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VINE® is integral to domestic violence victims' safety
Free, anonymous service notifies victims of jail release, other critical information

Louisville, Ky. — With the domestic violence case involving singers Rihanna and Chris Brown in the national news, it's an ideal time to ensure that battered women across the country know about VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday) — a free, anonymous service that notifies victims when offenders are released from jail.

A crime victim or any concerned citizen can access VINE 24 hours a day by calling a toll-free number or logging onto www.vinelink.com. After providing an offender's name or identification number, VINE users can access information about the offender's custody status, and in some communities, upcoming court appearances. They can also register to be notified by phone or e-mail when the offender is released, transferred, or escapes.

VINE is available in more than 2,000 communities in 46 states, including most of the nation's largest metropolitan areas. Around-the-clock support from a staff of live operators is available for callers who need help locating an offender, registering for notification, or accessing victim services in their area. Depending on the community, victims can interface with VINE in multiple languages.

Mildred Muhammad, a victim in Maryland, has integrated VINE into her overall safety plan. Her former husband, John Allen Muhammad — known as the DC Sniper — went on a shooting rampage in 2002. She believes she was John Muhammad's ultimate target. He stalked her during the attacks, and some of the shootings occurred nearby.

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“I know that should he get out of prison, he will find me and kill me,” Mildred Muhammad said. “I feel I can rely on VINE to stay informed, and it gives me some much-needed peace of mind to know I will get that call right away.”

Rita Smith, executive director of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, stresses that victims must hold batterers accountable for their crimes by calling law enforcement to make an arrest.

“The period following an arrest can be critical for a domestic violence victim. The release from jail is a period when a victim is most at risk from the perpetrator seeking retribution,” Smith explained. “That’s why timely and reliable information about the perpetrator’s custody status is vitally important. We encourage domestic violence victims who live in a community where VINE is available to get registered and stay informed about their offenders’ whereabouts.”

For more information about VINE, visit www.appriss.com/VINE.html.

About Appriss

Appriss provides innovative technology solutions that help thousands of local, state, and Federal government agencies serve and protect their citizens. In addition to VINE, other innovative services offered by Appriss include VINE Protective Order®, which alerts individuals when a protective order has been served; JusticeXchange®, the leading solution for connecting criminal justice agencies nationwide; and MethCheck®, an online tool that allows law enforcement to monitor the purchases of pseudoephedrine, a key component in the manufacture of methamphetamine.

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