



## ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES

### Message from the Executive Director

Legislative efforts for 2008 are well underway. First, though, Stop Child Predators thanks you for making 2007 a successful year. Child sexual exploitation is still an underappreciated problem, but we continue to collaborate with policy experts and lawmakers, law enforcement officers, community leaders, and parents to launch state-by-state campaigns to educate lawmakers and the public about policy changes that will protect America's children from sexual predators.

In 2007 we worked with lawmakers to successfully pass our model legislation, The Sexual Offenses Against Children Act. The law requires mandatory minimum sentences and electronic monitoring for convicted sex offenders. Its template was Florida's Jessica's Law, named after Jessica Lunsford, the nine-year old girl who was abducted, raped, and murdered in Florida in 2005 by a twice-convicted sex offender. In the last two years since Florida passed Jessica's Law, 32 other states have adopted provisions included in the law. Legislators in Colorado, Idaho, Kentucky, Mississippi, New York City, North Carolina, Utah, and West Virginia have introduced similar legislation for the 2008 legislative session.

In 2007 we also joined in an effort to combat Internet crimes against children. We worked with social networking sites, ISPs, and technology companies to support the registration of electronic addresses and other tough penalties for enticement crimes and for the possession and distribution of child pornography. For those of you monitoring child pornography in the states, you may want to check out Maryland's efforts to combat child pornography. There are five bills worth reviewing: [House Bills 60](http://mlis.state.md.us/2008rs/billfile/hb0060.htm) (<http://mlis.state.md.us/2008rs/billfile/hb0060.htm>), [436](http://mlis.state.md.us/2008rs/billfile/hb0436.htm) (<http://mlis.state.md.us/2008rs/billfile/hb0436.htm>) and [574](http://mlis.state.md.us/2008rs/billfile/hb0574.htm) (<http://mlis.state.md.us/2008rs/billfile/hb0574.htm>), and [Senate Bills 75](http://mlis.state.md.us/2008rs/billfile/sb0075.htm) (<http://mlis.state.md.us/2008rs/billfile/sb0075.htm>) and [414](http://mlis.state.md.us/2008rs/billfile/sb0414.htm) (<http://mlis.state.md.us/2008rs/billfile/sb0414.htm>).

More broadly, Stop Child Predators in 2007 supported a variety of measures designed to promote public safety. These ranged from penalty enhancements, including mandatory minimum sentencing and electronic monitoring, to a uniformed national sex offender database to the elimination of the statute of limitations on reporting child sexual assault, and more.



Stop Child Predators took our message to the states last March, for instance, where we joined U.S. Representative Mark Kirk at a townhall meeting in Chicago to address the need for mandatory sentencing for sexual predators living in Illinois.

In April, we joined New York State Assemblyman Felix Ortiz and partnering organization [OmniLink Systems](http://www.omnilinksystems.com/) (<http://www.omnilinksystems.com/>) for a press conference on the importance of electronic monitoring of sex offenders.

In June, we traveled to Wisconsin to defend the GPS component of Jessica's Law that was passed in 2006. Three University of Wisconsin law professors unsuccessfully claimed GPS monitoring violated privacy rights. They argued that since the law does not authorize police to stop offenders from moving into off-limits areas like schools and parks, it does not protect the public as the legislation's authors claim and is "physically and psychologically burdensome." Stop Child Predators drafted a [white paper](http://www.stopchildpredators.org/pdf/SCP_PR041707.pdf) ([http://www.stopchildpredators.org/pdf/SCP\\_PR041707.pdf](http://www.stopchildpredators.org/pdf/SCP_PR041707.pdf)) refuting the professor's key points while noting that GPS monitoring does not violate *ex post facto* laws and is consistent with substantive due process.

Finally, in November, we went south to Atlanta for the [ChoicePoint Cares](http://www.choicepoint.com/about/cares.html) (<http://www.choicepoint.com/about/cares.html>) annual non-profit conference. There we partnered with the [National Law Center of Children and Families](http://www.nationallawcenter.org/) (<http://www.nationallawcenter.org/>) to highlight legislative and judicial victories in sex offender management, and also discussed how non-profits can better develop partnerships with law enforcement and state organizations.

