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Illegal Sexual Behavior Program

The Illegal Sexual Behavior (ISB) program at SATS is based on the Risk Needs Responsivity model and the most up to date research and suggested practices of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers. Our program involves both individual and group therapy modalities.

The clinicians at SATS utilize a combination of cognitive behavioral therapy, motivational interviewing, strengths-based models, psychodynamic practice, trauma informed practices and emotion focused therapy to meet the specific needs of our clients.

Our curriculum covers the following topics: offense responsibility, victim empathy, shame reduction, identification of cognitive distortions, relapse prevention planning, affect regulation skills, interpersonal skills development, family of origin issues, trauma resolution, the role of hypersexuality, healthy sexuality and any other areas identified for each individual client.

SATS works with pre-trial supervision agencies as well as probation and parole. We currently provide sex offender specific treatment for multiple Pennsylvania counties as well as Federal Supervised Release.

SATS is a state Sex Offender Assessment Board approved program. Therefore, we can treat anyone deemed by the state to be a sexually violent predator.

Sex Offender Specific Treatment at SATS

Any client of SATS who is deemed to have engaged in illegal sexual behavior (either adjudicated or not) will be in treatment with other offenders and will not be placed in a therapy group for non-offenders as their primary group.

SATS employs a combination of treatment paradigms with the main focus on cognitive behavior therapy. We also employ motivational interviewing, mindfulness, emotion focused therapy, dialectical behavior therapy, shame reduction and psychodynamic principles. We are a trauma informed practice as well.

Client treatment goals include the following:

1. *Victim empathy:* SATS realizes that sex offender treatment is victim focused. Our main goal in treatment is to prevent further or additional victimization. It is imperative that any SATS client come to a solid understanding of victim empathy as it directly relates to their specific sexual offense as well as a global understanding of victim empathy.
2. *Responsibility:* SATS realizes that many offenders, early in treatment, will minimize or deny their behaviors. An early treatment goal for all offending clients is the reduction of denial and distorted thinking surrounding their offense. The ultimate goal in this realm is for the offender to accept complete responsibility for their crime. This acceptance can be augmented with the use of an offense specific polygraph examination. This will be used (as different and specific from a sexual history polygraph) in cases where the offender does not accept full responsibility for his crime.
3. *Understanding the Offense Cycle:* SATS realizes that most sexual offenses are not impulsive in nature but the result of a combination of distorted thinking and beliefs, emotional deficits, coping deficits and (sometimes) compulsivity. It is imperative that each client at SATS come to understand his offense cycle. This includes the identification of the emotional triggers to the offense as well as the distorted thinking that led up to the commission of the illegal sexual behavior. A clear understanding of the offending cycle is a critical part of an offenders relapse prevention plan.
4. *Understanding the compulsivity cycle:* For SATS clients who have sexual compulsivity problems, they will also be required to learn and understand their addiction cycle. This process allows the offender to come to understand their emotional triggers as well as their “people, places, things” triggers. Coming to an understanding of this cycle informs the relapse prevention process.
5. *Improving coping skills:* Most SATS offender clients lack appropriate and healthy coping skills. The majority of SATS clients use sexuality as a means to cope with negative affect. A key element of relapse prevention is for clients to learn to engage in healthy coping skills that are non-sexual in nature. SATS also prefers if these skills do not include the use of technology, i.e., video games as a means to cope. SATS also advocates for mindfulness practice to help offenders tolerate their emotions and learn appropriate emotion regulation skills.

