
Appendix H. The Abel Screen

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THE ABEL SCREEN

The Abel Screen is a series of four tests whose combined scores reveal 20 separate kinds of sexual interest. It was created by Dr. Gene G. Abel, M.D. primarily to determine which adults have a high sexual interest in children.

Dr. Abel is internationally known for his 20 years of research with sexual aggressives, primarily adults who offend against children. He has headed six NIMH federal research projects and published nearly 100 medical articles in scientific journals. In addition, he is a full Professor of Psychiatry formerly on the faculty at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and now teaches at Emory University School of Medicine and Morehouse University School of Medicine.

Individuals undergoing the Abel Screen sit down at a laptop computer and take a series of four tests in a 90 minute period. During the first test, he looks at computer-driven slides of children, adolescents, adults, and couples and rates his interest in each slide. The second test is a physiologic measure of his slide-viewing taken beyond his awareness. The last two tests are question-and-answer tests.

Although, Dr. Abel is the creator of the first three tests, it is his database that is most vital. Because he has research results from 400 known sex offenders and over 100 normals, he is able to determine what are normal responses. Dr. Abel's scoring methodology or scoring formula reveals which adults have high sexual interest in children equivalent to the interest level shown by actual child molesters and quite different from responses given by normals. Set at a sensitivity that captures only 2% of false positives, the Abel Screen correctly identifies 96% of men who are sexually attracted to female children and adolescents and 100% of men who are sexually attracted to male children and adolescents.

The Abel Screen has a high degree of accuracy, is noninvasive, and can be administered in a short time in any setting.

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