

COMMUNITY POLICING in Snohomish County

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Crime Prevention Information

You can find the newsletter in the new "Crime Prevention Information" section of the Sheriff's web page at www.co.snohomish.wa.us/sheriff/Crime%20Prevention/Crime%20Prevention.htm

Sexual Offenders– Who They Are

Over the summer there have been numerous reports in the news, both locally and nationally, about kids being kidnapped by sexual predators. One columnist has even designated the summer as "the Summer of the Kidnapped Kid." As scary and tragic as these incidents have been, they represent only a small minority of the danger to children.

95% of sexual offenders are known to their victims; 3% are in positions of trust; 2% are strangers.

The typical sex offender is male (although not exclusively), has at least a high school education, is employed, and does not have a criminal record. 85% are known to the family of the victim— either as family members, friends, or an otherwise significant relationship to the family. While other criminals decrease their criminal activity as they get older, most sex offenders, without treatment, continue to offend until they are physically incapable.

The vast majority of child molesters are adults who seduce children they know through the use of subtle intimidation, persuasion and grooming. First, the sex offender gains the trust and friendship of the targeted child and its family. Then the offender will test the child's knowledge and ability to protect

themselves. Sexual jokes, back rubs, "accidental" sexual touching and hugging are used to "test the waters." This activity is often done in the presence of the parents. If the behavior does not create alarm in the child or the parents, the offender continues escalating the amount of sexual exposure. Also, offenders are careful to avoid causing physical pain or injury. Doing so increases the likelihood that the child will disclose what has been going on. Ultimately, the offender uses secrecy and shame on the part of the child to cloak his (or her) activity.

For the small minority of stranger kidnappers, several methods may be used to gain control of a targeted child including force, fear, bribery or tricks. The offender may appear to be friendly or trustworthy. Usually, the stranger will use a public place such as a park, mall or playground.

Some tricks include bribery (with candy or toys for young children, money or a trip to someplace exciting for teens); luring young children with a cute animal as a reward; requesting help with a fake emergency involving the victim's home, family or friend; claiming to be a friend of a friend who asked the offender to pick up the child; accusing the child of being bad; flattering the child with offers to take their photo for a "major" modeling magazine or agency.

Risk Assessment

When a convicted sex offender is about to be released from a state correctional institution, an End-of-Sentence Review Committee consisting of representatives from the Department of Corrections, mental health divisions of the Department of Social and Health Services and local law enforcement, reviews the offender's records and categorizes the offender:

Level I- *Least likely to re-offend. Local law enforcement keeps information & disseminates to other appropriate law enforcement agencies.*

Level II- *Moderate risk to re-offend– In addition, schools & anyone having to do with kids maybe notified.*

Level III- *Most likely to re-offend. Adds media and community to notification*

Registered Sex Offender Unit

For more information concerning sex offenders contact:

*Detective Joe Beard-
425-388-3324*

Joe.Beard@co.snohomish.wa.us

*Detective Dave Coleman-
425-388-3324*

David.Coleman@co.snohomish.wa.us

Sex Offenders– Community Notification

The Community Protection Act of 1990 provides guidance to Washington State law enforcement agencies for notifying the public about the location of convicted sex offenders. Since the early 1990's, the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office has conducted numerous sex offender notification meetings. The Sheriff's Office conducts the meetings not to panic citizens, but to increase their awareness and improve their safety.

In 2001, the State of Washington instituted a law requiring local law enforcement agencies to publicize Level III offenders on internet web sites.

To be a sex offender, an individual must have been convicted of a sex offense that requires the individual to register with local law enforcement. Currently, there are over 16,000 registered sex offenders in the state of Washington. Over 1,300 reside in Snohomish County.

The Community Protection Act is often under attack in the courts by defense attorneys. The Sheriff's Office is careful to ensure that it's practices in notifying the community about sex offenders remains constitutional. Those practices include 1.) Not providing the exact address of the offender. 2.) It does not provide employment information of the offender. 3.) It does not provide information

about vehicles that are used by or registered to the offender.

Registration requirements and community notification are not meant to be punitive to the offender, but are intended for the safety of the community. Misuse of the information provided by the Sheriff's Office could endanger the notification program of the Sex Offender Unit, emphasizes that known sex offenders are not as dangerous as the unknown sex offenders.

