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Grade: 6
Topic: Sexual Violence

According to Senator Bob Ney, "Nearly 100,000 sex offenders remain unregistered and are moving freely about the country; the risk that they might strike again grows every day." When my cousin was 6 she was sexually abused by her aunt's husband. The after-effects of this situation were really painful for our family. She was depressed and cried a lot. We tried to console her and do everything to make her feel well. She is now 10 and in a better mental state. I want this man who hurt her, and others like him, to be registered because sexual violence is a serious public problem and has both a profound short and long-term impact on physical and mental health; government officials should create stricter laws against sex offenders to prevent this kind of life-changing distress.

Sexual violence happens in different forms which causes victims to suffer mentally and physically. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "In armed conflicts, the breakdown of social infrastructures, the disintegration of families and communities, and the disruption of responses leave women and girls vulnerable to sexual and other forms of gender-based violence, including rape by combatants and intimate partners or acquaintances and, at times, sexual exploitation by humanitarian actors." This evidence tells me that women can be threatened and abused by family members, co-workers, or even boyfriends and that it can happen anywhere, anytime. By creating stricter laws against these assaults they can be less likely for anyone to become a victim of sexual violence.

Furthermore, this violence impacts many women each year. WHO goes on to say, "Approximately 1 in 5 (21.3% or an estimated 25.5 million) women in the U.S. reported completed or attempted rape at some point in their lifetime." This shows how sexual violence happens every year and no one does anything to solve it. In addition, WHO reports there are an average of 433,648 victims (age 12 or older) of rape and sexual assault each year in the United States. This evidence indicates that sexual violence can happen to anyone at any age. In order to get rid of this situation, government officials should create stricter laws against sex offenders.

In conclusion, sexual violence should be taken seriously. It can happen to anyone because sexual violence is a serious public health problem and has a profound short or long-term impact on physical and mental health, so government officials should create stricter laws against sex offenders to prevent this mental and physical health issue. What happened to my cousin is heartbreaking. This is not something a 6-year-old should be anxious about.

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