


# How to Develop Effective Internet Safety Plans with Adult Clients Who Have Sexually Abused

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# Introductions



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# What brings you in today?



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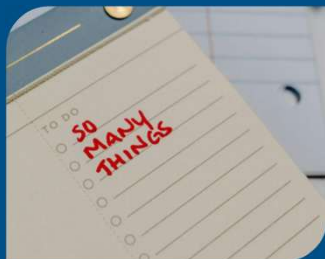
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## Learning Objectives:

- 1) Describe how to initiate and have conversations with clients in preparation of safety planning for internet use
- 2) Explain how internet safety planning contributes to stability for clients
- 3) Identify the essential components of an internet safety plan
- 4) Guide clients in their navigation of the sexually suggestive environments of media platforms and explain their subconscious influence



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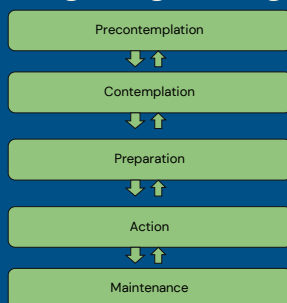
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## Safety Planning Along the Stages of Change



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### 1. Pre-Contemplation

“Everyone looks at stuff online—it’s not like I’m hurting anyone.”

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## Internet Facilitated Offending

- Child Sexual Abuse Media
- Sextortion
- Online enticement
- Child Sex Trafficking
- AI-generated abuse imagery/Deep Fakes
- Non-consensual pornography/media sharing

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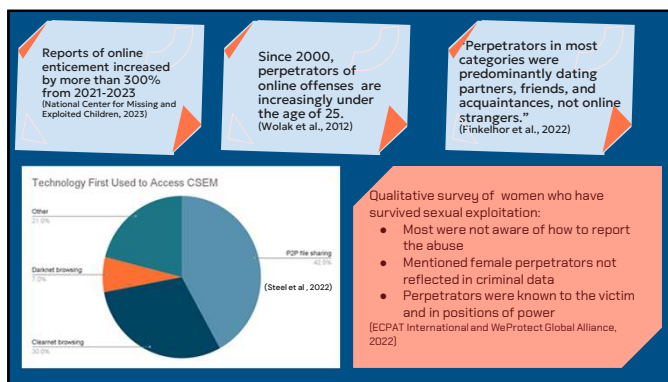
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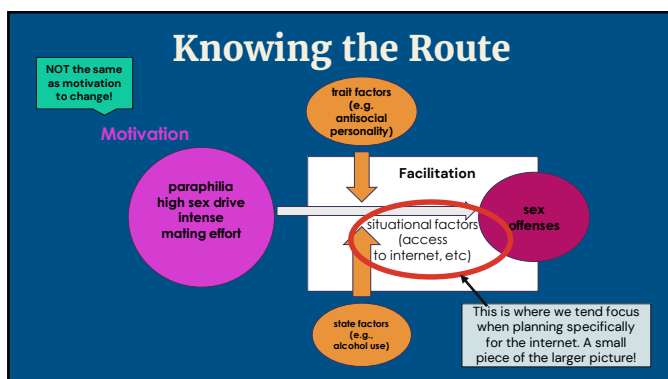
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## Online Disinhibition Effect

- Feeling anonymous
- Feeling invisible
- Ease of Disengagement/ Escape
- Blurred lines of reality and fantasy
- Real world rules and social norms don't apply
- Perception of equality

(Suler, 2004; Suler 2015)



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## Specific Risk Factors for Online Offending

From a 2023 Systematic Review (Steene et al., 2023):

1. Cognitive Distortions
    - a. Harm Minimisation and Wide Availability
    - b. Children as Sexual Agents
    - c. Fantasy Driven
  2. Difficulties with Relationships (both intimate and non-intimate)
  3. Managing Isolation, Loneliness and Boredom
  4. Low self-worth, poor psychological health, impulse challenges
  5. Interest in offense supportive sexual material
  6. Child Abuse Images as reinforcing for emotions
    - a. Removal of aversive emotional states
    - b. Supplementation of pleasurable states
  7. Hyper-sexuality/sexual preoccupation
- One more:
- Problematic General Internet Use

