



Child sex offender

This term appears to have a generally agreed meaning and/or can be used without stigmatising and/or otherwise harming the child.

The term “child sex offender” is one of the most frequently used terms to refer specifically to individuals involved in sex-based crimes against children, and it is particularly used by international law enforcement agencies. The term encompasses all forms of sexual offences against children, including acts carried out through or enabled by the Internet.

While the term “child sex offender” is not inaccurate, the qualifier “child” before “sex offender” may cause confusion with regard to who (a child or an adult) has committed the offence. To avoid confusion, where the offender is a minor, the recommended qualifying term is “juvenile”.

Alternative terms to “child sex offender” are the abovementioned “perpetrator of sexual crimes against children” or “perpetrator of child sex offences”.

Conclusion: The term “child sex offender” can be used to refer to adults who have committed sex-based crimes against children and represents the most frequently used term in the law enforcement sector. It should not be confused with the term “juvenile offender”, where it is a child who has committed an offence.