Getting information about sex offenders. You can obtain information about Level II & III sex offenders at your precinct. You can find information about Level III sex offenders on the Sheriff's Office web site at <http://www.co.snohomish.wa.us/sheriff/rso/>. You can make copies from the web site as long as you do not alter the pages.

Three Parts to Protection. According to Detective Coleman three local entities must do their jobs to protect the public from sex offenders:

1. The Offender– Must meet his (or her) conditions set by the court, and must seek help when he (or she) thinks they will re-offend.
2. Law Enforcement– Must keep track of the offender.
3. The Community- needs to educate it's family on how to protect itself and know how sex offenders operate.

Sex Offenders— Preventing Sexual Assault

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children makes the following common sense guidelines for you to keep your children safe:

1. Know where your children are at all times. Know their friends and be clear with them about the places and homes they may visit.
2. Never leave children unattended in an automobile, whether it is running or not.
3. Be involved in your children's activities. As an active participant, you'll have a better opportunity to observe how the adults in charge interact with your children. If you are concerned about anyone's behavior, take it up with the sponsoring organization.
4. Listen to your children. Pay attention if they tell you that they don't want to be with someone or go somewhere. This may be an indication of more than a personality conflict or lack of interest in the activity or event.
5. Notice when someone shows one or all of your children a great deal of attention or begins giving them gifts. Take the time to talk to your children about the person and find out why the person is acting in this way.
6. Teach your children that they have the right to say NO to any unwelcome, uncomfortable, or

confusing touch or actions by others. Teach them to tell you immediately if this happens. Reassure them that you're there to help and it is okay to tell you anything.

7. Be sensitive to any changes in your children's behavior or attitude. Encourage open communication and learn how to be an active listener. Look and listen to small cues and clues that something may be troubling your children, because children are not always comfortable disclosing disturbing events or feelings. Listen compassionately to their concern, and work **with them** to get the help they need to resolve the problem.
8. Be sure to screen babysitters and caregivers. Check out references with other families who have used the caregiver or babysitter. Once you have chosen the caregiver, drop in unexpectedly to see how your children are doing.
9. Practice basic safety skills with your children. Make an outing to a mall or park a "teachable" experience in which your children can practice checking with you, using pay telephones, going to the restroom with a friend, and locating the adults who can help if they need assistance.
10. Remember that there is no substitute for your attention and supervision. Being available and taking time to really know and listen to your children helps build feelings of safety and security.

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

For more information about preventing child sexual assault contact the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children at:

www.missingkids.org

1-800-THE-LOST

Warn of Situations, Not of Strangers

It is easy for parents to warn their children to stay away from strangers or the sex offender across the street. But, this can be false advice, since you need to beware of those who you know and who you don't know.

*Its better to teach them to watch for certain **situations** or **actions**. That way your children will be better prepared to handle the situation no matter who initiates the action.*

COMMUNITY POLICING in Snohomish County

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Everett, WA 98201*

*Rick Bart, Sheriff
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- Sheriff Office Precincts:**
- North-
(425) 388-7939
 - South-
(425) 744-6868
 - East-
(360) 805-6770
 - Crime Prevention Center (128th S.W.)
(425) 710-0232

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Sexual Assault– Where to Get More Information

If you are a victim of sexual assault, or want more information about preventing sexual assault call the Providence Everett Sexual Assault Center at (425) 252-4800 or (800) 656-4673.

The Providence Sexual Assault Center is a member of The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) a national non-profit organization that is the nation’s leading anti-sexual assault organization. Working through over 1,000 local affiliates, RAINN provides assistance to sexual assault victims, friends and family to recover from rape and to prevent sexual assault.

RAINN maintains a web site at www.rainn.org that provides information on prevention, background information on rape drugs, campus rape, how friends and family can help rape victims, etc. RAINN also provides a recommended reading list as well as web links to other sites that provide help and information for sexual assault victims.

It also maintains a the National Sexual Assault Hotline- (800) 656-HOPE (4673). This hotline automatically transfers calls to the closest local participating rape crisis center nearest the caller.

