Table 28). Table 29 shows that in the Aboriginal Group the percentage of convictions was higher for Homicide, Burglary, Motor Vehicle Stealing and Other offences than in the Non-Aboriginal Group. The opposite was true for Violent offences, Stealing and Drug offences. While a higher percentage of Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal offenders was convicted of

**Table 29: Distribution of Different Types of New Non-Sex Offences: Convictions**

Categories of New Non-Sex Offences	Total						Aboriginal						Non-Aboriginal					
	Total (n = 326)		Psych Services (n = 97)		Other (n = 229)		Total (n = 95)		Psych Services (n = 39)		Other (n = 56)		Total (n = 119)		Psych Services (n = 58)		Other (n = 61)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Homicide	5	0.1	3	0.4	2	0.1	3	0.2	3	0.7	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Violent	259	7.6	42	5.7	217	8.1	85	6.1	21	4.8	64	6.7	76	9.8	21	6.8	55	11.9
Burglary	643	18.9	199	26.8	444	16.6	329	23.8	130	30.0	199	21.0	126	16.3	69	22.3	57	12.3
Stealing	469	13.7	102	13.7	367	13.8	160	11.6	58	13.3	102	10.7	94	12.2	44	14.2	50	10.8
Motor Veh Stealing	255	7.5	52	7.0	203	7.6	128	9.2	26	6.0	102	10.7	61	7.9	26	8.4	35	7.5
Traffic	464	13.6	97	13.0	367	13.8	152	11.0	52	12.0	100	10.5	126	16.3	45	14.6	81	17.4
Drug	165	4.8	28	3.8	137	5.1	45	3.3	16	3.7	29	3.1	57	7.4	12	3.9	45	9.7
Other	1153	33.8	220	29.6	933	34.9	482	34.8	128	29.5	354	37.3	233	30.1	92	29.8	141	30.4
Total	3413	100	743	100	2670	100	1384	100	434	100	950	100	773	100	309	100	464	100

Notes:

- The n in each row is the number of convictions, not the number of offenders.
- The % is of the Total row, not of the group size.
- The n in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal columns may not add up to the respective Total columns, as the race of some offenders was unknown.

new non-sex offences, no consistent pattern emerged in terms of the seriousness of the new non-sex offences.

As Homicide<sup>8</sup> is such a serious offence, the researchers further investigated the five offenders with new convictions for Homicide. Three Aboriginal offenders, all in the Treated Group, were convicted of Homicide, while the racial background of the two in the Other Group was unknown. Their index sex offence convictions were for Rape and one also had a previous Rape conviction. All of them had concurrent or past convictions for Violent offences.

### **4.5.3 New offences and supervision**

In Table 30 below Supervised Offenders included all those treated by Psychological Services, as well as other offenders who were incarcerated or received supervision orders. In distinguishing between the While Supervised and After Supervision categories the following were taken into account. First, those offenders treated by Psychological Services who are incarcerated, or who received a supervision order, may remain under supervision after completion of treatment. Second, incarcerated offenders who are released earlier, remain supervised until the end of the original sentence period.

Fourteen of the 163 Supervised Offenders were still under supervision at the end of November 1998. The mean follow-up time since the end of supervision was 5.2 years for the other 149 offenders. The mean follow-up time from sentencing date was 4.9 years for Unsupervised Offenders.

Table 30 shows that half of offenders in the total male sample were supervised after their index sex offence convictions, while the other half had no supervision. There was not a big difference in the recidivism rates of the Supervised Offenders and Unsupervised Offenders. In respect of sex offences it was 10.4% and 8.6% respectively. In respect of non-sex offences it was 68.1% for Supervised Offenders and 66.9% for Unsupervised Offenders. The slightly higher recidivism rates for the Supervised Offenders are notable as supervision often includes a period of incarceration during which offenders have less opportunity to re-offend. On the other hand, offenders who are given supervised sentences are normally the high risk offenders.

There was an increase in new sex offences among Supervised Offenders in the period after supervision. A finding that is difficult to explain is the decrease in re-offending among Supervised Offenders in the Any New Offences category, after supervision.

**Table 30: New Offence Distribution for Supervised and Unsupervised Offenders**

Categories in terms of New Offences		Supervised Offenders (n = 163)		Unsupervised Offenders (n = 163)	
		n	%	n	%
No new Offence		52	31.9	54	33.1
New Sex Offence	While Supervised	7	4.3	14	8.6
	After Supervision	10	6.1		
Any New Offence	While Supervised	63	38.7	109	66.9
	After Supervision	48	29.4		

Notes:

- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- The distinction between While Supervised and After Supervision is not relevant for Unsupervised Offenders.
- The % is of the group size.

**4.6 Association between Different Types of Offences: Male Juvenile Sex Offenders**

Tables 31 to 35 show the association between index sex offences and past, concurrent, and new non-sex offences and new sex offences respectively for the total male sample. Tables 31, 32 and 35 provide the number of offenders in each category of index sex offences, who had convictions in the different categories of non-sex offences for concurrent, past and new non-sex offences respectively. They also provide the percentage of offenders convicted in each of the categories of non-sex offences, for the different categories of index sex offences. Tables 34 provides the number of offenders in each category of index sex offences, who had convictions in the different categories of new sex offences. It also provides the percentage of offenders convicted in each of the categories of new sex offences for the different categories of index sex offences.

As there were not many convictions in the index sex offence categories of Incest, Indecent Acts and Other offences, the results for these categories should be treated with caution.

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<sup>8</sup> This category includes attempted homicide and manslaughter, see paragraph 3.3.2.

