

Myth busting about child sex offenders

“He looks like the sort...”

There is no ‘typical’ child sex offender

- People who commit sexual offences against children are from all walks of life and are of no single age, gender, ethnicity, or position in society.
- The motivations for sexual abuse are varied and complex.

“Watch out for strangers...”

Most abusers are known to the child

- In most cases, the people who commit sexual crimes against children are not strangers to their victims. Around 90 percent of sexual crimes against children are committed by people who are known to the child or family, such as a family member, teacher, acquaintance, coach or friend.

“They’ve done it once so they’ll do it again...”

Most offenders do not reoffend

- Research has shown that most individuals who are convicted of child sexual abuse do not continue with sexually abusive behaviour after they complete their sentence.
- A small proportion (around 20%) of child sex offenders are reconvicted of a further child sex offence at some point.

“They’re all high risk and should be treated that way...”

Some offenders are at high risk for reoffending

- Most offenders are not considered high risk, and with support and guidance live a low-risk, offence-free life back in the community.
- For those offenders that are considered high risk, careful planning is undertaken prior to their release from prison to reduce the likelihood of reoffending. Extended supervision orders, public protection orders and electronic monitoring via GPS are used for these people to provide protection to the public.