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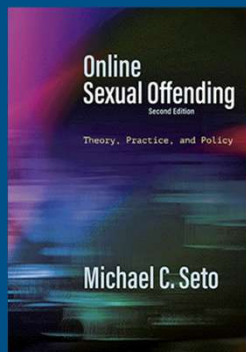
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## 2. Contemplation

"I want to stop some behaviors, but part of me still wants to keep doing them."

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Who is the plan for, really?



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Therapist goals vs Client Goals



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## What is the plan for, really?



- Safety planning origins in relapse prevention models
- Relapse prevention limited by:
  - Motivation to change
  - Predictability of client pathway to the undesired behavior
- Enhancing effectiveness by:
  - Addressing trauma
  - Developing healthy lifestyle

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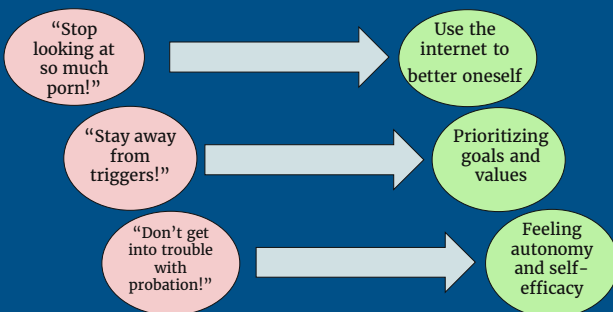
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## Avoidance Goals vs Approach goals



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## For Adults: Protective Factors from the SAPROF-SO

1. Adaptive Schemas
2. Empathy
3. Coping
4. Self-Control
5. Attitudes towards rules and regulations
6. Sexual self-regulation
7. Prosocial sexual interests
8. Prosocial sexual identity
9. Intimate relationship
10. Goal-directed living
11. Work
12. Leisure activities
13. Social network
14. Emotional connection to adults



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## Considering Developmental Stages: Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood



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## Pornography as Sex Education?

TABLE 6. Teens who say they have learned the following from online pornography  
(among teens who have ever viewed pornography)

By demographic	TOTAL	Age 13 to 14	Age 15 to 17	Cis Boy	Cis Girl	Transgender/ Nonbinary*	LGBTQ+	Non-LGBTQ+
How to have sex	79%	78%	79%	85%	72%	81%	86%	77%
How to talk with partners	48%	48%	48%	51%	43%	51%	54%	46%
What types of partners I find attractive	72%	71%	72%	80%	61%	76%	80%	69%
What sexual behaviors I am interested in trying	72%	69%	75%	82%	61%	77%	81%	69%
About human bodies and anatomy	79%	78%	81%	83%	74%	87%	85%	78%
What types of sexual behaviors are likely to feel pleasurable to me	73%	70%	75%	82%	61%	78%	81%	70%
What types of sexual behaviors are likely to NOT feel pleasurable to me	64%	64%	64%	71%	55%	76%	75%	60%
What types of sexual behaviors are likely to feel pleasurable to a sexual partner	73%	70%	76%	82%	64%	78%	82%	71%
What types of sexual behaviors are likely to NOT feel pleasurable to a sexual partner	60%	60%	62%	68%	51%	72%	67%	60%

\* Small base sizes; interpret with caution.

Common Sense Media. (2023). *Teens and pornography*.

