

Women Against Registry offers valuable support service

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By [Serena Solomon](#) . . . Vicki Henry sits at the desk in her two-bedroom duplex on a recent Sunday morning and adjusts her phone headset, which she has nestled on hair with a deep magenta tinge, a rare bit of pizzazz for the 72-year-old grandmother of three.

Everyone else in Henry's working-class neighborhood of Arnold, a southern suburb of St. Louis, is probably at church or finishing up a pancake breakfast with the family. But Henry is on the clock for a job that pays her nothing.

She wears a baggy red T-shirt with "Women Against Registry" and the acronym "WAR" embroidered on it in white thread. Henry runs WAR, an organization whose goal is to abolish the public sex offender registries that exist in every state.

She dials a phone number that showed up as a missed call on WAR's support line, which receives dozens of calls each month from registrants and families who are in search of emotional

and practical support. A woman named Ramona answers. She has spoken with Henry before. Henry asks Ramona for permission to put her on speakerphone so I can ask her questions, and Ramona agrees, asking that I use only her first name to protect the identity of her family. . . .

The WAR support line, Henry says, provides a rare, judgment-free opportunity for family members to verbally process the mixed emotions they have after a loved one is convicted of a sex crime. Other callers are registrants themselves, like the military veteran who was distraught because he feared his children would be bullied if their school friends discovered his name on Virginia's registry. Another asked for legal advice after an airline refused to let him, his wife, and his children board ahead of a long-planned vacation because of his sex offender status.

[*Read the full piece here at Vox.*](#)