

The G.A.S.P. Story-

HOW THE CONCEPT OF GRANDPARENTS AGAINST SEX PREDATORS (GASP) WAS BORN

The nine-year old girl was forcefully abducted from her Grandmothers home by a repeat sex offender. My initial reaction was a mixture of repulsion and helplessness.

Even an Amber Alert failed to find her in time; she was kidnapped, raped and buried alive! "How could this have happened?" I thought. My heart went out to the father of the dead girl.

One year later. I was still thinking about her, so I picked up the phone and called him. I had no agenda... I just needed him to know that I was hurting for him. After our conversation, my feelings of disgust were replaced with a deep, burning anger. There was no way I would sit idly by without trying to do something.

Turning to God, I asked for direction. Soon, it was revealed to me that I was to use my experience, resources and contacts to help find abducted/missing children... before it was too late. GASP was conceived and has taken wing!

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

GASP has a total of 120 volunteers serving on various committees. GASP is the only group of volunteers trained by/and partnering with the Ohio Summit County Sheriff's Office. All of the volunteers have background checks.

Some volunteers have been trained on the psychological profiles of sexual predators, observation techniques, and internet dangers and solutions. We are speaking to the community on internet awareness and safety measures. Others have been trained to do fingerprinting of children for identification purposes. To date, almost 700 children in the community have had their fingerprints recorded by GASP.

GASP volunteers are currently being trained by the Summit County Sheriff's Office to participate with them in Amber Alert situations. A telephone system has been put into place that will alert GASP volunteers to report to the Sheriff's command center, The volunteers will be organized in zones where the situation is happening. GASP members will comb neighborhoods and gather leads for law enforcement. All volunteers will participate on committees that will increase their knowledge and result in more children being aware of the use of the internet by sex predators. This

INTRODUCTION TO "GRANDPARENTS AGAINST SEXUAL PREDATORS"

By Summit County Sheriff Drew Alexander

The Summit County Sheriff's Office proudly supports the efforts of GASP (Grandparents Against Sexual Predators) and recognizes its members for their commitment to aid law enforcement.

Both the Executive Board and the membership of GASP have shown their willingness to partner with us in many areas that will have a direct impact on public safety. They have demonstrated their desire to help by taking the most important first step in the process. They recently spent eight hours of their valuable time to attend a seminar hosted by the Summit County Sheriff's Office which provided them with important information regarding sex offenders and also, ways in which they can help law enforcement protect our citizens, especially our children.

We are both proud and encouraged by our relationship with GASP. This is a "kan do" group of people that can't wait to roll up their sleeves and get to work in order to truly make a difference. It is rare, and I speak with many years of experience, to see such a well organized group such as GASP. Their members fully understand that there is a great need for their help and they are in for the long haul.

Some of the ways GASP will help are:

- Organized search efforts for abducted/missing children
- Child Fingerprinting at community and special events
- IRIS Scan Child Safety Project
- Public Education/community event Speakers Bureau
- Assist with Neighborhood Watch Program
- Development of Child Safety Strategies
- Advisory role to law enforcement

would include situations that are not appropriate, involving a family member or friend.

FUTURE PLANS

We have plans to include walking malls on the weekends, with shirts identifying us as Grandparents Against Sex Predators, We will volunteer to patrol playgrounds. We will become the civilian arm of law enforcement, providing a comfortable place for the community to report possible problems. Volunteers will be trained to assist with internet predator investigations and captures. We will publicize our programs through brochures, our website and speaking engagements.

Our intention is to have the Summit County operation up and running in a very professional manner before we move on to new territory. We expect this program to be a national non-profit service to better all communities.

ORGANIZATION'S ACCREDITATION

The Summit County Sheriffs Office is working very closely with GASP and is evaluating and monitoring our progress. They have offered many suggestions to further the scope of operation. Because of their help, we are growing into areas of responsibility that we had nor originally envisioned. They have provided free training to our team.

“America’s Most Wanted” has been instrumental in guiding our organization. They have given us advisory assistance and information for obtaining grants/funding from other national services. They have provided us a letter stating in part “AMW will continue to keep in touch with Ms. Doll about the progress of her organiLarion and keep GASP as a possible resource for our viewers.”

GASP MISSION STATEMENT

Volunteers dedicated to improving child safety by helping to find missing! abducted children, and educating the community on child abuse and sexual predators.

OUR GOALS

To become a network of grandparents and other caring volunteers who:

1. Become a civilian arm of law enforcement, assisting Sheriffs and police departments in many ways.
2. Are trained by the Sheriff’s departments to be their extra eyes and ears, enhancing them in finding missing and/or abducted children, including Amber Alert situations.
3. Will have community education programs to teach sexual-abuse awareness and prevention, including internet safety.