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## For Adolescents and Emerging Adults: PROFESOR Risk and Protective Domains (Worling, 2017)

1. Hope regarding sexual future
2. Respectful Sexual Environment
3. Sexual Beliefs and Attitudes
4. Sexual Interests – Focus
5. Sexual Interests – Frequency
6. Knowledge of Laws and Procedures for Respectful Sexual Relationships
7. Knowledge and Consequences of sexual offending
8. Strategies to Prevent Sexual Offending
9. Compassion for Others
10. General Values and Attitudes
11. Self Regulation
12. Problem Solving
13. Responsivity to Guidance and Support
14. Self Esteem
15. Intimacy and Friendship
16. Relationship with Caregiver
17. Parent/Caregiver practices
18. Engagement in School/Work
19. Engagement in organized leisure activities
20. Living Arrangement

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## Motivation Barriers for Safety Planning

- "I learned my lesson, I'll never do XYZ again!"
- "My computer is monitored, I'd have to be an idiot to do something illegal on there"
- "I don't need to do this, I haven't had a sexual thought since I got arrested"
- "I don't have a problem with the internet"
- "I always viewed porn on my computer and now I only have a smartphone"
- Perceived threat to self agency
- Responsivity issues - why might this task be too challenging?
- Trauma and nervous system dysregulation



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## Motivational Interviewing Refresh

- OARS
  - Open ended questions
  - Affirmations
  - Reflections
  - Summaries
- Developing discrepancy
- Rolling with resistance
- Prioritizing self-agency and autonomy



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## Your client is ready to change, but is he ready to plan?

- Insight into risk
  - Patterns of Behavior
  - Problematic websites/platforms
  - Risk factors at the time of the offense behavior
- Insight into goals
  - How to meet needs
  - Values behind online behavior



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### 3. Preparation

“I know I need to be mindful when I go online, but how do I actually plan?”

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Is formal planning specific to the internet right for everyone?



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# The Internet Safety Plan

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Chat: What is the goal of an Internet Safety Plan?



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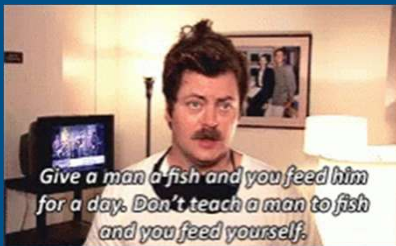
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### Setting Intentions



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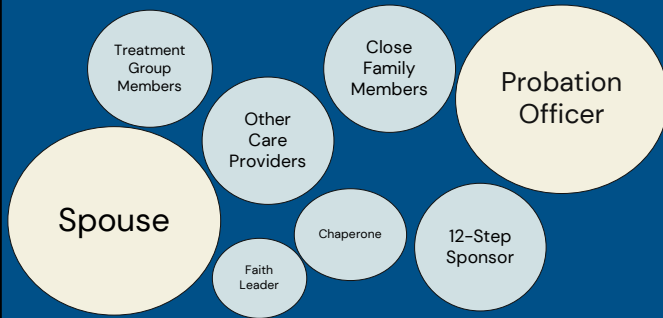
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### Collaboration Considerations



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How does internet use vary?					
Internet Purpose	Culture	Devices Used	Age	Socio-economic background	Cognitive Abilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-News and information</li> <li>-Communication and Social Engagement</li> <li>-Education and Learning</li> <li>-Entertainment</li> <li>-Shopping</li> <li>-Accessing Services</li> <li>-Work and Business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Country of Origin</li> <li>-Religion</li> <li>-Family Influence</li> <li>-Social norms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Mobile Phones</li> <li>-Laptops</li> <li>-Desktops</li> <li>-Tablets</li> <li>-Gaming Systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Varied digital literacy</li> <li>-Perception of online relationships</li> <li>-Normative Balance online vs offline differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Access to reliable internet</li> <li>-Shared devices vs individual devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Varied digital literacy (again)</li> <li>-Internet or personal device access</li> </ul>

