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Sexual Assault Awareness Month emphasizes safety and prevention
Sex Offender Solutions offered by Appriss help keep citizens informed

Louisville, Ky. — April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, an ideal time to bring the nation's attention to the prevalence of this devastating crime and encourage citizens to use sex offender notification services available through Appriss.

Sexual assault crimes include acquaintance rape, stranger rape, sexual assault by an intimate partner, child sexual abuse, incest, sexual harassment, forced sexual trafficking, and child pornography. Victims of sexual assault experience a violation or loss of privacy, dignity, security, and humanity, and often experience long-lasting physical and emotional scars.

The Appriss suite of comprehensive service offerings to address sex offender management can help communities combat sexual assault and provide citizens with safety tools to 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.

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“Our services are incredibly versatile for concerned individuals in any community – including parents and other primary caregivers, child care providers, social workers, or anyone responsible for populations who are vulnerable to sexual assault crimes,” said Lisa Dohoney, product director at Appriss. “This technology provides an accurate, convenient snapshot of the potential dangers in a community. Having access to this information can empower citizens to protect themselves and their families.”

To learn more about Sexual Assault Awareness Month, see the fact sheet on the next page or visit <http://www.nsvrc.org/saam>.

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 2,000 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.

Quick Facts about Sexual Assault

- According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, sexual assault involves sexual acts that are forced upon individuals against their will. These acts can be physical (such as rape or unwanted sexual touching), verbal (such as sexually abusive or threatening speech), or psychological (such as voyeurism or exhibitionism). Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault. However, women and girls are more likely than males to experience violence of this type.
- Sexual assault is most often committed by someone known to the victim such as a spouse, family member, co-worker, friend, or acquaintance, although it can be committed by a stranger.
- According to research published in the journal *Violence and Victims* in 2007, in the United States, an estimated 2.7 million women and 978,000 men are victims of sexual assault each year.
- The *Violence and Victims* survey also reported that 60 of females and 69 of males were 17 years old or younger at the time they were first victimized.
- Based on a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services review of state records pertaining to child abuse and neglect, 86,830 children in the United States reported sexual abuse in 2001. However, the number of unreported instances is far greater, because many children are afraid to tell anyone what has happened.
- Of the rapes and sexual assaults reported in the 2002 National Crime Victimization Survey, 87% of the victims were women and 13% were men. However, these findings may be somewhat influenced by reluctance among men to report sexual violence.
- A National Institute of Justice survey conducted in 2000 found that eight out of 10 victims of sexual assault knew their perpetrators.

The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry suggests that parents and primary caregivers can prevent or lessen the chance of sexual abuse by:

- Telling children that if someone tries to touch your body and do things that make you feel funny, say NO to that person and tell me right away.
- Teaching children that respect does not mean blind obedience to adults and to authority. For example, don't tell children to always do everything the teacher or baby-sitter tells you to do.
- Encouraging professional prevention programs in the local school system.