


WHY do we register children as sexual criminals?

written by admin | October 19, 2017

Name:	[REDACTED]		
Birth Date:	OCT 26, 1991	Birth Place:	MT
Race:	WHITE	Sex:	MALE
Height:	5 FEET 08 INCHES	Weight:	145 LBS
Eye Color:	BLUE	Hair Color:	RED OR AUBURN
Home Address			
1978 BOISE AVE / B			
ID:	[REDACTED]	TY	
ID 83482			
Offense	Description	Date	Place of Conviction



By Riya Saha Shah...

Ten-year-old [Leah](#) pretended to have sex with her younger step-siblings. She said it happened a few times and that she was just acting out scenes from the movies. A couple years later, Leah's conduct was discovered by law enforcement.

Leah was 12 when she was convicted of criminal sexual conduct in juvenile court and labeled a sex offender. The law required her to remain on the [sex offender registry](#) for 25 years. She says she lost jobs and internships as a result. When she was about to enter her freshman year of college, an old friend called her up to tell her she'd seen Leah's name and photograph on the state's online public registry. Even though her friend knew the circumstances of Leah's conviction, it seemed all anyone would see when they searched her name was "sex offender."

According to the Center on Youth Registration Reform's

estimates, Leah is one of the approximately [200,000 individuals](#) placed on sex offender registries for actions they engaged in before they were 18 years old. Proponents of laws that require children to be placed on sex offender registries argue that providing the public this information will help people keep their families safe from harm. But many believe that including children on registries does much more harm than good.

While laws [differ from state to state](#), sex offenders can include individuals who engaged in benign sexual experimentation, those who “sext” with their peers, as well as those who committed a forcible rape. The classification of offenses [differs by state](#), but in all cases, registration is imposed after young people have been held accountable in the court system. Before they are deemed rehabilitated and fit to return to society, many offenders spend years incarcerated and undergo treatment to address their sexual misconduct. But the society [to which they return](#) is [not likely to accept them](#) when they’re labeled sex offenders.

Depending on the state, registration can last anywhere from a few years to the individual’s entire lifetime. During that time, they may be required to appear in person – in some cases every week and in others, every 90 days or more – to update and verify their information. This can include details like where one’s car is parked, their online usernames, and, if they are homeless, a few places they may frequent. If a young person fails to provide this information or to return to the police station to report any changes in this information, they may be charged with a felony offense and incarcerated.

These laws are based upon the assumption that juveniles who commit sex offenses will commit them again. Research has showed that the overwhelming majority of juvenile sex offenders won’t – [between 97% to 99%](#) of young people who commit a sexual offense never reoffend. [Not all](#) sex offenses committed by juveniles are sexually motivated; some young

people who are required to register have cognitive or intellectual disabilities or are [on the autism spectrum](#).

[*Keep reading here*](#)