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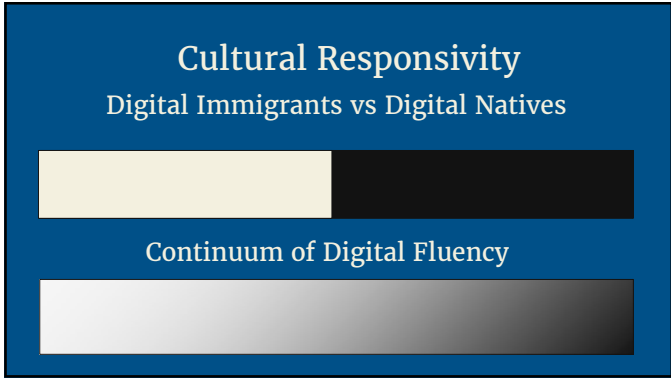
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“The price of anything is the amount of life you exchange for it.”  
- Henry David Thoreau

“the cost of a thing is the amount of what I will call life which is required to be exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run”

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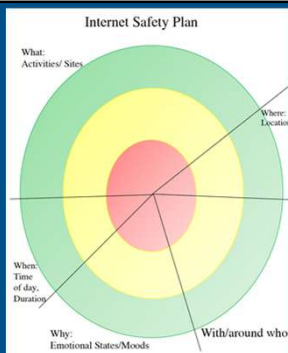
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**Red:** Unacceptable, unhealthy, harmful behaviors/sites, moves the clients away from their goals

**Yellow:** It depends, proceed with caution

**Green:** Acceptable, healthy behaviors/sites - moves client in the direction of their goals



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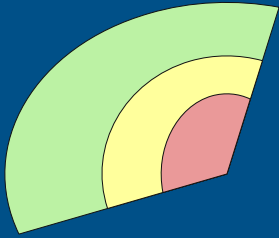
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### WHAT are you doing online?



- Activities
- Specific Websites (assumptions about “safe sites”)
- Patterns of computer use
- Compulsive Research
- Media Multitasking

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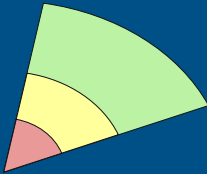
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### WHERE are you when you access the internet?



- In a bedroom? Door open or closed?
- Basement Office?
- In your car? Bus?
- Bathroom? At work?
- Living area where others congregate?

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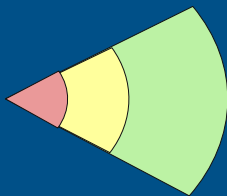
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### WHO are you around/with when you're online?



- Alone? In the house or in the room with you?
- Friends?
- Family?
- Is this person supportive?
- Are you hiding anything you're doing from anyone?
- Has anyone ever

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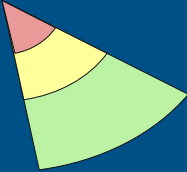
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### WHY are you going online?



- Using the internet to cope?
- What thoughts do you have?
- What is your emotional state right now?
- How do you feel when you're done?
- HALT

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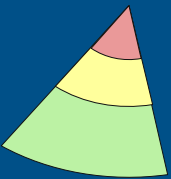
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### WHEN are you going online?



- Time of Day
- Length of time? How many hours?
- Frequency of use?
- Timing within your routine? Ie. after work, before anxiety provoking events?

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### Using the Internet for Sexual Gratification



Pros?

Cons?

What questions would you ask to determine if this could be done in a healthy way?

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CYBERSEX MAP WORKSHEET (90 DAY PREP)

Cybersex Map Worksheet

Female Start Sites

Start Site Desk  
After Sex Start  
Insert Themes

Images of teens  
& some pre-pubescent

Experiment  
with any porn.

Questionable  
sites & legality

Exposure using  
Webcam sites

Female Start Sites

Interpersonal  
- Free porn

Soft & Hard  
Core Images

College Co-eds

Teens & Barely  
Legal

Images of teens  
& some pre-pubescent

Experiment  
with any porn.

Questionable  
sites & legality

Exposure using  
Webcam sites

Specific Themes in  
Your Map

Younger Images  
Vulnerability  
Exploitation  
Revenge  
Money Exchange  
Boundary Violations  
Power Differentials  
Blame or Shaming  
Disgusting  
Violent / Aggressive  
Amateur / Realistic  
Interactions  
Offline / In Person  
Specific sex act  
Specific partner  
characteristic

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1. Does my fantasy, tool for stimulation, or sexual behavior hurt me (emotionally or physically?)

