



Evidence-Based Policy

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Registration and Notification

- 1994: Jacob Wetterling Act
 - Required sex offenders to register with local law enforcement so that such criminals could be tracked and their whereabouts known.
- 1996: Megan's Law
 - Amended the Wetterling Act, requiring all states to implement community notification.
- About half of the states assign offenders to one of three risk levels and notify differentially according to risk.
- Other states (such as Florida) employ broad community notification
- Upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2003, in 2 cases (CT & Alaska)
- PROTECT amendment require all states to develop Internet registries by 2006.
- Adam Walsh Act (2006)

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Thus far, there is little evidence that community notification is successful in reducing sexual offense recidivism.

- Washington Institute for Public Policy (Schram & Milloy, 1995).
- Compared 125 released adult sex offenders who were subject to Washington's highest level of notification with a randomly selected control group of 90 offenders released before the law went into effect.
- Follow-up periods 1 – 4 years.
- No statistically significant difference in recidivism rates between offenders who were subject to notification (19% recidivism) and those who were not (22% recidivism).
- However, sex offenders who were subject to community notification were arrested more quickly for new sex crimes than those not subject to notification.
- 63% of the new sex offenses occurred in the jurisdiction where notification took place.
- The authors concluded that community notification had little effect on sex offense recidivism.

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Does Community Registration and Notification Reduce Recidivism?

- (Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2005).
- After controlling for generally decreasing crime trends, sex offense recidivism rates dropped nearly 70% after 1997, when community notification procedures in Washington were standardized across the state.
- The absolute recidivism rates were low; 5% to <1% respectively.
- While the authors acknowledged they were unable to account for other possible explanations for this reduction (e.g., more severe sentencing guidelines, or improved probationary supervision), they concluded that community notification has likely contributed to reductions in sexual offending.
- Notably, Washington reserves its most aggressive community notification for its highest risk "level III" offenders. Consequently, the results might be generalized only to those states with similarly crafted policies.

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Does Community Registration and Notification Reduce Recidivism?

(Walker, Maddan, Vasquez, VanHouten, & Ervin-McLarty, 2005).

- An interrupted time-series analysis involving ten states investigated the impact of registration and notification laws on sexual assault rates.
- Five states experienced an increase in sexual assault rates, with one of those states being statistically significant
- Trends in three states revealed a significant decrease in sex crime rates.
- The authors concluded that registration and notification policies did not appear to have a systematic influence on decreasing sex crime rates across the ten states as a group.

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Does Community Registration and Notification Reduce Recidivism?

- (Adkins, Huff, & Stageberg, 2000).
- In Iowa, researchers tracked 223 sex offenders for about 4 years. Approximately 3% of the registered sex offenders were rearrested for a new sex crime, compared with 3.5% of sex offenders who were not required to register.
- This difference was not statistically significant.

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Does Community Registration and Notification Reduce Recidivism?

- (Zevitz, 2006)
- In Wisconsin, 47 high-risk sex offenders subject to aggressive public notification had higher (though not statistically significant) rates of recidivism (19%) than 166 high-risk sex offenders about whom the community was not informed (12% recidivism).
- Zevitz concluded that "extensive amounts of public exposure for sex offenders...had little effect on their recidivism" (p. 204).

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Which sex offenders should be subject to notification?

Levenson, Brannon, Fortney, & Baker (2007)

No sex offenders	1.6%
All sex offenders except those rated low risk with no history of violence	6.3%
All sex offenders rated high risk	5.8%
All sex offenders	76.3%

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Notification strategies in Melbourne, FL

	Never	Sometime	Most of the Time	Regularly	Don't Know
	%	%	%	%	%
Fliers are posted in my neighborhood	56.0%	17.1%	7.8%	4.1%	15.0%
Police go door to door to inform	63.0%	8.9%	2.6%	3.6%	21.9%
Neighborhood meetings	61.7%	7.3%	3.1%	1.6%	26.4%
Fliers sent home with school kids	39.3%	12.6%	6.3%	3.7%	38.2%
Newspapers publish pictures	21.2%	25.4%	9.8%	10.9%	32.6%

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Unintended Consequences

What are Offenders' experiences and perceptions of the effects of Megan's Law?

