



Keeping Children Safe from Online Sexual Exploitation

Ontario Provincial Police Making Sure that Parents and Teachers Have Access to Important Resources

[East Algoma (Elliot Lake, Ontario): Children and youth are increasingly living out a large proportion of their daily lives online — whether using technology to communicate with friends, seek entertainment, or learn and broaden their knowledge about the world around them. However, just like the offline world, parents and teachers need to be fully aware of the risks children and youth may encounter while using the Internet. The Provincial Police (OPP) wants Ontarians to know about the comprehensive Internet safety resources and tools available through the Canadian Centre for Child Protection. These tools are there to help parents (and teachers) make sense of the challenges with raising children and youth in an ever-changing technological world.

“In this ever-changing technological world, children and youth are able to connect to the Internet with relative ease, exposing them to risks and harms that can be difficult to keep up with,” says Inspector Scott Naylor, Manager, OPP Child Sexual Exploitation Unit. “The protection of children online is all of our responsibility. The Canadian Centre for Child Protection resources provide parents, educators and communities with current information about children’s online activities and what we can do to make the Internet a safer place for our children and youth.”

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection, a national charitable organization dedicated to the personal safety of all children, will be launching new e-parenting safety sheets addressing issues and concerns parents may be facing right now with regard to their adolescent’s online safety. This includes valuable information on protecting youth from online luring, the growing issue of sexting, as well as how to talk to your child about healthy relationships and appropriate boundaries.

“We all have an important role to play in the online protection of children,” says Lianna McDonald, Executive Director, Canadian Centre for Child Protection. “We know that for parents and teachers it can be hard to even know where to begin — and this is why, in partnership with the OPP, we want to make sure that Canadians are aware of the important educational resources we have to offer to better protect children.”

Recognizing that educators also play a critical role when it comes to teaching children important personal safety strategies that will help reduce online victimization, the Canadian Centre will also be distributing over a million Internet safety materials to schools across Canada free-of-charge. The OPP also encourages parents and teachers alike to visit *The Door That’s Not Locked* website (www.thedoorthatsnotlocked.ca), a comprehensive resource with age-specific Internet safety information. This includes material about the online activities that are popular with children of different age groups, the potential risks children face when using certain technologies and safety strategies to address those concerns.

About the Canadian Centre for Child Protection: The goal of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (www.protectchildren.ca) is to reduce child victimization by providing programs and services to the Canadian public. Its four national programs include **Cybertip.ca** (www.cybertip.ca), Canada’s tipline to report the online sexual exploitation of children; **MissingKids.ca** (www.missingkids.ca), a national missing children resource and response centre; **Kids in the Know** (www.kidsintheknow.ca), an interactive child personal safety program for children in Kindergarten to Grade 9; and **Commit to Kids** (www.commit2kids.ca), a program to help child-serving organizations create safer environments for the children in their care and reduce their risk of sexual abuse.

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