

# Law and Psychology: A Detailed Analysis on Chemical Castration for Sex Offenders

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**P**unishments that are enacted against sexual offenders after they have served their time in prison to prevent recidivism, such as: mandated treatments like chemical and surgical castration, involuntary mental hospitalization under the state of Kansas' [Sexually Violent Predator Act](#); and the Federal Government's mandatory database [Sex Offender Registry](#) can be seen as inhumane to these individuals, as they believe that their time served in prison has resolved the issue of their crime. However, psychological treatment for their behavior outweighs the time served for their crime. Not only does its end result prevent individuals from recommitting their crime who believe that their natural urge to pedophilia "is only curable by death" ([Kansas v. Hendricks 1997](#)), but it also provides them with an alternative. Most importantly it provides some type of restitution, although it will never be enough, to children who were sexually assaulted and have inevitably inherited the dangerous psychological effects from their victimization all throughout their adolescent years and adulthood.

According to child sexual abuse psychologist, [Kristen McClure](#), "Sexually abused children have difficulty knowing who to trust." A child's age makes him or her socially dependable on adults for nurture, guidance and protection. He or she is vulnerable. After being sexually abused, a child's perception of the natural order of how they view adults as being their protectors and their nurturers is distorted. Their sexual abuse creates a confused state of trust and guidance amongst adults. Worst of all however "the experience with the perpetrator may cause them to trust people who will abuse them again." ([McClure](#))

While pedophiles are serving time in prison for their crimes, their victims are growing up to become menaces of society. According to the [American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress](#), "53% of sexually abused children are more likely to be arrested as juveniles, and 38% are more likely to be arrested for a violent crime." This is problematic for those children who once had ambitions that could have amounted to careers that benefited their country and family as doctors, lawyers, educators, engineers, entertainers, etc. Instead they have involuntarily become ex-cons and as a result, have negatively contributed to the economic cost of imprisonment. They have smeared the concepts of American values: education, respect for property and social charity. Furthermore, the notion of allowing pedophiles to only serve time in prison as their just desert for their crime without mandatory psychological treatment is absurd and damaging to society at large. In *Lawrence Wrightsman's* book *Wrightman's Psychology and the Legal System* a **25 year** psychological study of sex offenders in Canada was conducted, it revealed that the "**25 year** follow-up sex offenders in Canada" demonstrated that "sex offenders have committed more sex crimes than those for which they were arrested." Without the resolution of mandated psychological treatment, their natural tendency to act on their pedophilic urges can allow them to recommit their crime and successfully psychologically damage more children, which has the possibility to create a rise in crime and the decline in high ambitions of the American youth. An

alternative such as [Chemical Castration](#), can reduce sexual arousal and fantasizing in pedophiles. It can also serve as a remedy to prevent future criminal activities of some juveniles, as those pedophiles who were arrested are being treated and thus no longer have the desire to act on their pedophilic urge. As a result, they would not psychologically damage a child where he or she becomes a recruit of and for violence.

While adults who were sexually abused do not all become criminals, their behavior nonetheless in intimate environments within society such as: work, family and socializing with friends is a constant challenge, as they suffer from post-traumatic stress. Because of this unending complexity for the abused child to feel socially integrated within his or her environment and for the high possibility of pedophilic recidivism, it is not enough for the punishment of pedophilia to only be sanctioned to a prison term. Harsher laws mandating psychological treatments are essential. It will help with preventing recidivism and as a result, one less issue that prevent a child from having a normal life that he or she deserves.

Below you will find a list of symptoms that children and adults suffer who are being and were sexually abused. It is taken from the [American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress](#).

### **Identifying Abused Children**

No child is psychologically prepared to deal with ongoing or intensive sexual stimulation. Even very young children, two or three years old, may sense that the sexual activity is "wrong," but they are unable to stop it. Children are frequently threatened that if they tell anyone, they will be killed or sent away, or their puppy will be killed; or their whole family will breakup.

Children subjected to sexual over-stimulation, with or without threats, will develop problems. Those older than five years of age become caught between loyalty to or dependence on the perpetrator, and shame at doing something "wrong." Over time, the child develops low self-esteem, feelings of being worthless or "dirty," and an abnormal view of sexuality. How do you recognize such children? There are many signs:

- Withdrawal and mistrust of adults
- Suicidality
- Difficulty relating to others except in sexual or seductive ways
- Unusual interest in or avoidance of all things sexual or physical
- Sleep problems, nightmares, fears of going to bed
- Frequent accidents or self-injurious behaviors
- Refusal to go to school, or to the doctor, or home
- Secretiveness or unusual aggressiveness

- Sexual components to drawings and games
- Neurotic reactions (obsessions, compulsiveness, phobias)
- Habit disorders (biting, rocking)
- Wears long sleeves in hot weather (to hide bruises?)
- Unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- Prostitution
- Forcing sexual acts on other children
- Extreme fear of being touched
- Unwillingness to submit to physical examination
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Specific physical indicators of recent sexual abuse include:

- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Torn, stained or bloody clothing
- Pain or itching in genital area
- Bruises or bleeding in genital area or mouth
- Pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases, especially in preteens
- Repeated urinary infections or genital blockages

### **Identifying Adults Abused As Children**

The effects of early sexual abuse last well into adulthood, affecting relationships, work, family, and life in general. Individual symptomatology tends to fall into four areas: <sup>7</sup>

1. **Damaged goods**: Low self-esteem, depression, self-destructiveness (suicide and self-mutilation), guilt, shame, self-blame, constant search for approval and nurturance.
2. **Betrayal**: Impaired ability to trust, blurred boundaries and role confusion, rage and grief, difficulty forming relationships.
3. **Helplessness**: Anxiety, fear, tendency towards re-victimization, panic attacks.
4. **Isolation**: Sense of being different, stigmatized, lack of supports, poor peer relations.

Adult incest survivors may demonstrate some of the following symptoms:

- Fear of the dark, fear of sleeping alone, nightmares, night terrors
- Difficulty with swallowing, gagging

- Poor body image, poor self-image in general
- Wearing excessive clothing
- Addictions, compulsive behaviors, obsessions
- Self-abuse, skin-carving (also addictive),
- Suicidality
- Phobias, panic attacks, anxiety disorders, startle response
- Difficulties with anger/rage
- Splitting/ de-personalization, shutdown under stress
- Issues with trust, intimacy, relationships
- Issues with boundaries, control, abandonment
- Pattern of re-victimization, not able to say "no"
- Blocking of memories, especially between age one and 12
- Feeling crazy, different, marked
- Denial, flashbacks
- Sexual issues and extremes
- Multiple personalities
- Signs of posttraumatic stress disorder

If you or someone you know has a child that is being sexually abused or if you were sexually abused as a child, please visit <http://www.aets.org/about3.htm> to learn how the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress can help you with your recovery.