Levenson & Cotter (2005)
183 male adult sex offenders in FL

Levenson, D'Amora, & Hern (2007)
239 male adult sex offenders in CT & IN

Zevitz, Crim & Farkas (2000)
30 adult males sex offenders in Wisconsin

Tewksbury (2005)
121 adult male sex offenders in Kentucky

Tewksbury (2004)
Female sex offenders in Kentucky and Indiana

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Results

Florida (n=183)
Indiana & Connecticut (n=239)

Type of Consequence	Florida	Indiana Connecticut
I have lost a job because my boss or co-workers found out I am a sex offender.	27%	21%
I have had to move from a home or apartment because landlord found out that I am a sex offender.	20%	10%
I have had to move from a home or apartment because neighbors complained that I was a sex offender.	15%	11%
I have been threatened or harassed by neighbors.	33%	21%
I have been physically assaulted or injured by someone who found out I was a sex offender.	5%	10%
My property has been damaged by someone who found out I was a sex offender.	21%	18%
A person who lives with me has been threatened, harassed, assaulted, injured, or suffered property damage because I am a sex offender.	19%	16%

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Results

Levenson & Cotter, 2005

- As the length of time on probation (and exposure to notification procedures) increased, so did the incidence of:
 - physical assault (r = .19; p < .05)
 - property damage (r = .17; p < .05)
 - consequences to household members (r = .20; p < .01).

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Differences in Proportions of Negative Consequences Grouped by reported notification strategies

	Flyers posted	Door to door warnings	Community meetings	Flyers sent home from school	Newspaper ads
n	No 48 Yes 55 Don't know 79	No 47 Yes 52 Don't know 83	No 64 Yes 26 Don't know 92	No 64 Yes 22 Don't know 96	No 62 Yes 32 Don't know 88
Lost job	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Had to move from home because landlord found out	ns	**	ns	ns	ns
Had to move from home because neighbors complained	**	**	ns	ns	ns
Threatened or harassed	ns	ns	*	ns	*
Physically assaulted or injured	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Property damage	ns	ns	*	ns	ns
Suffering to household members	ns	ns	ns	ns	*

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Indiana & Connecticut (N = 239)

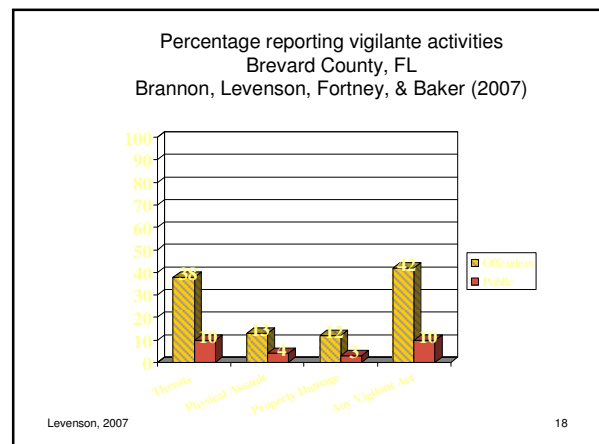
	No	Agree or Strongly agree
Megan's law makes my recovery more difficult by causing stress in my life.	239	62%
I feel alone and isolated because of Megan's law.	239	54%
I have lost friends or close relationships because of Megan's law.	236	50%
I am afraid for my safety because of Megan's law.	235	46%
Shame and embarrassment due to Megan's law keep me from engaging in activities.	236	58%
I have less hope for the future now that I will be a registered sex offender.	238	55%
Sometimes Megan's law makes me feel hopeless - "no one believes I can change, so why even try?"	239	44%