6. *Healthy Sexuality:* SATS understands that the concept of healthy sexuality has become skewed for our clients. Some offenders have never learned healthy sexuality. A core competency necessary for completion of our treatment program is understanding and practicing healthy sexuality. All offenders are required to attend a two hour healthy sexuality workshop. Healthy sexuality is discussed in group therapy as well. Prior to discharge, offenders will have completed and presented a healthy sexuality plan to the treatment provider.
7. *Minor Attraction:* SATS understands that some of our offender clients are minor attracted. Those individuals who are identified as being minor attracted either by offender admission or by the ABEL screen are required to attend a workshop specifically addressing minor attraction. This arousal template is also to be discussed in group therapy.
8. *Shame:* SATS understands that frequently sexual offending is a shame-based behavior. Our treatment techniques actively avoid shaming our clients. All SATS offender clients are required to actively engage in and complete a shame reduction program. This can be completed in their primary group or as a separate program. SATS uses the Shame Resilience program created by Brene Brown.
9. *Mental Health issues:* SATS understands that many of our offender clients have co-occurring mental health disorders. These issues are discussed in group therapy. Those individuals with more severe mental health issues are frequently required to attend individual therapy as well. If the mental health disorder is outside the competency of SATS staff, we will refer the offender to the appropriate treatment provider and work collaboratively with them. Additionally, if psychiatric care is needed, clients are referred to a psychiatrist for medication management. SATS works collaboratively with psychiatrists as well as other mental health providers. SATS requires a release of information signed for all treatment providers for coordination of care.
10. *Substance Abuse issues:* SATS understands that many of our offender clients have co-occurring substance abuse problems. This is why some of the SATS staff are dual credentialed by the state of Pennsylvania as certified substance abuse providers. Offenders with substance abuse problems will address these issues in counseling and will be encouraged to attend 12 step meetings. SATS does not do drug testing and will rely on probation and parole for this accountability.
11. *Relapse Prevention:* As the main goal of sex offender treatment is to protect the community from any further victimization, relapse prevention planning is critical. All of the above-mentioned treatment objectives are the components of an offender's relapse prevention plan. Prior to successful completion of the offender program, an offender will have an approved relapse prevention plan that assesses all aspects of his behavior, thinking, social competency, sexuality and emotion regulation.

Individual Treatment Planning:

Each offender at SATS will have an individualized treatment plan that reflects his or her specific issues related to the sexual offense. This plan will be tailored to the offender's sexual history, criminal history, emotion regulation deficits, addiction concerns, and arousal templates. This treatment plan will include tangible and measurable goals and will be reassessed by the treatment team throughout the treatment process.

Objective Psychological Testing:

Each offender in treatment with SATS will be required to complete a number of psychological tests. Each offender is required to take the MMPI (or other objective personality measure such as the MCMI), and ABEL screen. Additional testing may be required based upon the client's history, behavior and presentation in treatment. These assessments may screen for substance abuse issues, other mental health issues, sexual addiction and compulsivity, and psychopathy.

Testing does not need to be completed at SATS, though SATS staff does have the training and capability to complete the testing, including the ABEL Screen. If the testing was completed with another psychologist or at another treatment program, SATS requires the offender to provide access to the testing results.

Use of Polygraph Testing:

SATS employs the use of polygraph testing in our offender treatment program. All offenders are required to take and pass a sexual history polygraph within six months of entering treatment. Maintenance polygraphs will be used on an annual basis. Other polygraph testing such as offense specific or specific issue testing may be employed if there are any specific concerns arise during the course of treatment.

SATS does not provide polygraph testing in our office. Our preferred polygrapher is Mid Atlantic Truth Consultants. Any polygraph results obtained are immediately shared with probation or parole.

Collaboration with the Criminal Justice System:

SATS understands that sex offender treatment is most effective when approached as a team effort. SATS works cooperatively with any aspect of the criminal justice system. For pre-trial clients, SATS requires a signed release of information for any pre-trial officer or other court supervisor. For clients on any type of supervised release, SATS requires a signed release of information for any party involved in the supervision.

Probation/Parole officers are provided with a written monthly report by SATS staff. This report will summarize the offender's progress in group, compliance and any other issues that may arise. SATS staff will also maintain open communication with any officer of the court or agent

in charge of the offender's supervision. It is SATS' policy that probation and parole officers are not permitted to sit in on group therapy sessions.

SATS Staff Credentials:

SATS staff members who participate in the offender program will be licensed or license eligible by the State of Pennsylvania in a field directly related to therapy and counseling. (LPC, LCSW, Ph.D., etc). Staff members working in the offender program will be members of ATSA or a regional affiliate.

SATS staff members who work in the offender program will have training specific to the following core competencies:

Assessment and diagnosis, counseling and psychotherapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, psychopathology, risk assessment, psychopathy, family systems, ethics, forensic psychology, psychological testing, relapse prevention, sexual arousal templates, motivational interviewing, group therapy, substance abuse treatment, family reunification, assessment and treatment of mental health disorders and sexual addiction and compulsivity.

