

A mile a minute....
that is how fast your child can disappear



A MESSAGE FROM MARC

There is a dangerous new game afoot in California. Without protest from our elected leaders, the California Department of Mental Health (DMH) is engaged in practices that threaten public safety as they violate the law and dump thousands of sexually violent predators onto our streets.

This is perpetrated through the use of two questionable procedures: an underhanded tactic rejected by California voters in 2006; and a new low-bid contract that promotes the release of known predators such as John Gardner, the registered sex offender who has admitted that he raped and murdered 17-year-old Chelsea King from Poway, CA, and 14-year-old Amber Dubois from Escondido, CA.

The California DMH is in charge of the Sexually Violent Predator (SVP) and Mentally Disordered Offender (MDO) programs. Both programs exist to maintain violent sexual offenders if they are still considered a threat after their prison term expires or their parole date approaches.

Currently, both programs undermine the intent of SVP and

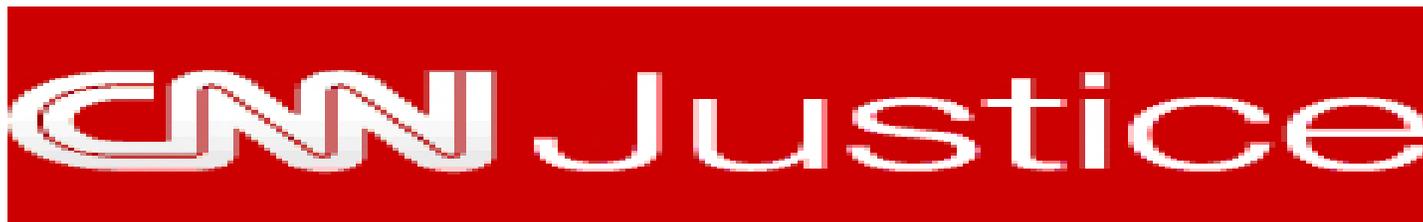
MDO provisions designed to protect public safety.

In 2006, Californians voted to pass Jessica's Law (Proposition 83). Among other requirements, Jessica's Law mandates that, prior to release from prison, violent sex offenders who meet certain offense criteria be evaluated in person by two expert psychiatrists or psychologists. If the experts agree that the prisoner is a violent sexual predator with a high risk of re-offending, they must be referred to the District Attorney for civil commitment proceedings.

However, in many cases since 2007, California's DMH is providing a cursory "paper screening," or record review, of potential predators by only one mental health professional in lieu of an expert panel in-person evaluation. This violation of California law has thus far dumped more than 17,000 potential sexual predators back into society, including Gilton Pitri, who is currently being held for raping and murdering 15-year-old Alyssa Gomez within four days of his release.

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FIGHTING SEX TRAFFICKING AT SUPER BOWL



The following article appeared on CNN.com on Feb. 6, 2010, before the Super Bowl.

Volunteers are taking to the streets of Miami, Florida, this Super Bowl weekend to inform teenage girls of alternatives to working as prostitutes. Just as Miami's hotels, restaurants and retail stores are seeing a bump in business for one of the biggest sporting events of the year, law enforcement and social service agencies say they are also witnessing a spike in trafficking of underage sex workers.

"Many social service agencies and law enforcement agencies recognize that there was an increase of victims of trafficking during last year's Super Bowl," said Regina Bernadin, Statewide Human Trafficking Coordinator for the Florida Department of Children and Families.

"That correlates with research that whenever there's a convention, a concert or a large event, traffickers will bring girls to the area to serve the influx of visitors," she added. Girls and young women, as well as their pimps, come from as far as New York and Texas to meet the increased demand, says Brad Dennis, director of search operations for the KlaasKids Foundation, which is spearheading the outreach effort.

"It's just that party culture," Dennis said. "The Super Bowl is an entertainment event and everyone wants to come down and party, and when you throw that mix into an area with lots of money to spend, it's a traffickers' playground." Due to the clandestine nature of underage sex

trafficking, it's hard to track the exact number of girls who are brought in for the Super Bowl and other big events. But a look at online escort listings gives some clues, Dennis said. One free online site offered 38 ads for Miami on January 16, but more than 200 on Saturday night, he said. It was impossible to tell how many of the advertised escorts might be underage.

On less high-profile weekends in Miami, Trudy Novicki, Executive Director of Kristi House, said her organization looks at the number of reported runaways as an indicator of how many girls could be working in the sex trade.

"We know that a very high percentage of runaways will end up being approached by a pimp within 72 hours of hitting the streets and they will be prostituted in order to survive," Novicki said. "So we know there is an extremely high correlation between runaway juveniles and underage prostitution." Kristi House is also helping to coordinate the Super Bowl weekend outreach, Novicki said.

The profile of a typical runaway cuts across socio-economic lines, Novicki said, but many of them leave home to escape some form of abuse. In an effort to reach those girls, state and local law enforcement agencies are teaming up with social service agencies to coordinate nighttime outreaches to girls on the streets.