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- Tewksbury, 2005; 2004
- In Kentucky, job and housing difficulties were revealed by about 45% of male sex offenders.
 - Nearly half had been harassed.
 - 16% reported being physically attacked (Tewksbury, 2005).
 - Female sex offenders from Kentucky and Indiana indicated that after almost three years on the registry, 45% had suffered employment instability.
 - 35% had been denied housing.
 - 50% lost friends.
 - 45% were harassed
 - 15% reported being assaulted (Tewksbury, 2004).
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- Zevitz, Crim & Farkas (2000)
- A large majority of Wisconsin sex offenders experienced
 - housing problems (83%)
 - isolation or harassment (77%)
 - employment instability (57%)
 - harm to family members (67%)
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- Vigilante
- Shootings
 - Arson
 - Property damage
 - Murder: Maine, Washington, New Hampshire
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Positive Consequences Florida (n=183)

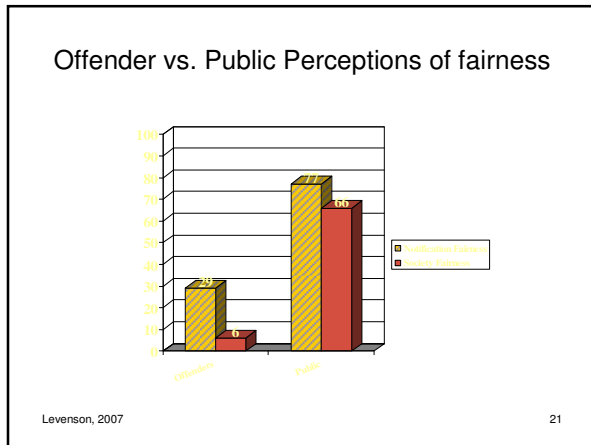
Positive Impact	Agree or Strongly Agree
I am more willing to manage my risk factors because I know my neighbors are watching me.	36%
I am more motivated to prevent reoffense so that I can prove to others that I am not a bad person.	66%
I think that registration and notification help me to prevent offending.	22%
Because my neighbors know that I am a sex offender, I have less access to potential victims because people keep their children (or other potential victims) away from me.	22%
Megan's Law has helped me to be more honest with people.	26%
I find that most people who know that I am a sex offender are supportive of my recovery.	52%
I agree that communities are safer when they know where sex offenders live.	32%

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Perceptions of Fairness Florida (n=183)

	Unfair	Somewhat fair	Very Fair
Fingerprints	54%	23%	20%
Photographs	49%	33%	16%
Home address	65%	26%	8%
Home telephone	89%	6%	4%
Work address	88%	7%	4%
Description of sex crimes	40%	37%	21%
Vehicle description	68%	20%	10%
License plate number	74%	16%	9%
HIV test status	45%	20%	33%

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- ### Narrative Responses: Common Themes
- Many offenders pointed out that their victims were family members or acquaintances and that the threat of strangers is exaggerated by the media.
 - They suggested the need for education to help families become more aware of the dangers posed by people they know and trust.
 - The majority of responses focused on the need for a risk-level system of classification with differential notification for higher risk offenders.
 - Another common theme was the unfairness of lifetime registration and notification.
 - Respondents felt that notification should be altered after successful completion of treatment or probation, or that a mechanism to petition the court for removal from the registry should be provided after some extended period of law-abiding behavior.
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- ### Registry reliability
- More than half the sample reported that the information on Florida's Internet registry was incorrect.
 - Poor tracking of sex offenders has received national attention and reduces the credibility and effectiveness of notification.
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- ### Registry reliability
- In 2003, the Boston Herald reported that the whereabouts of 49% of registered sex offenders in Massachusetts were unknown (Mullvihill, Wisniewski, Meyers, & Wells, 2003).
 - An investigation of the accuracy of Kentucky's internet registry revealed that as many as 25% of the registered addresses might be incorrect (Tewksbury, 2002).
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Indiana & CT

