

## What can we do as a community to protect our children?

The answer is that we must take an open, proactive, collaborative approach to dealing with this issue with our children.



- Establish and explain healthy boundaries with your child. Help them distinguish between right and wrong touches.
- Explain to your child that people have certain roles and what the limit to those roles are. Be clear, specific and frank.
- Educate yourself and your child to the grooming/games that

offenders play in order to gain your child's trust.

- Use role play to help your child fully understand how others may manipulate to get what they want. The better prepared a child is to react to an unwanted situation, the better the chance for your child.
- Maintain open lines of communication with your child. If your child can't talk to you, whom can they talk to?
- Trust your gut instinct. If it "feels" wrong, find out why. The same goes for your child.
- Become actively involved in your community. Know your friends and neighbors.
- Learn about the resources in your community.

## What you can do to protect your child

- Respecting and supporting your child's choice to *NOT* kiss other adults, even grandparents, aunts and uncles.
- Teaching your child that we do not say, "I love you" to everybody, only to people who are really special in our lives.
- Teaching the real names of body parts. Teaching that "private parts" are the parts of your body covered by underwear and bathing suits.
- Letting your child know that grown-ups are not always right. There are times when it is OK to say NO to a grown-up. Allow your child to say no to you sometimes.
- Making time to listen to your child. BELIEVE what your child is saying.
- Teaching your child about touch that is good and OK and touch that is WRONG.
- Using role-play to help your child fully understand how others may trick them to get what they want.
- Helping your child make a list of grownups that he/she can trust if he/she needs help.
- Knowing the people who are with your child. Meet your child's friends and their parents. Know who will be with your child when you are not and don't be afraid to ask questions. If a person or situation makes you uncomfortable, don't think you have to accept it.
- Monitoring your child's computer activities. Know who he/she is chatting with online.



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## What you need to know about sexual predator

- Offenders may ask a child for help (i.e. looking for a lost puppy; asking for directions; help carrying packages) or approach the child as if they know them and state that they were told to pick them up by their parents.
- Offenders may integrate themselves in the family by offering to baby-sit, drive to practices, etc. Be alert for those who are more interested in your children than you are
- Offenders use their authority as teachers, coaches, religious/club leaders, bus drivers, etc. in inappropriate ways.
- Offenders may talk to your child about sex or expose them to pornography in an effort to desensitize them.

- Offenders may use drugs or alcohol in an attempt to lower the child's inhibitions.
- Offenders make false promises to the child that he/she will make them a star, or that they will get a promotion at work.
- Offenders use the internet. This has become a preying ground for offenders. They will try to elicit information from your child without directly asking for it.
- Offenders try to legitimize sex by stating that there are organizations that condone the sexual relationship between children and adults.

*\*Models are for illustrative purposes only.*

## The Sex Offender Registry ACT (SORA), also known as Megan's Law

New York law requires anyone on parole or probation, or incarcerated, for a sexual offense on or after January 21, 1996, to register with the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). In addition, sex offenders sentenced to probation, local jail or state prison after that date must register upon their return to the community. In 1999, eight (8) new offenses were added to the list of registerable offenses. Any person on parole or probation or incarcerated for one of these offenses on January 1, 2000, as well as any person who is convicted of one of the new offenses after that date must also register.

'The Registry' contains information regarding sex offenders in New York State. Information collected includes aliases, DOB, sex, race, height, weight, eye color, driver's license number, photograph, fingerprints, description of the offense, date of conviction, sentenced imposed, Internet accounts and Internet screen names, as well as other pertinent information.

### How are sex offenders classified in the Sex Offender Registry Act?

There are three levels of risk, based on an offender's risk of re-offending: Level 1 (low), Level 2 (moderate), and Level 3 (high). Generally, the sentencing court will determine an offender's risk level either at the time of sentence (in probation cases) or when the offender is released from custody (in jail or prison cases). Because the court may not possess up-to-date information on an offender being released from prison or jail, SORA established a Board of Examiners of Sex Offenders to evaluate these cases and make a risk level recommendation to the court.

### For how long must an offender register?

All sex offenders must register annually for a period of at least ten years. Offenders who are classified as "high risk" (Level 3) must register for life unless judicially relieved of that obligation and also must personally verify their address with local law enforcement every 90 days.

### What happens if an offender fails to register?

The failure to register is a crime. A first conviction is punishable as a Class A Misdemeanor; a repeat conviction is punishable as a Class D Felony.

### How to Access Registered Offender Information

Registry information can be accessed by the general public by calling a telephone service (1-800-262-3257). There is no charge for the call. You can also access the information by email: [www.infodcjs@dcjs.state.ny.us](mailto:www.infodcjs@dcjs.state.ny.us). If the person you are inquiring about is on the registry, the caller will be advised accordingly and receive additional information depending on the offender's risk level. You can also access Level 3 information from the Division of Criminal Justice Services Website: [www.criminaljustice.state.ny.us](http://www.criminaljustice.state.ny.us).

In addition, contact your local police department for further information:

Nassau County Police Department at  
516-573-7100

Suffolk County Police Department at  
631-852-6000

For additional information, contact CCAN at:  
(516) 747-2966  
[www.coalitiononchildabuse.org](http://www.coalitiononchildabuse.org)

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## CCAN PRESENTS A PARENT'S GUIDE TO KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE AND MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFER



**Children CAN NOT protect themselves.  
YOU must keep your child safe!**

A Community Education Project of  
CCAN  
Coalition Against Child Abuse & Neglect  
229 7th Street, Suite 00  
Garden City, NY 11530  
(516) 747-2966  
Fax: (516) 747-5065  
[www.coalitiononchildabuse.org](http://www.coalitiononchildabuse.org)