**Table 31: Distribution of Index Sex and Concurrent Non-Sex Offences: Offenders**

Categories of Concurrent Non-Sex Offences	Categories of Index Sex Offences									
	Rape (n = 192)		U16 (n = 123)		Incest (n = 19)		Indecent Act (n = 11)		Other (n = 6)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>Total with Concurrent Offences</i>	68	35.4	20	16.3	0	0.0	4	36.4	0	0.0
Homicide	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Violent	18	9.4	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Burglary	32	16.7	12	9.8	0	0.0	4	36.4	0	0.0
Stealing	16	8.3	5	4.1	0	0.0	2	18.2	0	0.0
Motor Veh Stealing	4	2.1	3	2.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Traffic	3	1.6	1	0.8	0	0.0	1	9.1	0	0.0
Drug	3	1.6	2	1.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other	45	23.4	13	10.6	0	0.0	4	36.4	0	0.0

Notes:

- Figures are for the total male sample of 326.
- The rows include offenders with at least one concurrent conviction for that type of offence, and the Total row may be less than the group size.
- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total row, as an offender may have concurrent convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the group size, not of the Total row.

Table 31 demonstrates that offenders with index sex offence convictions in the Incest and Other offences categories, had no concurrent non-sex offence convictions. Offenders convicted of Indecent Acts and Rape had the most convictions for concurrent non-sex offences (36.6% and 35.4% respectively), compared to only 16.3% of those convicted of U16 offences. Except for one offender with an U16 index sex offence conviction, all those convicted of concurrent Violent offences were convicted of Rape.

Table 32 shows that a high percentage of offenders with index sex offence convictions for Rape and Indecent Acts had previous non-sex offences (45.8% and 45.5% respectively). The incidence of past non-sex offences was substantially lower for offenders convicted of U16 offences (22.8%), while not many offenders convicted of Incest and Other sex offences had convictions for previous non-sex offences. The percentage of offenders with previous convictions for Violent offences was 22.4% for offenders convicted of Rape, 13% for those convicted of U16 offences and 5.3% for those convicted of Incest.

**Table 32: Distribution of Index Sex and Past Non-Sex Offences: Offenders**

Categories of Past Non-Sex Offences	Categories of Index Sex Offences									
	Rape (n = 192)		U16 (n = 123)		Incest (n = 19)		Indecent Act (n = 11)		Other (n = 6)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>Total with Past Non-Sex Offences</i>	110	57.3	43	35.0	5	26.3	6	54.5	3	50.0
Homicide	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Violent	43	22.4	16	13.0	1	5.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Burglary	81	42.2	29	23.6	1	5.3	6	54.5	1	16.7
Stealing	80	41.7	28	22.8	2	10.5	5	45.5	2	33.3
Motor Vehicle Stealing	53	27.6	11	8.9	2	10.5	2	18.2	0	0.0
Traffic	42	21.9	16	13.0	3	15.8	3	27.3	1	16.7
Drug	22	11.5	14	11.4	1	5.3	1	9.1	0	0.0
Other	88	45.8	28	22.8	2	10.5	5	45.5	1	16.7

Notes:

- Figures are for the total male sample of 326.
- The rows include offenders with at least one past conviction for that type of offence, and the Total row may be less than the group size.
- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total row, as an offender may have past convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the group size, not of the Total row.

There were only seven offenders with convictions for previous sex offences. An investigation of the association between different categories of index and past sex offences reveals that five (2.6%) of the 192 offenders who were convicted of Rape, had previous convictions for sex offences. In fact, with the exception of one offender who had a previous conviction for an Indecent Act, they had all committed Rape in the past. One (0.8%) of the 123 offenders who were convicted of U16 offences, had a previous conviction for an U16 offence, and one (9%) of the 11 offenders who were convicted of Indecent Acts, had a previous conviction for Rape. Four offenders were thus convicted of Rape on both occasions, and one of U16 offences on both occasions. In respect of Rape and U16 offences, offenders tended to repeat the same type of offence. These results should be interpreted with caution, as such a small number of offenders had previous convictions for sex offences.

The likelihood of re-offending appears to be different for offenders convicted of different types of index sex offences (Table 33). Offenders with index sex offence convictions for Incest and U16



offences were least likely to re-offend. Among offenders with convictions for U16 offences, 48% had no further convictions and among those with Incest convictions, 47.3% had no further convictions. The percentage with no further convictions was lower in the Rape (25%) and Indecent Acts (27.3%) categories, while only 16.7% of offenders with convictions for Other sex offences, had no further convictions. Table 33 also demonstrates that irrespective of the type of index sex offence convictions, most offenders who were convicted of new sex offences also had further convictions for non-sex offences.

**Table 33: Distribution of Different Types of Index Sex Offences and New Offences**

Categories of Index Sex Offence	Categories in terms of New Offences								Total
	No new Offence		New Sex Offences Only		New Non-Sex Offences Only		New Sex and Non-Sex Offences		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Rape	48	25.0	2	1.0	124	64.6	18	9.4	192
Under 16	59	48.0	2	1.6	55	44.7	7	5.7	123
Incest	9	47.4	1	5.3	8	42.1	1	5.3	19
Indecent act	3	27.3	0	0.0	7	63.6	1	9.1	11
Other	1	16.7	0	0.0	3	50.0	2	33.3	6
Total	112	34.4	4	1.2	183	56.1	27	8.3	326

Notes:

- The rows include offenders with at least one index sex offence conviction for that type of offence.
- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total row, as an offender may have index sex offence convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the Total column, not of the Total row.