The information listed about me on the internet registry is correct.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	15	6.3	6.4	6.4
disagree	9	3.8	3.8	10.2
I don't know	89	37.1	37.9	48.1
agree	98	40.8	41.7	89.8
strongly agree	24	10.0	10.2	100.0
Total	235	97.9	100.0	
Missing System	5	2.1		
Total	240	100.0		

The information listed about me on the registry helps the public know how to protect themselves from me.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	47	19.6	19.9	19.9
disagree	59	24.6	25.0	44.9
I don't know	72	30.0	30.5	75.4
agree	50	20.8	21.2	96.6
strongly agree	8	3.3	3.4	100.0
Total	236	98.3	100.0	
Missing System	4	1.7		
Total	240	100.0		

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Conclusions

- Little evidence to support that community notification prevents sexual abuse, reduces recidivism, or protects children.
- The unintended consequences of sexual abuse might disrupt the stability of sex offenders in ways that may be counterproductive.

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Residence restrictions nationally

- In 2004, 14 states had residence restrictions
- Since 2005, 22 states and hundreds of cities have passed ordinances
- *Seering v. Iowa*, a district court declared Iowa's restrictions unconstitutional in 2003, resulting in an injunction preventing the enforcement of Iowa's 2,000 foot buffer zone.
- In July of 2005, the Iowa Supreme Court overturned the lower court's ruling, opining that the infringement on sex offenders' freedom of residency was superseded by the state's compelling interest in protecting its citizens.
- In a separate but related Iowa case, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals also upheld the constitutionality of the law in a class action suit against the state by sex offenders ("*Doer v. Miller and White*," 2004).
- The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear the case.
- Superior court judge in NJ ruled residence laws unlawful because they violate Megan's Law which says that sex offender status can not be used to deny housing or other accommodations.

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Georgia

- July 1, 2006
 - Prohibits registered sex offenders from living, working, or loitering within 1,000 feet of any child care facility, church, school, bus stop or "area where minors congregate." It also makes it illegal for child sex offenders or sexually dangerous predators to loiter in those areas.
- No grandfather clause
- US District Judge granted class action status to all registered sex offenders and issue a temporary injunction against the enforcement of the bus stop residence restriction.

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California: Proposition 83

- Prohibits sex offenders from living within 2000 feet of schools and parks.
- Passed overwhelmingly; 73% of voters.
- Under injunction.
- Ex post facto has been ruled illegal

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Forces pushing increased residence restrictions

- Common belief that this effort will make the community safer.
- Common feeling that punitive efforts towards all sex offenders are justified after hearing highly publicized single cases of child abduction, abuse and death.

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Does proximity to schools increase recidivism?

- In Colorado, 130 sex offenders on probation were tracked for 15 months (Colorado Department of Public Safety, 2004).
- Recidivists were randomly scattered throughout the study area, and did not seem to live closer than non-recidivists to schools or child care centers.
- Fifteen (12%) were rearrested for new sex crimes, and all were "hands off" offenses (peeping, voyeurism, or indecent exposure).
- Researchers concluded that residence restrictions are unlikely to deter sex offenders from committing new sex crimes, and that such policies should not be considered viable strategies for protecting communities.

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Does proximity to schools increase recidivism?

- Minnesota: 329 "level three" sex offenders (those considered to be at highest risk for reoffense) tracked for 3 to 6 years (Minnesota department of corrections, 2003).
- Researchers concluded that sex offenders' residential proximity to schools or parks was not a factor in recidivism, nor did it impact community safety.
- 4% recidivism (13 cases)
- They advised that blanket policies restricting where sex offenders can live are unlikely to benefit community safety.
- None of the offenses occurred in or near schools.
- They did suggest that case-by-case restrictions may be an appropriate supervision strategy when based on the risks and needs of each individual offender.
- Two of the offenses did take place near parks, but the park areas were several miles from the offenders' homes and the offender used a car to drive to the crime scene.

