

DETERMINING RISK LEVELS OF OFFENDERS

Upon release to the community, following a conviction for a registered sex offense, a sex offender is required to register with the Division of Criminal Justices Services.

In order to determine the level of community notification and duration of registration, a hearing is held by the sentencing court. Some of the factors considered by the court are the use of force, weapons, alcohol or drugs, victim's age, number of victims, assault or injury to the victim and relationship to the victim.

The court then makes a determination regarding the offender's level of notification, commonly called risk level. The risk level is based on the court's assessment regarding whether a particular offender is likely to repeat the same or similar offense.

The court may assign one of the following three risk levels. The risk level governs the amount and type of information that can be released to the public:

- Level 1 Offenders (Low risk of repeat)
- Level 2 Offenders (Moderate risk of repeat)
- Level 3 Offenders (High risk of repeat)

BE INFORMED!

Parents, guardians and adults who care for children face constant challenges when trying to help keep children safe. For decades, children were taught to stay away from "strangers." But this concept may be difficult for children to grasp. Often a perpetrator is someone a child knows, or may be familiar with.

It is more beneficial to help build children's confidence by teaching them to respond to a potentially dangerous situation, rather than to teach them to look out for a particular type of person.

Child abductions are rare, but they do happen. As parents, we can fight back through prevention and safety education. Most people genuinely care about children and not all strangers are bad. However, we must educate parents and children to recognize and avoid dangerous child abduction situations.