Table 34 shows that there were some variations between the offender groups in respect of sex offence recidivism rates. Offenders convicted of Rape were more likely to be convicted of a new sex offence than those convicted of U16 offences (10.4% versus 7.3%). Rape was the most likely new sex offence for those with an index sex offence of Rape, while Rape and U16 offences were the most likely new offences for those with U16 index sex offences.

Table 35 demonstrates that there was some variation in the non-sex offence recidivism rates, depending on the type of index sex offence. Offenders with index sex offence convictions in the category of Other offences had the highest recidivism rate (83.3%), but there were only six offenders in this category. The recidivism rates were very similar for offenders with index sex offence convictions for Rape (74%) and Indecent Acts (72.7%). Offenders with index sex offence

convictions for Incest and U16 offences had lower recidivism rates (47.4% and 50.4% respectively). All offenders, except those with index sex offences in the category of Other, had convictions for new Violent offences, but those with index sex offence convictions for Rape were more likely than the other offenders to be convicted of new Violent offences.

**Table 34: Distribution of Index and New Sex Offences: Offenders**

Categories of New Sex Offences	Categories of Index Sex Offences									
	Rape (n = 192)		U16 (n = 123)		Incest (n = 19)		Indecent Act (n = 11)		Other (n = 6)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total with New Sex Offences	20	10.4	9	7.3	2	10.5	1	9.1	2	33.3
Rape	16	8.3	7	5.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
U16	6	3.1	7	5.7	1	5.3	0	0.0	2	33.3
Incest	0	0.0	1	0.8	1	5.3	1	9.1	0	0.0
Indecent Act	1	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	16.7
Other	1	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Notes:

- Figures are for the total male sample of 326.
- The rows include offenders with at least one new sex offence conviction for that type of offence, and the Total row may be less than the group size.
- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total row, as an offender may have new sex offence convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the group size, not of the Total row.

Tables 31 to 35, and the description of past sex offending, demonstrate that offenders with index sex offence convictions for Rape and Indecent Acts were more likely than the rest of the male juvenile sex offenders in this sample to have other convictions. This was true in respect of concurrent non-sex offences, past offences (sex and non-sex) and new offences (sex and non-sex). There were two exceptions. The offenders in the Incest category had a slightly higher sex offence recidivism rate (10.5%) than those in the Rape (10.4%) and Indecent Acts (9.1%) categories (Table 34). The offenders in the Other category had a higher non-sex offence recidivism rate (83.3%) than those in the Rape (74%) and Indecent Acts (72.7%) categories (Table 35). However, in the former instance there were only six offenders in the Other category. Index sex offence convictions for Rape appears to be associated with new Violent offences as was the case with concurrent and past Violent offences. However, this association was stronger for concurrent than for past and new offences.

**Table 35: Distribution of Index Sex and New Non-Sex Offences: Offenders**

Categories of New Non-Sex Offences	Categories of Index Sex Offences									
	Rape (n = 192)		U16 (n = 123)		Incest (n = 19)		Indecent Act (n = 11)		Other (n = 6)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total with New Non-Sex Offences	142	74.0	62	50.4	9	47.4	8	72.7	5	83.3
Homicide	5	2.6	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Violent	75	39.1	20	16.3	3	15.8	2	18.2	0	0.0
Burglary	76	39.6	26	21.1	3	15.8	3	27.3	2	33.3
Stealing	84	43.8	26	21.1	3	15.8	3	27.3	2	33.3
Motor Veh Stealing	55	28.6	14	11.4	4	21.1	1	9.1	2	33.3
Traffic	81	42.2	29	23.6	7	36.8	4	36.4	3	50.0
Drug	52	27.1	22	17.9	4	21.1	4	36.4	1	16.7
Other	112	58.3	40	32.5	5	26.3	6	54.5	4	66.7

Notes:

- Figures are for the total male sample of 326.
- The rows include offenders with at least one new non-sex offence conviction for that type of offence, and the Total row may be less than the group size.
- The n in each row is the number of offenders, not the number of convictions.
- These can sum to more than the Total row, as an offender may have new non-sex offence convictions for more than one type of offence.
- The % is of the group size, not of the Total row.

**4.7 Offence Patterns of Juvenile Offenders: Male Sex Offenders versus all Offenders**

The 326 male juvenile offenders in this study had 815 convictions for sex offences, while the majority (73.9%) of them also had a total of 7072 convictions for non-sex offences. To find out whether their offence patterns were any different from that of juvenile offenders in general, the pattern of non-sex offences for the male juvenile sex offenders in this study was compared to that of all juvenile offenders dealt with by the Court in WA during the study period. This information was obtained from the CRC-reports and are presented in Table 37.

The categories used for capturing data about non-sex offences in this study differed slightly from that used in the reports, and certain categories were collapsed to make a comparison possible.

The following categories were combined:

- Homicide and Violent offences to compare with offences against the person in the CRC-reports.
- Burglary, Stealing, and Motor Vehicle Stealing to compare with Burglary and theft offences in the CRC-reports.

- Good order offences, damage offences, and sundry other offences in the CRC-reports to compare with other offences in the present study.

The CRC-reports provided information about the different offence categories based on all charges finalised by the courts. Cases referred to Juvenile Justice Teams, where the charges were dropped or where the outcome was acquittal were thus included. The present study included offenders who were convicted, as well as those whom the Court referred to Juvenile Justice Teams, but not those against whom the charges were dropped, or who were acquitted.

The information for juvenile sex offenders in this study is therefore not totally comparable with that provided in the CRC-reports. However, the number of cases where the outcome is an acquittal or where the charges are dropped is relatively low. For example, from 1995 to 1998 it ranged between 3.6% and 5.8% (CRC-reports). The percentage distribution of different offence categories should therefore not change much if the cases where the charges were dropped or where the outcome was acquittal, had been excluded. Furthermore, only the percentage distribution of different offence categories will be compared.