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Does proximity to schools increase recidivism?

- **Minnesota DOC (2007)**
- analyzed 224 recidivistic sex offenses and concluded that "not one of the 224 sex offenses would likely have been deterred by a residency restriction law" (Minnesota Department of Corrections, 2007, p. 2).
- **The majority of the sex offenders (79%) victimized someone known to them, and half of the assaults against strangers occurred more than one mile from the offenders' homes.**
- **Of the 16 juvenile victims with whom contact was established within one mile of the offender's home, none of these relationships were cultivated near a school, park or playground (Minnesota Department of Corrections, 2007).**

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4 criteria in MN 07 study

1. Because housing restrictions are geared primarily towards deterring sex offenders—namely, child molesters—from initiating contact with potential victims, offenders had to establish direct contact with the victims, as opposed to gaining access to their victims through another person they know such as a significant other (e.g. wife, fiancée, girlfriend, etc.), friend, co-worker, or acquaintance.
2. The contact had to have occurred within at least one mile of the offender's residence at the time of the offense.
3. The first contact location had to have been near a school, park, daycare center, or other prohibited area.
4. The victim had to have been under the age of 18 at the time of the offense.

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Does proximity to schools increase recidivism?

- Arkansas -- study of 170 sex offenders (Walker, Golden, & VanHouten, 2001).
- 48% of child molesters lived in close proximity to schools, day care centers, or parks, compared with 26% of perpetrators convicted of sex crimes against adult victims.
- The authors speculated that some child molesters might be motivated to purposely live within close access to potential victims.
- But, various factors contributing to residential placement choices were not investigated and could not be clearly identified.
- The study did not examine recidivism.
- No relationship between recidivism and residential proximity to schools or parks could be drawn.

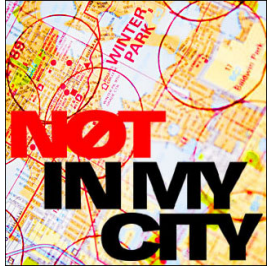
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There is no research indicating that sex offenders' proximity to schools increases their likelihood of recidivism, or that residence restrictions are successful in preventing sexual abuse or protecting children.

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New Trend: 2,500 Feet

- Virtually every independent city in Miami-Dade and Broward have passed ordinances.
- It is essentially impossible for sex offenders to find housing in metro-Miami and Ft. Lauderdale.



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Orange County, FL GIS mapping

Zandbergen, P. A., & Hart, T. C. (2006).

- The most dominant zoning category in Orange County is low-density residential with 137,944 occupied properties, or 51.2% of all 269,428 occupied residential and combined use properties.
- 22.5% of 137,944 potentially available residential properties fall within a 1,000 feet of schools and 63.7% fall within 2,500 feet, reducing the number of available properties to 106,888 and 50,108, respectively.
- When considering all 5 restrictions combined, the number drops to 4,233 properties for the 1,000-foot buffer zones and to 37 properties for the 2,500-foot buffer zones.
- In addition, these numbers represent all existing properties and only a very small portion of these are likely to be available for rent or purchase at any particular point in time.
 - 5 restrictions: schools, parks, daycare centers, bus stops, theme attractions

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- When considering the residency restriction categories individually, bus stops are the most restrictive (93.0% of potential properties fall within 1,000 of a bus stop and 99.6% within 2,500).
- followed by daycares (24.2% and 55.4%),
- schools (19.7% and 55.8%),
- parks (15.9% and 38.2%)
- and attractions (0.2% and 1.0%).
- These results clearly highlight the dominance of bus stops as a restrictive factor, and that daycares and schools result in roughly similar restrictions on the residency choices.

