

The Bedford County Sheriff's Office **Operation C - S.O.R.T.** is designed to 'turn up the heat on' and 'hold accountable' sexual predators and other sex offenders who may reside in Bedford County, with a special emphasis placed upon those offenders who either have targeted juveniles as their victims or may target juveniles as their victims.

Operation C - S.O.R.T. is coordinated by the Special Investigations Division of the Bedford county Sheriff's Office. The project's objectives are to increase the safety of all citizens through the proactive enforcement of all laws related to the location and registration of all sexual offenders as well as to maintain updated offender information at the local law enforcement level.

Objectives:

- Identify ALL sexual predators and offenders who reside in Bedford County,
- Ensure that all convicted sex offenders in Bedford County are properly registered with the Virginia Sex Offender Registry,
- Conduct periodic wanted and records checks on convicted sex offenders,
- Develop and agency database of all sex offenders to include information regarding currently appearance, an updated photograph, employment, whether they are under active probation/parole, family history, vehicles they own, and any other information deemed relevant,
- Conduct periodic and unannounced visits to ensure sexual offenders remain in compliance with all state and federal regulations regarding registration as well as probation and parole mandates,
- Respond to the concerns about the activities of sex offenders from other law enforcement agencies the courts and public,
- Conduct intensive investigations to located convicted sex offenders who have left the area or changed their address but have not submitted the required information to the Virginia Sex Offender Registry,
- Ensure timely arrest and vigorous prosecution of sex offenders who have either violated sex offender registration laws or have not met the conditions of their probation and parole,
- Educate the public about sex offenders, the laws regarding sex offenders and **Operation C-S.O.R.T.**

Benefits:

- Increased supervision of sex offenders to ensure their compliance with the law,
- Increased inter-agency cooperation in the registration and tracking of sex offenders,
- More sex offenders returned to prison,
- Fewer victims of sex crimes.

Partners: Anticipated partners include the Virginia Attorney General's Office, Bedford County Commonwealth's Attorney, Virginia State Police, Virginia Department of Corrections, Federal Bureau of Prisons, US Marshals Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Virginia Department of Probation and Parole.

Research: In the June 2005 issue of the Criminal Justice Information Services Link, a recent study conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation revealed:

- 46,653 cases of sexual offenses were studied involving forcible and non-forcible sexual offenses throughout the United States,
- Only one (1) in six (6) assault victims were male thus the percentage of female victims is very high,
- The victims were acquainted with their attackers in 24% of the offenses, 76% of the offenses were committed by strangers,
- Victims were under the age of 15 in 50% of the sexual assaults reported.