6. Am I using my fantasies or sexual behavior to cope with negative emotions or maintain positive feelings?

1. Does my fantasy, tool for stimulation, or sexual behavior hurt another person?

7. Am I hiding my fantasies, tools or behaviors from others?

1. Is my fantasy, tool or behavior within the conditions of my supervision/treatment?

8. Is my fantasy, tool or behavior consensual in nature (age, capacity, intent)?

1. Does my fantasy, tool, or behavior reinforce unhealthy sexual interests, distortions, or illegal behavior?

9. Have I attempted and struggled to stop this using this tool or engaging in this behavior in the past?

1. Does my fantasy, tool for stimulation, or sexual behavior interfere with my functioning/ ability to meet needs in other areas?

10. If the tool is media based, who is the intended audience?

11. Does this behavior or tool move me in the direction of my goals or away from my goals?

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Escape Toolkit:  
Short-Term Distress Tolerance Strategies (DBT)



Activities - The more variety of options the better!  
Exercise, hobbies

Contributing- Opposite action, doing something positive

Comparisons - Comparing current to past distress, gratitude

Emotions - Emotional film/music, journaling, art

Pushing away- Distractions, thought stopping strategies

Thoughts- Thought exercises, urge surfing, logging urges

Sensations - Soothing with the 5 senses. Cold water

Other- Meditation, breathing exercises,

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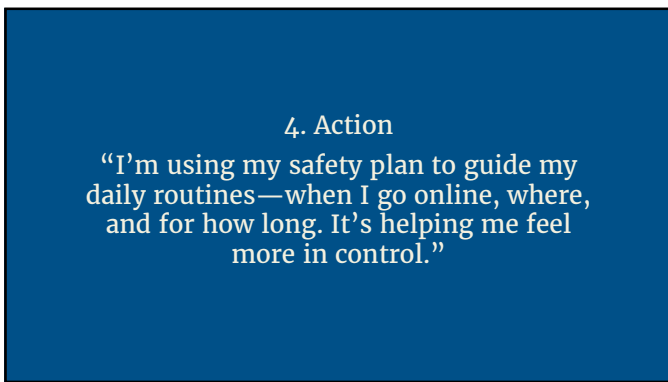
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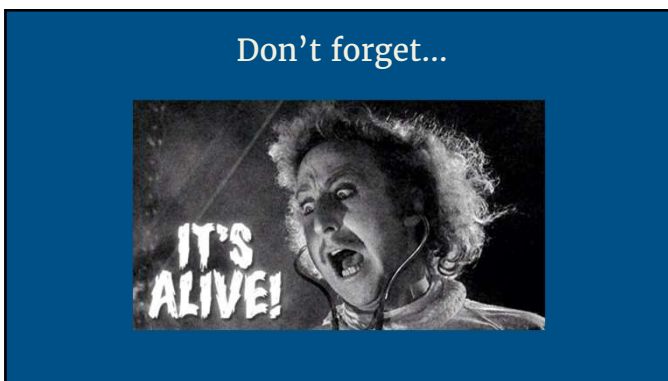
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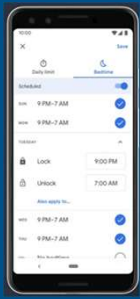
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## Additional tools to use with internet safety plan:



- 1 Computer/Internet monitoring
- 2 Time out/tracking apps
- 3 Timers/alarms
- 4 Journaling/logging
- 5 Ad blockers
- 6 Safe Search Filters

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## Digital Fluency is a moving target...