Table 36 provides the percentage distribution of different types of non-sex offences, based on the total number of convictions, for all the male juvenile offenders in this study. Table 37 provides the percentage distribution of different types of offences, based on all charges finalised by the Court in WA from 1990 to 1998. As the CRC-reports do not distinguish between sex offences and offences against the person, Table 37 includes sex offences under the category of offences against the person. However, this is negligible as only an estimated one percent of juvenile offenders convicted in WA from 1990 to 1998 were convicted of sex offences.

**Table 36: Summary of Non-Sex Offences for Juvenile Sex Offenders: Convictions**

Offence Groups	Offence Categories				
	Burglary/Theft	Driving/Motor Vehicle	Offences against Person	Other Offences	Drug Offences
	%	%	%	%	%
Past	56.3	9.3	5.2	27.1	2.1
Concurrent	43.1	4.0	9.3	41.5	2.1
New	40.1	13.6	7.7	33.8	4.8
Total	47.8	11.1	6.6	31.1	3.4

Table 36 shows that the offence patterns were the same for past, concurrent and new non-sex offences, although the percentages were different. The biggest differences between past, concurrent and new offences were in respect of Burglary/theft and Other offences. The percentage of convictions for Other offences was higher among concurrent than among past and new offences. The percentage of convictions for Burglary/Theft was higher among past offences than among concurrent and new offences. If all their non-sex offences are taken together for the

**Table 37: Distribution of Charges against all Juvenile Offenders in WA**

Year	Categories of Charges				
	Burglary/Theft	Driving/Motor Vehicle	Offences against Person	Other	Drug Offences
	%	%	%	%	%
1998	41.6	17.8	9.0	26.0	4.6
1997	41.5	17.6	8.9	26.8	4.8
1996	42.3	17.4	8.0	27.2	4.9
1995	44.8	19.2	6.7	24.2	5.0
1994	45.1	18.7	5.7	25.4	5.1
1993	48.1	17.6	5.1	24.4	4.8
1992	49.8	19.2	4.5	21.4	5.1
1991	51.5	19.7	3.4	21.4	4.0
1990	45.5	21.8	3.8	25.2	3.7

Note: This table was compiled from figures provided in the annual statistical reports "Crime and Justice Statistics for Western Australia" published by the Crime Research Centre of the University of Western Australia for the period 1990 to 1998.

juvenile sex offenders in this study, there is not a big difference in the offence patterns of juvenile sex offenders, and all juvenile offenders in WA. For juvenile sex offenders and juvenile offenders in general, Burglary/Theft were the most frequent offence types, mostly followed by Other offences, while Drug offences and offences against the person were the least frequent.

**4.8 Variables Related to Sex Offence Recidivism in Male Juvenile Sex Offenders**

The researchers wanted to compare the Recidivist and Non-Recidivist Groups in respect of age at committing the first sex offence they were convicted of, but that was not possible as offence dates were only available for the index sex offences of 220 offenders. An approximation was therefore used in respect of age at conviction/sentence for their first sex offence. Only the sentencing dates

were available for past sex offence convictions, and age at sentencing date was therefore used for the seven offenders with past sex offence convictions. The rest of the juvenile offenders had no sex offence convictions before their index sex offence convictions. For male juvenile offenders with no past sex offence convictions, age at index sex offence was used where available, but age at sentencing was used for the others, except for offenders who were over 18 years of age at the time of sentencing. The approximate age at sex offence was therefore not available for a few offenders.

Table 38 shows that the Recidivist and Non-Recidivist Groups did not differ significantly in respect of age at first sex offence, and the number of index sex offence and concurrent non-sex offence convictions. However, the follow-up time was significantly longer, and the number of convictions for past non-sex offences significantly higher, in the Recidivist than in the Non-Recidivist Group.

**Table 38: ANOVA Comparisons of Recidivist and Non-Recidivist Groups**

Variables	Recidivists (n = 31)		Non-Recidivists (n = 295)		F	df	p	S/NS
	M	SD	M	SD				
Age at First Sex Offence Conviction	14.7	1.5	15.0	1.6	1.25	1, 308	.265	NS
Follow-up Time	5.3	2.4	4.0	2.2	9.10	1, 325	.003	S
Index Sex Offence Convictions (number)	2.0	1.7	2.2	2.2	0.30	1, 325	.586	NS
Concurrent Non-Sex Offence Convictions (number)	1.1	2.3	1.2	3.1	0.04	1, 325	.852	NS
Past Non-Sex Offence Convictions (number)	18.1	33.3	9.2	18.8	5.24	1, 325	.023	S

Note: S = Significant, i.e.  $p < .05$ , NS = Not Significant

Table 39 demonstrates that the Recidivist and Non-Recidivist Groups were very similar in respect of the percentage of offenders with concurrent non-sex offence and past sex offence convictions. The distribution of different types of index sex offences was also very similar in these offender groups. However, there were notable differences between these groups in respect of race and the level of involvement with Psychological Services.

