



PARSOL

Prevention

Prevention Must be the Guiding Force for Effective Policy:

- Prevention of sexual violence can be achieved through a systematic and comprehensive public health approach supported by science, rational discourse, and collaboration among all stakeholders and disciplines (Letourneau, Eaton, Bass, Berlin, & Moore, 2014).
- Comprehensive prevention of sexual abuse is grounded in increasing protective factors and decreasing risk factors for both potential victims and potential perpetrators and is focused on primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention efforts at individual, family, community, and societal levels (Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers; Letourneau, et al., 2014; Tabachnick, 2013).
- Current law is aimed almost exclusively on secondary prevention, despite evidence that these efforts do little to nothing to prevent sexual violence, and may even *compromise* public safety (Letourneau, et al., 2014).

The Premises at the Foundation of SORN Laws are Flawed

- SORN legislation has been designed on the basis of misleading assumptions which foster strategies that fail to make communities safer.
 - The “stranger danger” myth misleads the public about the source of high risk of sexual violence. 93% of victims of sexual assault knew their attacker prior to the assault (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000).
 - The “frightening and high” recidivism myth falsely assumes that those individuals who have sexually offended will offend again (Ellman & Ellman, 2015).
 - Public sex offender registries are promoted as a public safety initiative, yet 87% of sexual offenses are committed by individuals who are not subjected to SORN (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1997). The idea that “something is being done” leads to a false sense of security and diverts resources from prevention.

References

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