



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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SUSPICIOUS INCIDENT FOR AWARENESS

PURCELLVILLE, Va. January 15, 2020 — The Purcellville Police Department would like to make the public aware of a suspicious incident which occurred on January 10, 2020 in the area of King James Street and Skyline Drive. A twelve year old middle schooler reported that he was waiting at the bus stop when a man, described as a white male in his 70's, driving a small car, slowed and asked, "Are you riding the bus?" When the student answered, "yes", the man drove away. The student could not think of a neighbor who fit the description of the man in question. The investigating officer from the Purcellville Police Department met with the School Resource Officer at Blue Ridge Middle School to make him aware of the incident. In addition, officers discreetly monitored bus stops for the next several days but observed no similar behaviors. There have been no other reports of this nature.

If anyone has information regarding this case, please call Officer Adam Barnhart at 540-338-7422 x 102.

Please remember to discuss with your children ways to recognize suspicious adult behaviors. Below are a few examples to use in your discussion.

- Establish a family code word to give only to a family member or trusted individual(s) responsible for your child in your absence. The person picking them up should be able to provide the code word, otherwise your child knows not to leave with him or her. The code word can also be used if something is making the child feel unsafe. A child can either call or text his/her parent the code word to express his/her concerns discreetly.
- Strangers/adults should not ask children for help, such as looking for a lost pet. Nor should a child respond to an offer by a stranger to pet their dog or cat.
- Do not take any kind of treats, toys, etc. from strangers.
- Avoid personalized items that are visible to strangers, such as backpacks. When a stranger knows your child's name, the child is more likely to trust them.
- Remind children to never leave or get into a vehicle with a stranger. Use role play scenarios to help them practice how to react.

If you or your child ever feel unsafe, please do not hesitate to 911 for assistance or to report suspicious activity.

The Town of Purcellville, Virginia

"Purcellville-your small Town, where history and progress intersect and people prosper," is an award-winning town of over 10,000 residents located in Loudoun County, approximately 50 miles west of Washington, DC. Having received the prestigious Siemens Sustainability Award for Small Communities, Purcellville continues to be honored for its green initiatives with most recently being the Tree City USA recipient for the 12th year. The Town was reaffirmed as a AAA rated community by S&P Global Ratings, the highest credit rating possible, and is recognized as one of the safest towns in Virginia. Once a stop along the W&OD rail line, which has been converted to a multi-use trail from Alexandria, VA to Purcellville, the town has maintained its historic old-town feel through the restoration and maintenance of its many downtown structures, reflecting the Victorian architecture popular during the early 1900s. Today, Purcellville is the economic hub of western Loudoun County and a popular weekend destination for antiques, equestrian activities, farmer's markets, wineries, breweries, distilleries and restaurants. More info at www.purcellvilleva.gov.