All SATS staff members who work in the offender program are directly supervised by Dr. Jennifer Weeks.

POST SENTENCE TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND GOALS

Treatment: As you will see in the attached program outline, you are expected to attend individual and group therapy. Over time, as you meet your treatment goals in individual therapy, this will be phased out and you will be required to remain in group therapy. Either in addition to group therapy or during group therapy, you will be required to attend/participate in programs pertinent to your therapeutic needs: offender specific programming, shame reduction, healthy sexuality, minor attraction, drug and alcohol treatment, and mental health issues, etc.

Client Expectations:

1. It is the client's responsibility to attend group weekly as dictated. All absences must be approved ahead of time. If a client is ill and cannot attend group, the group leader must be notified. Cancellations to individual therapy require a minimum of 24 hours' notice.
2. Clients are expected to actively participate in group therapy.
3. It is the client's responsibility to pay for treatment each week.
4. Clients on supervision (Probation or parole) are required to write safety plans for day-to-day activities that will be approved by treatment. These safety plans are to be presented to the group as well. Any event that may be attended by a minor requires an approved safety plan. Any out of state travel also will require a safety plan presented to treatment with enough time to revise and approve before it is taken before a judge to approve out of state travel.
5. Clients are responsible to report any incidental contact with minors at group therapy.
6. Clients are responsible to abide by all rules and regulations of probation and to report any violations to treatment providers.
7. Clients are required to take a sex history polygraph one time (or until the polygraph is passed) during treatment and maintenance polygraphs throughout treatment. The client is responsible for paying for these polygraphs.
8. Clients are required to disclose any and all technology that they possess to treatment. This is done through an Acceptable Use Policy. These devices may need to be monitored. If monitoring is required, the client is responsible for paying for monitoring. Any new technology purchased must be disclosed to treatment within 24 hours.

Treatment Expectations:

1. You can expect the staff at SATS to always behave in a professional manner.
2. The staff of SATS will provide monthly progress reports to your probation or parole officer
3. The staff at SATS will engage with probation and/or parole in order to decrease any miscommunications or issues with supervision and treatment.
4. The staff at SATS will provide timely notice of any canceled or changed groups (barring any emergency).

Definitions:

Incidental Contact: Unintended and unanticipated physical or verbal contact with a minor. For example, a child comes up to you at the veterinarian's office and asks to pet your dog. Seeing a child on the street that you do not have verbal or physical contact is not incidental contact.

Approved Supervisor: An adult, over the age of 18, who is fully aware of the offender's crime. This adult also is familiar with the terms and conditions of the client's probation or parole and treatment requirements.

Please take a moment to read through the attached program description to familiarize yourself with SATS treatment requirements and philosophies. You will be provided a second document that outlines necessary components of treatment that we will ask you to engage in.

Safety Plan Procedures

All clients who are on any type of supervised release must complete safety plans and have them approved to engage in activities in the community.

General Safety Plans: General safety plans are for normal, daily life events. These include: shopping, eating at restaurants, religious services, etc.

Once a general safety plan is presented to group and approved, the client no longer must seek permission to engage in these activities and is only required to report incidental contact.

Specific Safety Plans: Specific safety plans are for events that do not involve day to day activities. This could include events like concerts, sporting events, holiday events, birthday parties, weddings, etc.

Any event that is outside the scope of already approved general activities needs to be brought up in group prior to the event. A safety plan should be written. This needs to be brought to group. Before final approval, any changes from group need to be made and a final plan needs to be presented to group.

Upon approval, your therapist will sign and date the safety plan and copy or scan it to send to probation.

As this process can take several group sessions, you need to present safety plans at least two weeks in advance of any planned outing.

SAFETY PLAN

Name: _____

DOB: _____

This safety plan is for: _____

(i.e. shopping, movie, dinner, doctors appointment, etc)

Purpose of event: _____

Date: _____

Specific date required for single events. If multiple events – ongoing

Location: _____

Who will be attending the event: _____

Who will be attending the event that knows of your offense? _____

Does this person (people) understand the role of an approved supervisor? _____

Potential High-Risk Behaviors or Exposure to children or pornography?

(i.e. drug or alcohol use by attendees; unmonitored internet exposure, areas of high concentration of minors, etc.)

