

## Committing sex crimes may be influenced largely by genetics

Brothers of men convicted of sexual offences are five times more likely than average to commit the same types of crimes, scientists have found.

The study suggests that genetic factors are largely responsible for the effect and that environmental factors, such as sons learning from fathers, have only a minor influence. The authors urged authorities to consider interventions for the male relatives of sexual offenders, including counselling on appropriate sexual behaviour or even offering medications designed to lower sex drive.

Niklas Långström, professor of psychiatric epidemiology at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm and lead author, said: "This does not imply that sons or brothers of sex offenders inevitably become offenders too. But although sex crime convictions are relatively few overall, our study shows that the family risk increase is substantial."

There is no evidence for a "sex offending gene", he added. Instead, a constellation of genes linked to factors such as impulse control, intelligence and sexual appetite are likely to influence the risk of a person committing an offence.

The study is the first major investigation of the genetic basis of sexual crime – a subject that had proved too challenging for previous survey-based research. "It's pretty sensitive to ask about these things, so we tried to use officially available data" said Prof Långström.

**Read full original article:** [Risk of sex offending linked to genetic factors, study finds](#)