

1: How To Use These Guides

You are probably reading these guides because you are new to the Sexually Abusive Behaviour Treatment Service (SABTs) system. When we provide treatment for SABs we work therapeutically with our clients to equip them to understand and manage their behaviour.

These guides are designed to provide insight into what is required for your work – a ‘roadmap’ to the topics, or areas of the work that you should understand and will become proficient in over time. They are not meant to provide the training you will need for your work.

Working with young people with SABs falls within the broader spectrum of therapeutic treatment of issues within the sexual assault field. It differs from working with victims and survivors of sexual abuse for several reasons:

- Therapeutic work with victims and survivors of sexual assault is generally a client-led process. The work with sexually abusive youth must be led by the therapist.
- SAB work requires careful assessment, firstly of current risk – based on what has happened in the past, and what needs to happen to ensure the safety of those around the young person you are working with.
- Treatment must be focused and directed at the presenting issues. Your work must assist a young person to:
 - Manage their behaviours
 - Understand the basis of their behaviours
 - Equip them to replace the problematic behaviours with healthy, pro-social behaviours.
- Rather than choosing if and when to attend treatment, as is appropriate for survivors of sexual assault, young people with SAB usually come into treatment when their behaviours are discovered or disclosed. Their behaviours are considered, in most cases, criminal.

To work with sexually abusive youth, you must understand the basics of the theories that underpin the work. You should be aware of recidivism rates (low), and the factors underpinning the behaviours (exposure to family violence, sexual victimisation, exposure to low level neglect, cumulative harm, exposure to inappropriate sexual content).

Both ongoing supervision and training are pivotal for success in this work. Knowledge and experience cannot be ‘picked up as you go along’. A systematic and considered approach is critical. CEASE and ANZATSA run free bi-monthly training at least five times a year, focused on the topics you need.

Please read these guides in their numbered order and discuss them with your supervisor. In my role as project worker (and beyond) I can discuss with you what to think about, and how to achieve the results needed. Membership of ANZATSA, and awareness and liaison with CEASE, will assist your professional development.

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