**Table 39: Race, Level of Involvement with Psychological Services and Offence Histories of Recidivist and Non-Recidivist Groups**

Variables		Recidivists (n=31)		Non-Recidivists (n= 295)	
		n	%	n	%
Race	Aboriginal	15	48.4	80	27.1
	Non-Aboriginal	6	19.4	113	38.3
	Unknown	10	32.3	102	34.6
Level of Involvement with Psychological Services	Treated	8	25.9	65	22.0
	Referred	0	0.0	12	4.1
	Assessed	4	12.9	8	2.7
	Not Assessed	19	61.2	210	71.2
Concurrent Non-Sex Offence Convictions	Yes	10	32.3	80	27.1
	No	21	67.7	215	72.9
Past Sex Offence Convictions	Yes	0	0.0	7	2.4
	No	31	100.0	288	97.6
Past Non-Sex Offence Convictions	Yes	19	61.3	139	47.1
	No	12	38.7	156	52.9
Convictions for Different Types of Index Sex Offences	Rape	20	64.6	158	53.5
	U16	9	29.0	112	38.0
	Incest	1	3.2	13	4.4
	Indecent Act	0	0.0	9	3.1
	Other	1	3.2	3	1.0

The percentage of Aboriginal offenders was higher in the Recidivist than in the Non-Recidivist Group (48.4% versus 27.1%), while the opposite was true for non-Aboriginal offenders (19.4% of the Recidivist Group and 38.3% of the Non-Recidivist Group). This finding should be interpreted with caution, as the follow-up time was longer for the Aboriginal group (4.1 years) than for the Non-Aboriginal Group (3.1 years). The percentage of offenders whose racial background was unknown, was very similar in these offenders groups.

A higher percentage of offenders in the Recidivist than in the Non-recidivist Group was treated by Psychological Services (25.9% versus 22%). This was also the case for offenders who were just assessed (12.9% versus 2.7%), but a lower percentage of offenders in the Recidivist than in the Non-Recidivist Group was referred for treatment (0% versus 4.1%) or had no contact with Psychological Services (61.2% versus 71.2%).

The researchers therefore decided to use the level of involvement with Psychological Services, follow-up time, race and the number of convictions for previous non-sex offences in a logistic regression analysis to determine which are significantly related to sex offence recidivism. The results of the forward stepwise logistic regression are presented in Table 40.

**Table 40: Logistic Regression: Sex Offence Recidivism as a Function of Predictor Variables**

Variable	Logit	SE	Wald	df	p
Level of Involvement with Psychological Services			9.898	3	.019
Follow-up Time	.305	.095	10.319	1	.001

The logistic regression procedure discarded race and number of convictions for previous non-sex offences. Only level of involvement with Psychological Services and follow-up time were significantly related to sex offence recidivism ( $p < .05$ ). By inference, both the discarded variables were co-variates of one or both of these variables.

The logistic regression used the Other Group (i.e. those classified as Not Assessed in Table 39) as the reference group. The logistic regression results indicated that the Treated Group was slightly more likely to be reconvicted than was the reference (Other) group, while the Assessed Group was even more likely to be reconvicted. The logistic regression results showed that the Referred Group was less likely to be reconvicted, unsurprisingly given that none of them were reconvicted of a sex offence during the follow-up time. Because of the inclusion of the follow-up time the logistic regression equation any differences in follow-up time between the four groups were “factored out”.

The inclusion of follow-up time is likely to explain the finding that race was not significantly related to recidivism, when bivariate analyses appeared to indicate such a relationship. Aboriginal offenders in this study had a longer follow-up time, and therefore a greater opportunity to be reconvicted, and this probably explains all or most of their higher recidivism rate.



The exclusion of the number of previous convictions for non-sex offences is more surprising, but presumably arises because of a relationship between this variable and level of involvement with Psychological Services. In particular, the Assessed Group had a higher mean number of previous convictions for non-sex offences (14 compared to 10 or less for the other three group).

## SECTION 5

### DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 Methodological Limitations

The main limitation of this study is the fact that the data were collected retrospectively. In this process three sets of official records were used as sources. These records did occasionally differ. When this happened the team tried to reconcile the information from the differing sources, however, it is possible that some of the information recorded may be incorrect.

Because of the way the groups were identified, it seems almost impossible for the Other Group to have had previous convictions for sex offences, and none of them had any. In contrast seven of the PS Group had previous sex offence convictions.

The follow-up time was calculated from sentencing date until 20 November 1998. The follow-up time was relatively short (the maximum follow-up period was eight years 11 months). For offenders who were given custodial sentences during this period, follow-up time obviously included time in custody during which they were much less likely to re-offend. As the police records do not reflect the dates on which prisoners are discharged from custody, it was not practical to establish exactly how long specific offenders had remained in custody.

Another limitation is the definition of offending in this study. The team worked with convictions as an indicator of re-offending, which is very likely to be an under-estimate of the real situation. It is generally acknowledged that many instances of sexual victimisation are not reported, many suspects are not arrested, and the conviction rate is relatively poor (Allan, 1993; Amir, 1971; Finkelhor, 1985).

As the team used the records of the WA Courts and Police it was forced to use the offence definitions used by these institutions who obviously use those of the Western Australian Criminal Code Act (1913). This means that care should be taken when the results of this study are compared with the findings of studies undertaken in other States and countries.

During the course of the study the research team realised that the data in respect of new offences could be inflated by two situations. The first is where offenders who were referred to the juvenile justice teams by the Court had to report back to Court at a later stage for finalisation of the case. This was recorded in the research data file as a further conviction. The second was where offenders were found not guilty of the charged offence, but guilty of a lesser charge. The lesser charge was also recorded as an additional conviction. To ensure that sex offences were not inflated, one member of the research team and staff of Psychological Services compared the sex offences in the research data file with Court and Police records for all offenders with past and new sex offences. The research data file was changed where necessary. This ensured that the research data file was correct in respect of sex offences, but there is a possibility that the incidence and seriousness of non-sex offences may be slightly inflated, because it was not practical to check and change all of them manually.

