

DON'T WAIT! ACT NOW

Washington State's 1990 Community Protection Act included America's first law authorizing public notification when dangerous sex offenders are released into the community. However, it was the brutal 1994 rape and murder of seven-year-old Megan Kanka that prompted the public demand for broad-based community notification. On May 17, 1996, President Clinton signed Megan's Law. Megan's Law requires the following two components:

1. **Sex Offender Registration** – The 1994 Jacob Wetterling Act requires the States to register individuals convicted of sex crimes against children. Sex offender registration laws are necessary because:
 - Sex offenders pose a high risk of re-offending after release from custody;
 - Protecting the public from sex offenders is a primary governmental interest;
 - The privacy interests of persons convicted of sex offenses are less important than the government's interest in public safety;
 - Release of certain information about sex offenders to public agencies and the general public will assist in protecting the public safety.
2. **Community Notification** – Megan's Law allows the States discretion to establish criteria for disclosure, but compels them to make private and personal information on registered sex offenders available to the public. Community notification:
 - Assists law enforcement in investigations;
 - Establishes legal grounds to hold known offenders;
 - Deters sex offenders from committing new offenses;
 - Offers citizens information they can use to protect children from victimization.

On July 27, 2006 President Bush signed the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act. One important component requires the U.S. Justice Department to create a public accessible Internet based national sex offender database that allows users to specify a search radius across state lines. The result is the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website at www.nsopw.gov.

KlaasKids Foundation

- Internet's Premiere Megan's Law destination
- Log on to www.klaaskids.org for your state's public information on offenders in your area.

Parents Don't Wait, Act Now! Research Sex Offenders in your area today.