

# [Statistics decade in april 2011, sarah’s law became](https://assignbuster.com/statistics-decade-in-april-2011-sarahs-law-became/)

Statisticsin the UK show that parents should be concerned about child sex abuse, due tocases such as Sarah Payne, but also the amount of sexual offences againstchildren that are recorded, and 90% being by someone the child knew (NSPCC2018). Reports of sexual offences against children have raised in the UK(Bentley 2017).

However, there cannot bea definite and accurate number of statistics because in many cases such crimesare left unreported as the child can usually be too young, ashamed of what hashappened or scared due to threats that have been made to them. Parents need tobe vigilant around people who have access to their children. Newsof the world set up a campaign ‘ naming and shaming’ but due to innocent peoplebeing attacked did not succeed (Silverman and Wilson 2002). After more than adecade in April 2011, Sarah’s law became operational in England and Wales whichallows members of the public to contact police to enquire if anyone in contactwith their children pose a risk (Jones and Newburn 2013).

Sara Payne personified how the failure of thecriminal justice system dealing with violent and dangerous criminals coulddestroy innocent lives and families (Charman and Savage 2009). Asit unfolded that Whiting had previously been convicted of child sexual offencesthe News of the world launched crusade ‘ For Sarah’ with the support of hermother Sara. They were demanding for the law to be changed for all paedophilesto receive a life sentence when convicted and for the government to pass’Sarah’s law’ which would give parents the right to know if there is apaedophile living in their community, a law like this could have saved Sarah’slife.

Greer and McLaughlin (2017) suggest that if paedophiles were serving lifesentences Sarah Payne’s life would not have been taken. Aman called Roy Whiting was found guilty of the abduction and murder of Sarah, he denied his guilt but there was too much evidence to prove he was guilty. Forensictests shown that Sarah was in his car. On the 12th December 2001Whiting received a life sentence and was recommended to serve a while lifesentence which was set at 30 years. However, Whiting also had previousconvictions of sexual abuse charges on another eight-year-old girl where he wassentenced to four years in prison and only served half of his sentence. Afterhis release in 1997 he was one of the first men to be put on the new sexoffenders list.

Sarah Payne’s murder was such a high-profile case and itchanged so many aspects of the law and procedures (Newburn 2017). Onthe 2nd July 2000 an eight-year-old girl, Sarah Payne, was abductedin West Sussex. Sarah and her two brothers were out playing in a field when shewas abducted. Her body was later found on the 17th July although itwas in a state of decomposition and the cause of death could not be identified, it was later revealed that she was either strangled or suffocated (Newburn2017)Itwas not until the early 1980s that there was an idea of sexual abuse ofchildren as opposed to physical abuse, it started to gain recognition (Newburn2017).