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*Happy Mother's Day*

# JUSTICE COALITION'S VICTIMS' ADVOCATE

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## Sexual Predators and Offenders: Vigilance and awareness can keep our children safe



By FDLE Special Agent in Charge *Dominick Pape* and Government Analyst *Sharon Gogerty*



Sexual predators and offenders, who prey on our children, are loathsome. When many of us picture the child molester, he is a sinister male stranger, so, we warn our children, "beware of strangers." Although pedophiles do prey on children they have never met, when a child is molested the perpetrator is more likely to be a family member, neighbor, or someone with whom they have routine contact.

As much as we would like sex offenders to be people far away, they often are people our children know, or even "know well." They are of both sexes, any age, occupation and appearance - rarely sinister, usually inconspicuous.

We and our children need an informed perspective on the danger they face — where it may be, how to avoid it, and how to react to it should it appear. Here are some things you can do to accomplish this:

- \* Correctly describe the person who will most likely endanger them. The danger may come from a stranger, but will most likely come from someone they already know.

- \* Physical contact, suggestions, messages, or photos which make the child uncomfortable should be reported, regardless of who the person is — even if that person is a relative, a person in authority, or a friend.

- \* Help build the confidence and self-esteem that your child needs to stay as safe as possible in a potentially dangerous situation. This will enable them to refuse inappropriate contact, and notify you or someone in authority of the situation.

- \* Be involved in your child's life. Even though you can't control everything, be alert to changes in behavior. Don't forget your older children. At the same time

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## The Healing Power of Forgiveness: Life After Daughter's Death

By *Sherrie Clark*

On a crisp November day in 2007, Eva Redmon experienced the worst kind of horror a mother could ever face. A phone call gave her the devastating news: her missing daughter had been found, brutally murdered, and the news turned her world upside down.

She said, "I went through it, and by the grace of God, I can now talk about it. I think it's very important to get the message out that you can survive such a tragedy and go on. We didn't go through this for nothing. I hope I have something to say that will help someone else."

When asked about her daughter's life, Eva's smile could be heard through the phone. "She was a wonderful child. The fact

that she was even born was a miracle. When I was 5 1/2 months pregnant, her father beat me." This beating, which could have adversely affected the unborn child, served to prove early on that this baby was indeed a fighter.

Born on March 31, 1967, Deanna Christine Waldrup entered this world as a healthy infant, but abuse persisted in the family, and this time the victim was Deanna. Eva's immediate intervention resulted in a five-year prison sentence for the abuser, and together she and her little girl got through the traumatic experience.

As the years progressed, Deanna grew into a beautiful young woman. At age 17 she got married and had a son named Michael. Happily-ever-after did not hap-



*Deanna Waldrup*

pen, especially since her marriage involved the abuse of illegal drugs. After three long years, Deanna was divorced and facing life as a young, single mom. Still, she had hopes and dreams of having a happy family.

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## The Forever Victims



By *FBI SAC James Casey*

A few weeks ago I was asked by a local television reporter if there had been an increase in the number of child pornography cases in Jacksonville and if so, why. His questions were based on a series of arrests for possessing child pornography, some involving prominent people in the community, and whether I thought this was a trend. The short answer to the questions is "yes"; trafficking and possession of pornography involving children is higher than it has been in the past.

I'm not sure why people are interested in pornography that involves children, nor if the number of these people is increasing. These are questions beyond my area of expertise; however, I believe the proliferation of the Internet has made child pornography much more easily accessible to those individuals who are interested.

Years ago, before the Internet era, it was much more difficult to traffic in and receive all forms of pornography. Many no doubt remember or have heard of the proverbial "dirty

book store" which can still be found in some communities across the country - seedy stores where adults could purchase all types of pornography in cheap films, books and magazines. Many had (and have) small viewing booths for those who did not want to carry their pornography home.

Before the advent of so-called "soft porn" in the 1960s, when publications like *Playboy*, *Penthouse* and other such magazines were founded, the only outlet for any type of pornography was the dirty book store or the mail. Aggressive postal inspectors made purchasing pornography through the U.S. mail a dicey proposition. Even then, pornography involving minors was a serious crime, but it nevertheless attracted interested individuals.

The Internet changed everything. I have been told by some experts (with whom I tend to disagree, by the way) that a majority of all of the profitable commerce on the Internet is related to all forms of pornography. Anybody reading this article knows exactly how easy it is to trip over pornographic sites associated with the World Wide Web. Literally every form of pornography is easily available with a few key strokes from virtually any keyboard in the world.

Pornography involving children is,

unfortunately, no exception. Sure, child pornographers are a little more careful today, and I have seen recent examples where they are becoming more savvy in how they trade, and with whom, because of the penalties involved in trafficking child pornography.

I am not sure all Americans realize that trafficking in, and even the mere possession of, pornography involving children under 18, in any form, (including spoofed photos of adults and children, and in some cases even cartoons) are serious federal felonies, and against the laws of most states.

It is a serious miscalculation for individuals to underestimate how stringent these laws are, and how forcefully judges are imposing significant prison sentences for violating them. Otherwise law-abiding citizens are receiving multi-decade prison sentences for trafficking in and possession of child pornography. In the federal system, there is no "good time," so a 20-year prison sentence means exactly that, 20 years. There is good reason for this.

Unlike other vice crimes, the morality of which are considered by some to be "victimless" crimes, child pornography, especially in the age of the Internet, involves the ultimate victimization of the individual. This

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