

## Bringing balance to risk assessments: How to score the Structured Assessment of Protective factors against Sexual Offending (SAPROF-SO)

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A comprehensive assessment of recidivism risk requires assessment of protective factors as well as risk factors (de Vries Robbé & Willis, 2017). However, most sexual recidivism risk assessment tools focus primarily on risk factors without consideration for strengths or protective factors which might mitigate risk. Protective factors can be defined as those factors that predict nonrecidivism – either on their own or through mitigating the impact of risk factors (e.g., de Vogel et al., 2012). Protective factors exist in their own right; they are more than the absence of risk factors. To illustrate, offence related sexual interest is a well-established risk factor for sexual recidivism (Mann et al., 2010). The absence of offence related sexual interests does not represent a protective factor; however, the presence of prosocial sexual interests does.

The Structured Assessment of Protective Factors against Sexual Offending (SAPROF-SO) was developed to provide clinicians with a structured way of assessing hypothesised protective factors against sexual recidivism for use alongside commonly used risk assessment tools. As its name suggests, the SAPROF-SO was initially modelled on the SAPROF (de Vogel et al., 2012), a measure of protective factors against violent reoffending. In addition, the SAPROF-SO was influenced by desistance research and the Good Lives Model (Laws & Ward, 2011). Between 2017 and early 2020 the SAPROF-SO pilot version was tested in clinical and research settings. Pilot research found acceptable interrater reliability, convergent and discriminant validity in both high risk and routine samples (Willis et al., 2020). In addition, preliminary findings from retrospective file-based studies demonstrated predictive validity for reduced sexual recidivism. Results from pilot research informed Version 1 of the SAPROF-SO, launched in March 2021. Version 1 includes 14 core items across three subscales: Resilience, Adaptive Sexuality, and Prosocial Connection and Reward. This workshop will provide training on how to score the SAPROF-SO Version 1, utilising a case example throughout. The workshop will end with a discussion of the current clinical utility of the SAPROF-SO, with a focus on risk assessment, treatment planning and risk management.

### References

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