## **5.2 General Description of Offenders**

This study demonstrates that when compared to juvenile offenders in general in WA, Aborigines were also over-represented among juvenile sex offenders. To appreciate the importance of this it is necessary to see it in the context of research in WA that has consistently demonstrated that Aboriginal people (including juveniles), are over-represented as offenders and victims in WA (Broadhurst & Loh, 1997; Broadhurst & Maller, 1991; Crime Research Centre, 1996; Forster, 1997). When interpreting these findings it is necessary to take into account the large number of offenders whose race is recorded as unknown in the official records that form the basis of both the CRC-reports and this study.

This study further demonstrates that juvenile sex offenders were comparatively younger than all juvenile offenders in WA, and that males were over-represented among juvenile sex offenders. There were only eight female offenders and they will be excluded from the rest of the discussion.

## **5.3 Offence Histories**

The mean number of index sex offence convictions was 2.2 per offender, with Rape (50.3% of convictions) the most common type of sex offence. This was followed by U16 offences (36.9% of

convictions). Compared to Rape and U16 offences, the incidence of Incest, Indecent Acts, and Other sex offences was very low. This was generally true for all the offenders groups. There were only seven offenders with past sex offences (10 convictions). Eight of these convictions were for Rape. Only 27.6% of the offenders was convicted of concurrent non-sex offences (a mean of 4.2 convictions per offender). The category with the most convictions (41.5%) was the Other category that included offences such as disorderly behaviour, breach of court orders and resisting police. This was followed by the Burglary category (27.5% of convictions). There were no concurrent Homicide convictions, and not many convictions for other Violent offences (9.3% of convictions). Past non-sex offences were more common, with 48.2% of the offenders having a mean of 20.9 such convictions. Once again convictions for Violent offences were low (5.2% of convictions), and none recorded for Homicide. The offence histories of the juvenile sex offenders in this study are consistent with the findings of Rasmussen (1999) and Rubinstein, et al. (1993) that juvenile sex offending is often part of a more pervasive pattern of offending.

#### **5.4 Re-offending**

The mean follow-up time (from index offence sentencing date to 30 November 1998) was 4.2 years. During this time 66.3% of the juvenile sex offenders were convicted of new non-sex offences (a mean of 15.8 convictions per offender), while only 9.5% (a mean of 2.9 convictions per offender) were convicted of new sex offences. These findings confirm Berliner's (1998) opinion that juvenile sex offender recidivism rates for non-sex offences are considerably higher than those for sex offences.

Regarding non-sex offences, the Other category was the most common category of new convictions (33.8%) followed by Burglary (18.9%). The percentage of convictions for Homicide (0.1%) and Other Violent offences (7.6%) was low. In respect of sex offences, Rape (57.3%) and U16 (34.8%) convictions were most common.

An examination of the index, past and new sex offences reveal that Rape was consistently the most common type of sex offences, closely followed by U16. In comparison, the incidence of the other types of sex offences was low. It is interesting to note that none of the seven offenders with past sex offences were convicted of new sex offences.

In respect of concurrent and new non-sex offences, the Other category was the most common. For past non-sex offences the incidence of Burglary was slightly higher. Violent and Homicide convictions were consistently low.

Offenders with index sex offence convictions for Rape or Indecent Acts were more likely to have convictions for concurrent, past (sex and non-sex) and new (sex and non-sex) offences. Offenders with index sex offence convictions for Rape were also more likely to have convictions for Violent offences at some stage. As far as the prediction of re-offending is concerned the focus of this study was on sex offences, not on Violent or general offences. It was interesting to note that all the offenders with Homicide convictions after their index sex offences were convicted of Rape and all of them had concurrent or past convictions for Violent offences. However, the majority of offenders with index or past sex offence convictions for Rape and concurrent or past convictions for Violent offences, had no new convictions for Homicide. Longer term research on larger numbers of juvenile sex offenders who are later convicted of Homicide and other Violent offences, may provide more useful information that can be used to identify those most at risk of violence.

## **5.5 Comparison of Offender Groups**

There were notable differences between the offenders groups in respect of the severity of the sentences imposed at the time of their index sex and concurrent non-sex offences. More intrusive sentences were imposed on the Aboriginal than on the Non-Aboriginal Group. The PS Group was more likely to have received a custodial or supervised sentence than the Other Group. This may be an indication that the sex offenders referred to Psychological Services are repeat offenders or that they are offenders who were convicted of more serious offences. The finding that the mean number of index sex offence convictions for the PS Group was slightly higher than that of the Other Group, provides further tentative support for this hypothesis. If the offenders who are referred to Psychological Services are in fact medium to high risk offenders it would be in accordance with what Andrews and Bonta (1994) consider to be best practice in offender rehabilitation programs.

However, the focus of this study was not on sentencing. The researchers therefore did not collect information about sentences for past and new offences, and did not analyse sentences in relation to their offences.

In the Aboriginal Group, 31.6% of offenders was incarcerated and only 10.1% in the Non-Aboriginal Group. The relatively high percentage of Incarceration in the Aboriginal Group in this study is consistent with figures reported for WA juvenile offenders in general. Between 1990 and 1998 the percentage of custodial sentences for offenders in general varied between 2.8% and 14.2% for non-Aboriginal offenders, and between 12.7% and 27.1% for Aboriginal offenders (CRC-reports).

When comparing the sentences that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal juvenile offenders received for the same types of offences, the Crime Research Centre (1996) found that Aboriginal offenders were more likely to receive a custodial sentence than non-Aboriginal offenders were. However, they did not consider this as convincing evidence for a race bias in the decision to incarcerate as previous convictions were not taken into account in the comparison.