Identify possible situations where you may have unsupervised or unintended contact with minors and explain how you will manage this risk (active or avoidance)_____

(i.e., using a public restroom, a minor family member who wants a hug, etc.)

Identify possible situations where you might be exposed to other risk factors such as pornography, alcohol, drugs, etc._____

Identify any emotional triggers that influenced you to commit your offense:_____

(i.e., shame, loneliness, anger, isolation, depression, being identified as a sex offender in public or by attendees of the event)

What is your plan to manage any of these emotional triggers that may arise during this event?

Who is in your support team and how will you use your support team if the need arises during this event?_____

Date presented to group: _____

Revisions:

Date and signature for therapist approval: _____

Client date and signature for approval: _____

Date presented to probation for approval: _____

Incidental Contact Log

Date

Type of Contact

Where

Thoughts/Feelings
that arose

How did I
Manage it?

[illegible]



Offender Task List for Treatment Planning

Client Name: _____

Probation Officer: _____

	Completed	Not Pertinent
SAST-R		
HB – 19		
SASSI		
MMPI		
ABEL		
Complete Sex History		
Complete Child Pornography Attitudes Questionnaire		
Victim Empathy Article		

Attend Healthy Sexuality Seminar		
Complete Shame Resilience Curriculum		
Pass Sex History Polygraph		
Acceptable Use Policy		
Address Minor Attraction		
Maintenance Polygraph Annually		
Display appropriate emotion regulation skills consistently		
Any other Dynamic Risk Factors that need to be addressed:		

Group Rules

Logistics:

1. Technology – no cell phones, ipods, ipads, etc. while in group. Please make sure to either not bring these devices to the group or to turn them off during group.
2. Punctuality – Please be on time to group. It is a sign of respect to the other group members to be on time. If you are going to be late, please call ahead.
3. Absences – Your attendance in group is expected. We ask for a minimum four month commitment to the group process. You will be allowed two excused absences per year. In order for an absence to be excused, you must notify SATS a minimum of 48 hours ahead of time. You will not be charged for an excused absence. Any absence that is not indicated within 48 hours or over the two-group limit will be considered unexcused and you will be expected to pay for the group.
4. Weather – if there is inclement weather, we will make the decision to hold or cancel the group by 2 pm. A message will be left on the phone line or you will be notified by our office.
5. Facility – The office also holds other groups and individual sessions during your group. Please be mindful of this while you are waiting for a group and keep noise in the waiting area to a minimum.

Expectations:

1. Confidentiality – It is very important for the integrity and safety of the group that all group members understand and maintain the confidentiality of the group. This means that all group members agree to keep what they hear in the group private. Additionally, the therapists agree to safeguard the confidentiality of group members, unless you have either signed a written consent form for someone or fall under the mandatory reporting rules. Therapists are obligated to break confidentiality if you are a risk to yourself, others or if we become aware of child abuse.
2. Respect – We believe that all of our group members deserve to be treated with respect. Please refrain from any abusive language or threatening behavior toward other group members or your therapist.

Group Check in Procedure

1. Did you attend any 12 step meetings?

This could be SA, SLAA, AA, NA, etc.

2. Did you have any police or incidental contact with minors/pornography?

This includes any unintended contact with minors or unintended viewing of sexual images, etc. Also, any police contact, no matter how benign. Acknowledging and talking about these incidental contacts helps treatment be informed as well as providing support when it comes time for polygraphs.

3. Did you act out?

Acting out is defined differently for everyone. Did you engage in any behaviors that violate your bottom line behaviors? This can include sexual behaviors, substance use, lying etc.

4. How are you feeling emotionally?

This means feeling words. Responses like OK, fine, etc. are not feelings.

5. How are you feeling physically?

6. How are you feeling spiritually?

Not everyone has a sense of spirituality. If you do, how is that connection feeling to you?



I, _____, acknowledge that I have received and read the information regarding the ISB program at SATS. By agreeing to enter treatment at SATS, I agree to adhere to the program guidelines.

I, _____, understand that even if I am mandated to treatment by probation or supervised release, I can terminate treatment with SATS if I no longer agree to abide by the guidelines. I acknowledge that I will be provided referrals for treatment so that I may remain compliant with my conditions of supervised release.

Name

Signature

Date

Witness Signature