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VICTIMS' ADVOCATE

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Sex Offenders Usually Re-offend



FDLE Special Agent in Charge

by *Dominick Pape*

While attending the Justice Coalition's Seventh Annual TOGETHER WE CAN fundraiser in March, I was reminded again of the difference that can be made when people unite. Each spring, the Jacksonville Region of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) joins with the Justice Coalition to make a difference by drawing attention to a segment of the population that needs constant awareness - sexual offenders and predators.

We want our children and the children of others to be protected. When it comes to protecting them, we are their guardians. We want them home each night and we want them safe each day. One incident of child abduction or sexual misconduct is too many. A child abduction or sexual misconduct can rip at the fiber of a community. The impact could be life changing for the victim and the community.

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children reports, "There are currently more than half a million registered sex offenders in the United States. Most sex offenders are not in prison, and those who are tend to serve limited sentences. Most sex offenders are largely unknown to people in the community. Sex offenders have a high risk of re-offending and, while community supervision and oversight are widely recognized as essential, the system for providing such supervision is overwhelmed."

In 1997 Florida became one of the first states to make sexual offender and predator registration information available on the Internet through its "Sexual Offender Database." Each year the number of offenders/predators who register as required by Florida statute increases. Today the Florida database lists information about 7,551 predators and 43,504 offenders.

Despite the size of this threat, together we can make a difference by taking some concrete steps toward becoming better informed and more vigilant.

First, report all acts of sexual abuse. More than 300,000 children are victims of

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Online Sex Predators Targeted by CyberCrime Units

Could your child be labeled a sex offender?

by *Shirley Shaw*

Several years ago many of us watched incredulously as Chris Hansen of NBC's *Dateline* reported on online sexual predators. Eleven dramatic hidden camera investigations exposed more than 250 men targeting young teenagers over the Internet.

Although they are not televised, investigations such as these are carried on every day by law enforcement agencies around the country, including our own JSO, FDLE and FBI offices. Attorney General Bill McCollum frequently sends out news releases announcing arrests by his CyberCrime Unit, most recently James Saxon (arrested April 9 at his Aerosonic Corporation office



in Pinellas County after investigators traced pornographic pictures of children as young as five years old back to his computer) and Michael Dube of Clearwater, who also possessed and distributed child porn.

Just days ago Jaysien Santuci was arrested in Volusia County for

possessing child pornography images on his computer - one a video of a child appearing to be no older than five years of age. A Martin County registered sex offender was taken into custody on charges of child pornography possession.

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Senate Resolution



A resolution introduced by Senator Stephen Wise, honoring Ted Hires for his active role in victims' rights, was presented to Ted's family and the Justice Coalition staff in Tallahassee last month. (See Resolution on page 4.) Pictured left to right: Bill and Fran Futrill, Ann Dugger, Rep. Audrey Gibson, Wanda Hires, Clyde Mills, Selina Moraes, JFRD Asst. Chief Randy White, Senator Stephen Wise and Martha Schraud.

The Jacksonville City Council presented Ted Hires' family with a resolution honoring his years as a victims' rights advocate. Wanda Hires and son, Wes Hires, received the award from Ronnie Fussel (r), Council President, and Councilman Daniel Davis.