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Unanticipated Consequences

- Push offenders out of metropolitan areas and into rural communities with few resources.
- Isolate offenders and limit access to employment opportunities, social support, social services, and mental health treatment.
- Prevent living with supportive family members.
- Require the re-location of family members.
- Overlapping restriction zones make it essentially impossible for sex offenders in some cities to find housing.
- Restrictions can lead to homelessness and transience, which interfere with effective tracking, monitoring, and close probationary supervision.
- May increase risk by aggravating the stressors (ex. Isolation, disempowerment, shame, depression, substance abuse, lack of social supports) that can trigger some sex offenders to relapse.

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Florida's Experience

- 1,000 foot restriction since 1995
 - Probation condition
- 2005: Miami Beach passed 2,500 zone
- Nearly all independent cities Miami-Dade and Broward counties have 2,500-ft zones
 - Registered sex offenders with minor victims
- Palm Beach County – 2,500-ft county wide
- Virtually all of South Florida is off-limits
- State legislature declined to pass a 2,500 statewide zone in 2006

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Levenson, J.S. & Cotter, L.P. (2005). The impact of sex offender residence restrictions: 1,000 feet from danger or one step from absurd? *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 49(2), 168-168.

Item	Yes (n = 135)
I have had to move out of a home that I owned due to the 1,000 foot rule.	22%
I have had to move out of an apartment that I rented due to the 1,000 foot rule.	28%
When released from prison, I was unable to return to my home.	25%
I have been unable to live with supportive family members due to the 1,000 foot rule.	44%
I find it difficult to find affordable housing due to the 1,000 foot rule.	57%
I have suffered financially because of the 1,000 foot rule.	48%
I have suffered emotionally because of the 1,000 foot rule.	60%

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Many offenders emphasized their need for social support and believed their risk increased with isolation from supportive family and friends.

- "I believe you have a better chance of recovery by living with supportive family members."
- "What helps me is having support people around... isolating me is not helpful."
- One reported concern at having to live alone because of the location of his family's home, and several young adults said they were unable to live with parents and younger siblings after committing what they referred to as a "statutory" offense.
- Some respondents indicated that they had had to relocate several times, and one said he was forced to move to a "ghetto."

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The majority of respondents emphatically proclaimed that the 1,000-foot rule would have no effect on their risk of reoffense.

- Many pointed out the need for internal motivation to prevent reoffense and said that if a sex abuser wanted to reoffend, the rule would not stop him.
 - "Has no effect at all on offending,"
 - "Does not make an impact on my life,"
 - "I follow the rule but it has had little impact,"
 - "It's a childish rule,"
 - "You can walk as far as you want if that [child abuse] is what you're after,"
 - "Living 1,000 feet away compared to 900 feet doesn't prevent anything,"
 - "It doesn't matter where a sex offender lives if he sets his mind on reoffending... he can just get closer by walking or driving. The 1,000-rule is just a longer leash, I don't see the point."

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Some participants pointed out the Myth of "Stranger Danger".

- "It doesn't matter where you live; Most offenses happen with someone you know or live with."
- "Most abuse happens in homes or with family or close friends, not at bus stops or schools."
- "I couldn't live in an adult mobile home park because a church was 880 feet away and had a children's class that met once a week. I was forced to move to a motel where right next door to my room was a family with three children -- but it qualified under the rule."

Levenson, 2007

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Indiana (n=148)

Levenson, J. S., & Hern, A. (2007). The impact of sex offender residence restrictions on community re-entry. *Justice Research & Policy* 9(2).

