



Community Notification Release

What is it?

It is a province-wide or community specific warning to Manitobans regarding high risk sex offenders that have been released from jail. It includes a photograph of the offender, a physical description, as well as, other information regarding past offences.

What is the purpose?

As stated by CNAC (Community Notification Advisory Committee), the purpose of the notification is to provide information concerning potential dangers within the community, and to develop safety plans for children. ***“The warnings are made only so the public may take protective action. The police will not tolerate any form of vigilante activity or other unreasonable conduct directed at an offender.”*** It is not necessary to call police if the offender is seen in public, unless he/she is committing a crime, harassing or threatening someone or behaving in a way that appears dangerous.

Distribution of Notification

Community notifications are sent to schools by police services and are, subsequently, sent home with student for parents. Particular attention should be given to how the notifications are coming home with children. They should be sealed and addressed to parents. At no time should children be viewing the community notifications. The impact on children viewing is harmful. It can be terrifying. Children can experience difficulty sleeping, misinterpret and create false rumours regarding sightings of the offender, or discuss the sexual offences mentioned in the release. This will cause more fear and confusion.

What do Parents Need to Know?

Effective safety education empowers children with strategies and builds self-confidence, and does not make them feel frightened.

- ❖ Community Notification releases are written for adult audiences. They are very descriptive and frightening for children. Therefore, these notifications should never be shared with children. For example, do not post on the fridge, make available, nor read aloud to children.
- ❖ Be aware of the risk factors within your own neighborhood. (Does the offender live next to your home, or within your community?) Additional safety precautions may need to be made if the offender is living near your home. Know the resources available within your community to support your child's personal safety.
- ❖ Be aware of any changes in your child's behaviour. Communicate openly with your child so that they are comfortable sharing their concerns, fears or any other issues surrounding the notification process.
- ❖ Be aware of other sensitive issues surrounding community notification. For example, their may be children within the school system who in some way may be related to the offender. Remember, they are not responsible for the actions of the offender.
- ❖ Use this as an opportunity to teach children at home about personal safety. Do not use fear to make them understand. Safety strategies need to be reinforced daily. **Personal safety is a lifestyle.**

For additional information visit our website at www.childfind.mb.ca or www.cybertip.ca