Any differences in recidivism rates for the offenders groups, should be interpreted in view of differences in the follow-up times. The mean follow-up time in the Aboriginal Group was longer than in the Non-Aboriginal Group (4.1 versus 3.1 years). It was also longer in the Other Group than in the PS Group (4.6 versus 3.2 years).

### **5.5.1 Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Groups**

There was a number of differences between the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Groups. Relative to the Non-Aboriginal Group, the Aboriginal Group had more convictions for non-sex offences (concurrent, past and new) as well as for past and new sex offences. Rape was more common in the Aboriginal Group than in the Non-Aboriginal Group, but the opposite was true for Incest and U16 offences. These differences should be interpreted cautiously. Foster (1997) believes that “white” authorities do not have information about most sex offences within Aboriginal communities, as they are seldom reported to the police, but are dealt with under tribal law. It is therefore possible that sex offending by juvenile Aboriginal sex offenders is under-reported. However,

offending rates, especially for non-sex offences, may be inflated for Aboriginal offenders because they are more often arrested for offences for which non-Aboriginal people are less likely to be arrested Foster (1997).

While the percentage of offenders convicted of new sex and non-sex offences was higher in the Aboriginal than in the Non-Aboriginal Group, the results were different in respect of the number of convictions per person. The mean number of convictions per person for non-sex offences was higher in the Aboriginal than in the Non-Aboriginal Group, while the opposite was true for sex offences.

### **5.5.2 PS and Other Groups**

There were also differences between the PS and Other Groups. All offenders with past sex offences were from the PS Group and they also had a higher recidivism rate for new sex offences than the Other Group (12.4% versus 8.3%). This suggests that they may have a more consistent pattern of sex offending than the Other Group. More offenders in the PS Group had concurrent non-sex offence convictions (35.1% versus 24.5%) but less of them had convictions for past non-sex offences (42.3% versus 50.7%). The recidivism rate for non-sex offences was also lower in the PS Group (58.8%) than the Other Group (69.9%). However, if the mean number of convictions per offender is considered for those with non-sex offences, the pattern is different. The PS Group had slightly more concurrent convictions (4 versus 4.3); more past non-sex offence convictions (24.8 versus 19.5); and less new non-sex offence convictions (13 versus 16.8). This suggests that offenders with more past non-sex offences may be more likely to be referred to Psychological Services.

The researchers also investigated the differences within the PS Group (i.e. among the Treated, Referred and Assessed Groups) for sex offences. There were notable differences in the recidivism rates of these offender groups. The recidivism rate in the Treated Group (11%) was very similar to the rate in the PS Group, while the recidivism rate was much higher for the Assessed Group (33%). None of the offenders in the Referred Group were convicted of new sex offences. These results should be interpreted with caution in view of the size of the Referred and

Assessed Groups. (There were only 12 in each of these offenders groups compared to 73 in the Treated Group).

Oliveri (2000) who *inter alia* used data collected in this study, reported a recidivism rate of 9% for all offenders treated by Psychological Services, while the recidivism rate in the present study was 11% for the Treated Group. This discrepancy may be due to the fact that some of the juveniles treated by Psychological Services are diverted to them without formal court appearances, while the present report only includes offenders convicted of sex offences. The juveniles who are treated by Psychological Services without a formal court order, are either diverted to them by the Police or another agency, or referred by parents, or are self-referred (N. Cameron, personal communication, September 7, 1998). As the diversionary elements of the juvenile justice system in WA are targeted at less serious offenders, more serious offenders are usually arrested and dealt with by the Court (Ferrante et al., 1999). Presumably, those who are self-referred, or referred by parents or other agencies, are the least serious offenders.

As discussed in section 2, a comparison of the recidivism rates found in different studies must be approached with a great deal of caution. However, to provide some context for the findings of this study it is useful to consider the recidivism rates found in other studies. Most studies were undertaken in North America. Reviews of these studies show that sex offence recidivism rates for juveniles range from 2% to 14% (Milloy, 1998; Rubinstein et al., 1993). Unfortunately it is not always clear whether the relevant juveniles had participated in treatment programs or not. However, most of the relevant studies probably refer to treated juvenile sex offenders as the recidivism rates among untreated juvenile sex offenders appear to be higher. For example, Rubinstein et al. (1993) compared 19 sexually assaultive males and 58 with violent non-sex offences for 8 years after release. They found that 37% of the former group and 10% of the violent non-sex offender group had an adult criminal record for "first- or second-degree sexual assaults" (p. 263).

Recidivism rates do appear to be lower when the juvenile sex offenders are treated. Rasmussen's (1999) five-year retrospective study of 170 first-time juvenile sex offenders who had participated in either a community-based or restrictive treatment program, showed that 14.1% committed new sex offences. Smith and Monastersky (1986) found that 14% of their 112 juvenile sex offenders who



had been referred to a sex offender treatment program committed further sex offences by their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The follow-up period in this study ranged from 17 to 49 months with an average time of 28.9 months. Lab, Shields and Schondel (1993) studied two groups of offenders for varying follow-up periods, but the maximum possible follow-up period was about five years. They found recidivism rates of 2.2% for participants in the sex offender treatment program (n=46) and 3.7% for those in the non-sexually specific program (n=109). The 11% sex offence recidivism rate of the Treated Group in this study is therefore in the same range as recidivism rates found in studies of North American treatment programs.