Levenson, 2007

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Indiana

Levenson, 2007

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Indiana	Offender age	Years of education	Income	Most recent victim age	Months on probation
Had to move out of a house that I owned	.05	-.03	-.02	-.11	.16
Had to move out of a rental	-.08	-.15	-.08	-.10	.17
When released from prison, unable to return home	-.01	-.08	-.15	-.15	.03
Unable to live with supportive family	-.21*	-.12	-.15	-.08	.00
Landlord refused to rent to me	-.14	.00	.00	.00	.15
Landlord refused to renew lease	-.08	.00	.03	.01	-.08
Have found it difficult to find an affordable place to live	-.31**	.00	.00	.04	-.04

Levenson, 2007 2-tailed bivariate correlations; * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$ 49

Levenson, J.S. under review, Criminal Justice Studies
Broward County, Florida, 2006
Post-passage of local 2,500-foot zoning laws*

- Method
 - 2 outpatient treatment programs in Broward
 - Completed surveys during treatment group session
 - 109 out of 160, response rate 68%
- Sample $n = 109$
 - 60% between 25-49
 - 63% white
 - 22% currently married
 - 42% never married
 - 54% HS grad or GED
 - 32% some college or grad
 - 56% < \$30,000
 - 18% adult victims
 - 35% kids < 12
 - 53% minor teens
 - 71% Female victims only
 - 66% relative or acquaintance

* In Broward County, 23 out of 30 independent cities have passed municipal ordinances.

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Collateral Consequences of Residence Restrictions	Percentage reporting "yes"
I had to move out of a home that I owned.	22%
I had to move out of a home that I rented.	33%
When released from jail or prison, I was unable to return to my home.	42%
I am unable to live with supportive family members.	49%
I am unable to live with family members who depend on me.	43%
My family members have been forced to move.	22%
I have become homeless.	17%
A landlord refused to rent to me.	47%
A landlord refused to renew my existing lease.	22%
I have found it difficult to find a place to live.	65%
I was considered in violation of probation due to a residence restriction.	28%
I spent time in jail due to a residence violation.	13%

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Psychosocial Consequences of Residence Restrictions (n = 109)	% endorsing "agree" or "strongly agree"
I have suffered financially due to residence restrictions.	66%
I have suffered emotionally due to residence restrictions.	73%
I live farther away from employment opportunities.	57%
I live farther away from social services and mental health treatment.	41%
I live farther away from public transportation, no car.	27%
I live farther away from family support.	63%
I worry that if I ever have to move I will be unable to find a place to live.	87%

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Average number of days spent homeless or staying with someone	63
Average number of moves	2
22% reported 3 or more moves	

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Perceptions about utility of residence restrictions in preventing recidivism (n = 109)	% endorsing "agree" or "strongly agree"
I am more able to manage my risk factors	17%
Residence restrictions are successful in limiting access to children	9%
I believe that residence restrictions help me to prevent offending	7%
I believe that residence restrictions protect children from sex offenders	12%
If I wanted to reoffend I could do so despite residence restrictions	74%

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Which places create most difficulty finding housing? (FL)

Bus stops	28%
Schools	22%
Swimming pools (other place where children congregate)	20%
Daycare centers	15%
Parks & Playgrounds	15%
Other: Churches, fast food playgrounds	20%

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	Offender age	Years of education	Income	Most recent victim age	Proximity Zone ^a
Had to move out of a house that I owned	-.16	.12	-.10	.23*	.02
Had to move out of a rental	-.23*	-.12	-.10	.02	.21*
When released from prison, unable to return home	-.27**	.00	-.02	.11	.11
Unable to live with supportive family	-.26**	.00	-.12	.00	.15
Landlord refused to rent to me	-.32**	.19	-.06	.05	.06
Landlord refused to renew lease	-.25*	.17	-.06	.05	-.02
Have found it difficult to find affordable place to live	-.29**	-.10	-.17	-.03	.16
Spent time in jail due to residence violation	-.25*	-.03	-.20*	-.14	-.03
Number of days homeless	-.26*	.05	-.05	.02	.33**
Number of moves	-.24*	-.05	.08	-.15	.19
Live farther away from criminal justice system	-.12	.02	-.04	.06	.22*