Overall, Stop Child Predators had a successful 2007. We look forward to continuing to promote child safety in 2008.

To learn about additional state successes and other insights into Stop Child Predators, please read on. If you have any questions or comments you would like to share, you can reach me at [rumenap@stopchildpredators.org](mailto:rumenap@stopchildpredators.org).

*Stacie Rumenap*

## FEDERAL ACTIVITIES & NATIONAL NEWS

### Australian Attorney General to Appeal Rape Sentence of Young Girl

In December 2007, Stop Child Predators expressed outrage to Australia's Queensland Attorney-General Kerry Shrine over the jail-free sentences of three adult Australian

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males who engaged in a nine-person gang-rape of a 10-year-old girl and pleaded guilty to the crime. In a letter to Mr. Shrine, Stop Child Predators urged Shrine to “take any action possible within the law of Australia to strengthen the sentences.” Shrine has vowed to appeal the decision and review the sentences of sex offenders in his district.

In November, a district court judge, Sarah Bradley, handed mere six-month sentences to the three adult rapists—and suspended the sentences immediately upon issuing them. This illusory sentencing came a month after another court sentenced the six other perpetrators, who were minors at the time of the gang-rape, to 12 months of probation and gave them no record of criminal conviction. “For the most heinous of crimes,” Stop Child Predators’ letter noted, “the perpetrators received a slap on the wrist.”

Shockingly, Judge Bradley not only issued toothless sentences but derogated the victim. “The girl involved was not forced and she probably agreed to have sex with all of you,” Judge Bradley said, according to newspaper reports of her sentencing remarks. The judge told the men, “I hope that all of you realize that you must not have sex with young girls.” The no-jail sentence seems to have been requested by crown prosecutors, who argued that the victim, in some moral but not legal sense, consented to sex.

Stop Child Predators wrote: “One might expect notions so debased and obtuse to have emanated from Taliban Afghanistan. Contrary to the judge’s assertions, the victim was 10 years old, hardly able to consent. The crime was not merely sex with a young girl; it was rape of a child. Had the rapists targeted an adult, the jail-free sentence still would have been appalling. For the gang-rape of a child, the sentence is unconscionable.”

Stop Child Predators pointed out that the sentence was a boon to potential pedophiles and rapists throughout Australia, signaling that the most heinous acts may be committed with near impunity. The eldest gang-rapist was a repeat sex offender, already listed on the National Child Offence Register at the time Judge Bradley sentenced him. He had been convicted in 2006 for unlawful carnal knowledge of a female child. Judge Bradley, knowing this, warned the men: “If you get into more trouble in the next year, you could end up in jail.” As Stop Child Predators wrote: “At exactly what point is sex with children supposed to become too much? That point should be the first time it happens.”

Stop Child Predators will follow developments as Mr. Shrine appeals the sentences.

### **The Congressional Victim’s Rights Caucus**

The Congressional Victim’s Rights Caucus is a bi-partisan caucus that advocates for crime victims and law enforcement officials. Formed three years ago and co-chaired by U.S. Representatives Ted Poe (TX) and Jim Costa (CA), the Caucus took the lead in

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protecting programs that provide critical financial support for victim services throughout the nation, including the [Victims of Crime Act](http://www.wvdcjs.com/justiceprograms/victimsofcrime.html) (<http://www.wvdcjs.com/justiceprograms/victimsofcrime.html>) and [Violence Against Women's Act](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d109:s.01197) (<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d109:s.01197>). The Caucus was also instrumental in enacting the [Adam Walsh Act](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/07/20060727-7.html) (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/07/20060727-7.html>).