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## 2025 considerations

Intended and unintended technology affordances facilitate behavior

- o Short form video and content suggestions
- o Amplifying effects
- o Anonymity and social reach
- o Offending because it's "easy"



(Roberts & David, 2025; Seto 2025)

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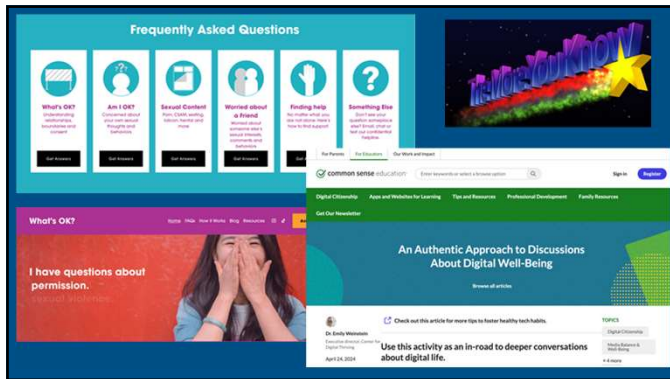
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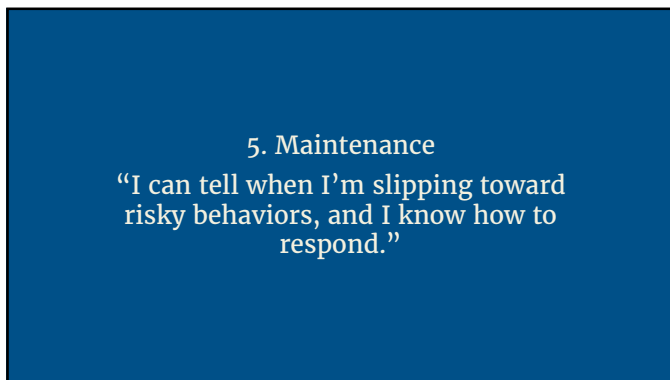
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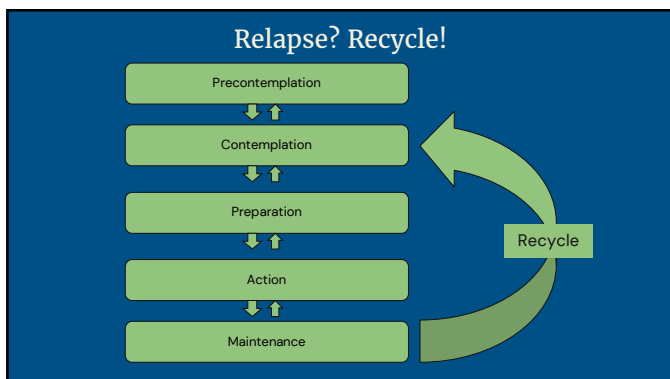
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### Steps to Take After a Lapse

**Pause & Reflect** – Breathe, avoid shame, journal

**Reach Out** – Contact your therapist, group, or accountability partner

**Re-engage with Supports** – Update your safety plan, attend meetings, explore deeper triggers

**Rebuild Boundaries** – Block triggers, reinstall filters, set device limits

**Recommit Daily** – Practice grounding, journal, track progress, remember your approach goals

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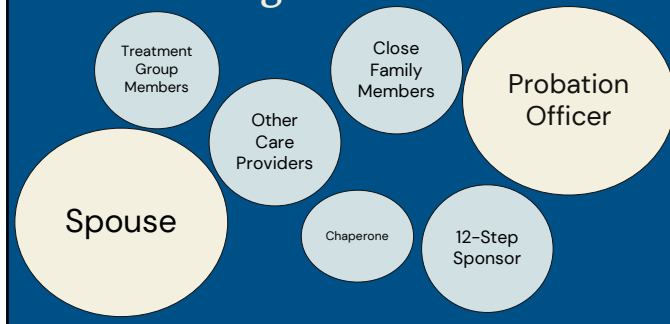
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### So we meet again...



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### A reminder about time...



Sexual reoffending rates are highest during the first few years after release and reduce by about half for each 5-year period of sex offense-free time in the community.

(Hanson et al., 2014)

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Thank you!

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