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***Monitoring nearby sex offenders is critical during summer break***  
*Sex Offender Solutions offered by Appriss and Watch Systems help keep parents informed*

**Louisville, Ky.** — With schools closing for the summer, many children will be without adult supervision for long periods of time, and thus more vulnerable to predators. Summer break is an ideal to introduce families to the sex offender notification and registration services available through Appriss.

Appriss Inc., in partnership with Watch Systems, offers the industry standard OffenderWatch® management and notification tool, which provides a comprehensive suite of services such as maps and e-mail alerts designed to help parents and caregivers track the whereabouts of sex offenders who live nearby.

Users can log on to a community Web portal to search for specific offenders, register to be notified when an offender moves into the area, and use a mapping tool to view offenders residing within a specified distance of a given address. Currently, more than 10 states — including Florida, North Carolina, and Washington — are relying on Appriss, Watch Systems, and OffenderWatch program for their sex offender management needs.

“We’ve designed a simple, comprehensive search mechanism with families in mind,” said Appriss Product Director Lisa Dohoney. “Our services provide real-time, around-the-clock access to information that is critical for keeping communities safe.”

Tips for parents and caregivers on protecting kids during summer break are included here. To learn more about the comprehensive suite of sex offender solutions available from Appriss and Watch Systems, visit [www.appriss.com/SOS.html](http://www.appriss.com/SOS.html) or [www.watchsystems.com](http://www.watchsystems.com)

## **News Release**

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#### **About Appriss**

Appriss provides innovative technology solutions that help thousands of local, state, and Federal government agencies serve and protect their citizens. Its flagship product, VINE®, keeps crime victims informed on the custody or court status of their offender in more than 2,300 communities across the country. Other innovative services include VINE Protective Order® which alerts individuals when a protective order has been served; JusticeXchange®, the leading solution for connecting criminal justice agencies nationwide; and MethCheck®, which works with both law enforcement and pharmacies to address the illegal meth lab problem.

#### **About Watch Systems, LLC**

Watch Systems is a leading provider of mapping software and geographic information systems (GIS) for state, county, and city law enforcement agencies in 37 states. Watch Systems offers automated processes with secure access that allow agencies to manage and share data with online communities. The company's core product, OffenderWatch®, has become the industry standard sex offender registration, management, and community notification solution serving more than 600 agencies at both the state and local level.

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## Summer Safety Tips for Parents

- Teach your children: DON'T take rides from strangers; DO tell a safe adult if anyone acts inappropriately toward them; DO RUN, SCREAM, and GET AWAY if someone is bothering them; DON'T keep secrets; DON'T assist strangers; DON'T go places alone; DO ask questions; DO talk about any uncomfortable feelings or interactions; DON'T harass or visit any sex offender's home or yard.
- Make sure children have a number where they can reach you when you are separated, and teach them to look for a police officer or call 911 if they are in trouble or lost.
- Establish a designated meeting place at theme parks, malls, festivals, and other summertime destinations.
- When your family is traveling, always give a trusted person at home your trip itinerary. If any information changes make sure you update your contact person.
- At your vacation destination, establish rules and guidelines for playing outside.
- If your children will be home alone while you are at work, remind them to lock doors while you are away, avoid answering the door for a stranger, or tell someone on the phone they are home alone. Leave a telephone emergency list by the phone for your child to use.
- Do not put your child's first name on clothing, bikes, backpacks or toys where they are visible.
- Know where your children are at all times. Be familiar with their friends and daily activities.
- Build self-esteem. A child who has low self-esteem cannot protect himself or herself. Listen carefully to your child's fears, and be supportive in all your discussions with him or her, replacing fear with knowledge.
- Teach decision-making skills. Children of all ages can make decisions. Practice early with little decisions so big decisions later are easier. Teach them to trust with their own feelings, and assure them they have the right to say no to what they sense is wrong.
- Build support systems. Children need positive adult role models and need to know where to go for help.

- Choose substitute caregivers carefully. Interview and monitor babysitters, group leaders, youth pastors, and other adults who spend time with your children. Be alert to a teenager or adult who pays unusual amounts of attention to your children or gives them expensive or inappropriate gifts.
- Be sensitive. Watch for changes in a child's behavior. Look for signals that you should sit down and talk to your children about the cause of these changes.
- Use role-playing. Rehearse safety situations with your child. Give them power through knowledge. Play the "What If?" game.
- Avoid scary details. Include general information when speaking to children. You know more than your child needs to know. Use language that is honest and age-appropriate.
- If your children could possibly have contact with a registered sex offender, you should show your children the sex offender's photo. In a manner that does not incite panic, instruct your children to avoid contact with the offender, even if the offenses of conviction do not involve a child. Instruct them to avoid being in the vicinity of the offender's residence or workplace.
- Encourage your children to tell you about any contact from any other person who makes them feel uncomfortable. It is important to teach your children about appropriate and inappropriate contact and to encourage regular discussion about their interactions with other people.