During its February meeting, the Caucus highlighted upcoming events of interest:

National Observance and Candlelight Ceremony  
Thursday, April 10, 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm  
US Chamber of Commerce @ 1615 H Street, NW, Washington, DC  
RSVP not required

National Crime Victims' Rights Week Awards Ceremony  
Friday, April 11, 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm  
Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium @ 1301 Constitution Avenue, Washington, DC  
Online RSVP required at [www.yesevents.com/ncvrw08](http://www.yesevents.com/ncvrw08)

For more information about these events, visit [www.ovc.gov](http://www.ovc.gov). To subscribe to the Congressional Victim's Rights Caucus' eNewsletter, please sign up at [www.vrc.poe.house.gov](http://www.vrc.poe.house.gov).

## STATE ACTIVITIES

### **Parents, Lawmakers Outraged after Children's Pictures are Posted on Pedophile Website**

A website created by an admitted pedophile is a virtual "how-to" manual, advising where in western Washington State to see young girls and how to evade police.

The site is legal but is now prompting legislative action. Washington State Senator Val Stevens has introduced legislation that would define material that is obscene, pornographic for minors, and child pornography—ultimately shutting down such "how-to" sites.

Wisconsin State Representative Joan Ballweg is working on similar legislation in her home state.

Stop Child Predators is working with Sen. Stevens, Rep. Ballweg, and the American Legislative Exchange Council to create model legislation as additional states introduce

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similar legislation. For more information on the website, please visit:  
[http://www.foxnews.com/printer\\_friendly\\_story/0,3566,262700,00.html](http://www.foxnews.com/printer_friendly_story/0,3566,262700,00.html)

### **Pushing for Jessica's Law in Utah**

Stop Child Predators joined Mark Lunsford, the Florida father whose 9-year-old daughter was abducted, raped and murdered by a twice-convicted sex offender in 2005, in Salt Lake City, Utah, at the end of January. We met with legislators to advocate for tougher laws against sex offenders who abuse young children.

Mark told Utah lawmakers he believes tighter laws would have saved his daughter's life.

Ed Smart, father of Elizabeth Smart who was abducted from her Salt Lake City bedroom in 2002 at the age of 14 and fortunately found alive nine months later, also joined us at the Capitol to show support for Jessica's Law.

Representative Carl Wimmer sponsored [House Bill 256](http://le.utah.gov/~2008/htmdoc/hbillhtm/HB0256.htm) (<http://le.utah.gov/~2008/htmdoc/hbillhtm/HB0256.htm>) and said the law would increase the penalties for certain sex offenses against children. He noted it would also increase penalties for those who strike plea agreements, pleading guilty to "attempted" offenses.

Rape of a child, sodomy on a child and object rape of a child could carry 25-years-to-life sentences. "Attempted" charges would get a standardized sentence of 15-years-to-life.

[HB256](#) was approved unanimously by the Utah House, 75-0. The Senate version passed the Judiciary, Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Committee and is awaiting a vote on the Senate floor.

### **Wisconsin Editorial: "Damning Documents"**

On February 1, The *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (<http://www.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=713741>) called on the Wisconsin Legislature to approve [Senate Bill 356](http://www.legis.state.wi.us/2007/data/SB-356.pdf), (<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/2007/data/SB-356.pdf>), proposed legislation allowing lawsuits to be brought forward by victims of child sexual assault regardless of the amount of time passed since the allegation.

The bill is facing opposition from the Catholic Archdiocese. According to the editorial: "The Milwaukee Catholic Archdiocese does 'an awful lot of good' in this community, as one prominent Catholic put it this week, and it would be a shame if financial difficulties forced it to curtail or stop providing some of those many good services. But institutions need to be held accountable for past sins, just as individuals are held accountable."

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Stop Child Predators spoke on behalf of the bill, noting the legislation is a tremendous step forward for victims and an important step in preventing future crime.

Similar legislation passed in Delaware last year.

**For more information concerning the initiatives in your state, or if you would like Stop Child Predators' assistance in drafting, testifying for, or supporting legislation in your state, please visit our website at [www.stopchildpredators.org](http://www.stopchildpredators.org) and/or call us at (202) 234-0090.**

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