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- ### Limitations
- Self report
 - Relatively small samples
 - However, combined samples total nearly 400 from 2 states, and show similar results.
 - Adds to an otherwise non-existent literature.
 - New mapping research corroborates sex offenders' reports of reduced housing availability.
- Levenson, 2007 57

- ### So what?
- Decades of criminological research have identified social support and employment as important factors in successful community re-entry and decreased recidivism.
 - Residence restrictions decrease stability and increase the psychosocial stressors that challenge coping skills (dynamic risk factors) – potentially increasing the risk for recidivism.
 - Laws that disrupt stability and push sex offenders into rural communities where they are more difficult to track and supervise are unlikely to be in the best interest of public safety.
- Levenson, 2007 58

- ### So what?
- Social stability enhances the probability of successful reintegration for criminal offenders, and public policies that generate obstacles to community re-entry may therefore undermine public safety (Petersilia, 2003).
 - In Colorado, sex offenders with positive support systems reoffended and violated the rules of their probation less often than those who had negative or no support (Colorado Department of Public Safety, 2004).
 - Sex offenders with stable employment and social relationships have lower recidivism rates than those without jobs or significant others (Kruttschnitt et al., 2000).
 - Zevitz and Farkas (2000b) noted that employment and housing were especially critical in facilitating a smooth transition to the community for sex offenders after incarceration.
 - Poor social supports, negative social influences, poor self-management strategies, and negative moods have been identified as dynamic risk factors associated with sex offense recidivism (Hanson & Harris, 1996; 2001).
- Levenson, 2007 59

- ### Iowa's experience
- 2000-foot exclusion zone passed in 2002.
 - Challenged and overturned in "Doe v. Miller and White," 2004.
 - Upheld by Iowa Supreme Court and 8th Circuit Court of Appeals (2005)
 - Within six months, the number of sex offenders across the state whose whereabouts were unknown nearly tripled (Davey, 2006; Rood, 2006).
 - Approximately 6,000 sex offenders and their families were displaced by the law, and many reported becoming homeless (Rood, 2006).
- Levenson, 2007 60

Iowa County Attorneys Assn (2006)

- Called to rescind the law, asserting that as more sex offenders become homeless and transient, law enforcement authorities are less able to monitor their day-to-day activities (Iowa County Attorneys Association, 2006).
- “damage to the reliability of the sex offender registry does not serve the interest of public safety” (p. 2)
- “there is no demonstrated protective effect...that justifies the drainage of...resources” (p. 2).

Levenson, 2007

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Iowa County Attorneys Assn (2006)

- “the categories of crimes included are too broad, imposing the restrictions on many offenders who pose no known risk to children in the covered locations” (p. 2).
- Have caused a decline in confessions and plea agreements, overwhelming the criminal justice system with trials and leading to some sex offense charges being dropped. As a result, many sex offenders will go unpunished and without treatment.
- Recommended sex offender risk assessment so that housing restrictions could be applied only to those who pose a threat to unknown children in public places.

Levenson, 2007

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Victims groups oppose residence restrictions

- National Alliance to End Sexual Violence
 - “Sex offenders who continually move or become homeless as a result of residency restrictions are more difficult to supervise and monitor, thereby increasing the risk of re-offense....”
 - “Because residency requirements cause instability, which may increase the risk of re-offense, NAESV opposes residency restrictions.”

Levenson, 2007

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Victims groups oppose residence restrictions

- California Coalition Against Sexual Assault
 - The coalition of rape crisis centers and sexual assault prevention programs criticize residence restrictions as “a short-sighted approach to sex offender management that will place California communities in greater danger.”
 - “This combination of policies creates a variety of unintended consequences. One is that there will be a general migration of sex offenders to rural communities who simply cannot monitor them, while on the other hand, the remainder of offenders in urban areas will simply go underground, failing to register.”

Levenson, 2007

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Public statements AGAINST residence restrictions

- Iowa County Attorney’s Association
- NAESV
- www.naesv.org
- www.nacdl.org

Levenson, 2007

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