In Australia juvenile sex offence recidivism rates are difficult to come by. A recidivism study is currently undertaken in New South Wales, but the scheduled completion date is 2002 (Nisbet & Seidler, 2001). The recidivism rate for the MAPPS clients treated in Victoria from June 1993 to January 1998 was 5% for sex offences, and 42% for non-sex offences (Community Change Consultants, 1998a). These rates are low in comparison to the recidivism rates for the PS Group (12.4% for sex offences, and 58.8% for non-sex offences). Strictly speaking, the MAPPS clients should rather be compared to the Treated Group in this study, as the PS Group includes a minority of offenders that were not treated by Psychological Services, or not treated at all. However, the researchers did not investigate the non-sex offences separately for the Treated Group. The sex offence recidivism rate of the MAPPS clients is still much lower than that of the Treated Group (11%).

The recidivism rate for the Treated Group appears to be high in comparison to that of MAPPS clients, but the follow-up period will have to be considered before such a conclusion is drawn. The follow-up period was not reported for the MAPPS clients. Some offenders in the Treated Group could have been followed up for about 8 years, while the maximum follow-up period for MAPPS clients was 4.5 years, and the recidivism rates are therefore not comparable. A further complication is that we cannot, on the information, say to what degree the offenders treated by MAPPS and Psychological Services respectively, are comparable. However, both programs exclude offenders who deny that they have a problem or need treatment (Community Change Consultants, 1998a; Oliveri, 2000).

Compared to the Other Group, there were more index sex offence convictions for U16 offences and less for Rape in the PS Group. This was not the case for past and new sex offences. All offenders with previous convictions for sex offences were from the PS Group, and 80% of the convictions were for Rape. Rape was the most common type of new sex offence in both offender groups. When all the sex offences are taken together, Rape appears to be the most common offence in the Other Group, and U16 offences in the PS Group. ( Only 7 of the 326 sex offenders had previous convictions for sex offences, and only 31 convictions for new sex offences.)

There were some differences between the Treated, Referred and Assessed Groups in respect of the type of sex offences they were convicted of. However, these offender groups were similar to all the other offenders groups in this study in that the majority of convictions were for Rape and U16 offences.

For the 54 participants treated in the MAPPS-study in Victoria from June 1993 to January 1998, 31% of the convictions was for Rape (as defined in the present study), compared to 26.6% in the Treated Group in this study.

## **5.6 Offence Patterns of Juvenile Offenders: Male Sex Offenders versus all Offenders**

A high proportion (87.1%) of the offenders with further sex offence convictions, had convictions for non-sex offences as well, suggesting that juvenile sex offenders do not form a very specific category. If all their non-sex offences are taken together, there is not a big difference in their offence patterns and that of all juvenile offenders in WA. For juvenile sex offenders and juvenile offenders in general, Burglary/Theft were the most frequent offence types, followed by Other offences, while Drug offences and offences against the person were the least frequent.

From the above it is clear that most of the juvenile sex offenders in this study are, as suggested by authors such as Berliner (1998) and Milloy (1998) generalists rather than a distinct group of specialist sex offenders.

## **5.7 Variables Related to Sex Offence Recidivism**

The follow-up time was significantly longer, and the number of convictions for past non-sex offences significantly higher, in the Recidivist than in the Non-Recidivist Group. Furthermore there were notable differences between these offenders groups in respect of race and the level of involvement with Psychological Services. However, when the joint effect of these variables were investigated by means of a logistic regression analysis, race and the number of convictions for previous non-sex offences, were not significantly related to sex offence recidivism. This means that the Recidivist and Non-Recidivist Groups did not differ significantly in respect of race and the number of convictions for previous non-sex offences, when the differences in follow-up time and level of involvement with Psychological Services were taken into account.

## SECTION 6

### CONCLUSION

In general the findings in respect of the first aim of the study are in accordance with research findings in Victoria and other countries. The generally high incidence of non-sex-offences among the juvenile sex offenders, and in particular the high recidivism rate for non-sex offences, provides further support for the hypothesis that juvenile sex offenders are generalists rather than specialists (Milloy, 1998; Rasmussen, 1999; & Rubinstein et al., 1993). In fact, this study provides strong support for the proposition that sex offenders are generalists. First, this study found that the specialist sex offender treatment offered by Psychological Services seems to have a more positive effect on re-offending in respect of non-sex offences than on sexual re-offending. Second, the findings in respect of aim two reveal that juvenile sex offenders in WA does not form a distinct group when compared to juvenile offenders in general in the State.

The third aim of the study was to identify variables that could predict further sex offending. The only variables significantly related to sexual re-offending were the level of involvement with Psychological Services and follow-up time. Other variables, such as biographical information and information about their offence histories, which are readily available at sentencing, could not discriminate between juveniles who later commit sex offences and those who do not. It is interesting to note that while Community Change Consultants' (1998b) literature review identified age and previous sex offence convictions as possible predictors of re-offending in juvenile sex offenders, these variable were not related to sex re-offending in the present study.

This study did not allow us to examine the other variables identified by Community Change Consultants (1998b) as possible predictors of re-offending. These included employment status, stability of living arrangements, anti-social behaviour and anti-social personality disorder, social competence and deviant sexual arousal. Future studies should consider these variables as well. Official information about these variables would also have been useful in this study when the researchers tried to determine the influence of treatment on further sex offending of juvenile sex offenders. As Community Change Consultants' (1998b) literature review suggested that treatment might reduce re-offending, the recidivism rates of the Treated and Other Groups were examined.

A higher sex offence recidivism rate was found for the Treated than the Other Group. However, this finding must be interpreted with caution as it is unlikely that these two offender groups were comparable. In fact, best practice suggests that the Treated Group participants will be at much higher risk of re-offending than the Other Group. The information available did not allow the research team to determine whether this was in fact the case, as only biographical information and offence histories of offenders were available, with no information about other possible risk factors. Furthermore, some of the offenders in the Other Group may have received private treatment or treatment from other agencies, but the researchers did not have any information about that.

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