

**HOT TOPIC**

# Can You Cure A PAEDOPHILE?

**Sex offenders are being offered 'treatment' to stop them offending. But will it work and should they receive it?**

Everybody deserves a second chance...  
Everybody has the ability to change...

But what about sex offenders?

Is it really possible for paedophiles, rapists and sex attackers to change and control how they feel?

One company believes so.

StopSO has a UK-wide network of psychotherapists and counsellors. They're trained

to deal with people who are concerned they might cross the legal line and commit a sexual offence - as well as people who have offended, to stop them doing so again.

**The NSPCC has warned that as many as one million children in the UK could have been the victim of an assault**

According to The Ministry of Justice, one in every 1,000 Brits is a registered sex offender.

Worrying figures also reveal there has been a 60 per cent increase in sex-offence convictions since 2006.

According to StopSO, it's hard for sex offenders to access professional support and help. Practically no NHS services are available for this group.

### Beyond help?

It's thought most therapists don't want to work with sex offenders as there's a stigma attached that they are beyond help or not worthy of it.

But many argue that in helping such people, we are helping to save vulnerable victims. So is StopSO and



Juliet Grayson, co-founder of StopSO

organisations like it a step in the right direction?

Therapist and co-founder of StopSO, Juliet Grayson, says, 'It's so hard for people to come forward and admit that they are a paedophile.'

'It's the public's perception that they're the lowest of the low. But I have huge respect for people who seek help. It's incredibly brave.'

StopSO was set up in 2011 after Juliet found that other therapists, who didn't know how to help sex offenders or judged them on their problem, turned them away.

'We provide a non-judgmental service to sex offenders because it could potentially prevent sex crimes being committed,' explains Juliet.

So far, StopSO has helped 'cure' and treat around 300 people.

'Some claim that, after sessions with us, they've lost all

their inappropriate desires and urges,' says Juliet. 'Others believe they have

their urges under control, but some still see us regularly because they're so afraid that their urges will come back.

'These people want to change. They don't want to be paedophiles.'

**People can apply to be removed from the sex offenders register if they can prove they no longer pose a threat**

### Possible cause

Research reveals that most sex offenders have experienced some kind of abuse in their childhood.

Juliet states this could be a factor in what causes paedophilia.

'Some people are simply just born with the tendency to be a paedophile, others might have been scarred by something in their childhood and compulsively repeat this in later life,' she explains.

For example, one client recalled an incident in his youth

**Will our kids be safer?**

### Shocking stats

The National Crime Agency estimates 750,000 men in Britain have an interest in having sex with children, with 250,000 sexually attracted to children under the age of 12.

groups of women, such as hen parties.

'Getting to the cause of the problem and the trigger enabled him to move on, and eventually he believed he'd been cured.'

'For me, knowing what causes paedophilia means I'm not judgmental. These people are brave enough to admit what they are and seek help.'

'Surely if we can save victims and stop sexual offences from occurring, then what we're doing is worth it?'

Supporters believe that prevention is treatment - treating paedophiles with therapy will prevent more offences being committed.

But others argue children won't be any safer around people who claim to have their urges under control.

It's an explosive issue that will potentially always divide public opinion.

For more info, go to: [www.stopso.org.uk](http://www.stopso.org.uk)

## Here's What You Say...

'One question: if a counsellor claims that a sex offender is now safe around children, would they trust them enough to leave them alone with their own child? If not, then I don't see how they can be released into society.'

Caroline, Stourbridge



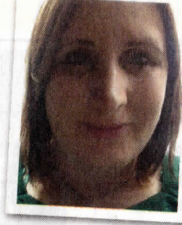
'Potential paedophiles are worthy of help - and hopefully therapy works for them - but anyone who has acted on their urges is beyond help. I can't begin to understand what makes people have thoughts about children...'

Michelle, Surrey



'For people in prison already convicted, I don't suppose therapy would hurt, as it may even show them the human side of their crimes and the impact their urges have upon a person for the rest of their lives.'

Debbie, Stourbridge



Words: Cher Heasmer Photos (main photo posed by model) Alamy/Sian Trenberth Photography