Starting Wednesday, small teams of three or four volunteers have set out each night scoping the streets for potential trafficking victims,

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FIGHTING SEX TRAFFICKING AT SUPER BOWL



covering ground from Fort Lauderdale to South Beach to Hialeah. The hard part isn't locating the girls but finding an opportunity to approach them without drawing the attention of their pimps, said volunteer Eddy Ameen.

"Safety's always an issue because we know the girls aren't alone. We have to make sure we're not presenting potential harm to them," said Ameen, executive director of StandUp For Kids Miami. If they get a girl's attention, they hand her a card with a hot line number for resources on how to get out of "the life," Ameen said. "It's usually a very brief encounter—just a few minutes, if that. Some may not call the next day or the day after or ever. We can give out card 100 times and maybe five will call. But if they do, we've made a difference," he added. Another component of the operation aims to educate hotels and the hospitality industry on how to spot sex-trafficking operations on their premises and report it—an approach that yielded the majority of leads at last year's Super Bowl in Tampa, Florida, according to Dennis.

"Last year, we put together 21 leads that we gave to law enforcement, most of them from business

owners or hotel owners basically stating, 'I believe I have a trafficker and his girls stay at my hotel,'" he said.

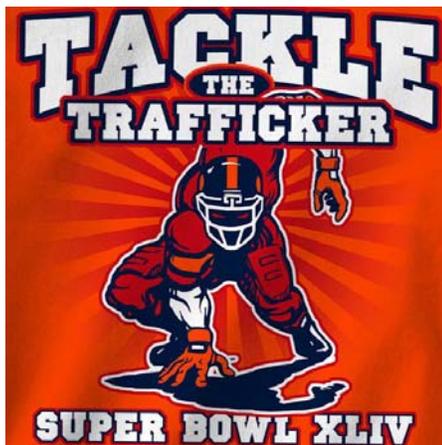
"They'd see a lot of traffic coming and going, or girls standing out on corners," Dennis added. "Those are all obvious signs, but good for them for actually reporting it."

The epidemic of underage sex trafficking isn't contained to Super Bowl weekend. An estimated 100,000 girls in the United States are under the control of a pimp or trafficker, according to Shared Hope International, a nonprofit that works to combat worldwide sex trafficking. It's a reality that groups like KlaasKids, StandUp For Kids and Kristi House encounter daily, Ameen said.

"The common perception is that the girls enjoy it, they make money, they're independent or they do it by choice. But when you work with young people selling their bodies, it's not a choice. It's a way to survive," he said. "I don't want the idea to go away when Super Bowl ends. The reality is that it's more concentrated on Super Bowl weekend, but they're still out there come Monday morning." ■

STOP DAT TRAFFICKING: THE STORY BEHIND THE SUPER BOWL SWEEP

As the “Who Dat” nation prepared for its victory at this year’s Super Bowl in Miami, another growing nation of volunteers prepared to hit



the streets to do battle against the underage sex trade. The Super Bowl is an entertainment event featuring parties, tourists, and lots of money and quickly becomes a traffickers’ playground. However, this time they ran into an unexpected obstacle.

Approximately 160 volunteers, led by the KlaasKids Foundation and its partner, the Florida Coalition against Human Trafficking, assisted in a sweep throughout Super Bowl weekend. Additional organizations instrumental in planning and execution of the event include Kristi House, Free International, Florida Abolitionists, and Stand Up For Kids.

Missing Children Found

Volunteers who participated in the effort came away with little doubt that children were being sold for sex during the Super Bowl. Throughout the four days of outreach, 23 direct contacts were made with potential commercial sexual exploitation victims.

In an effort to reach these kids, teams of three or four volunteers set out each night scoping the streets for potential trafficking victims from Fort Lauderdale to South Beach to Hialeah. The hard part wasn’t locating the girls, but finding an

opportunity to approach them without drawing the attention of their pimps.

During these brief encounters, outreach workers provided girls with a telephone number to an outreach hotline manned by workers of Project: GOLD, featuring specially trained advocates facilitated by Kristi House, a local child advocacy center. Although challenging, it was this direct intervention that proved the most successful. The results:

- Six missing children were recovered during the outreach sweeps.
- Workers intervened in four potentially dangerous situations, removing five girls from potential recruitment or exploitation by pimps.
- Law enforcement arrested a Hawaiian man importing kids to be sold in prostitution during the big game.

Another component aimed at educating hotels and the hospitality industry on how to spot sex-trafficking operations on their premises and report it. This approach yielded nine additional leads that were forwarded to law enforcement for follow-up.

Stop Trafficking in Your City

If your home town is hosting a major event and you’re concerned that child sex trafficking might be coming into town, there is something you can do. First, become aware of the issue. Second, partner with organizations, such as the KlaasKids Foundation, that are willing to train and deploy volunteers in an effort to educate and intervene on behalf of child sex trafficking victims. You can help prevent children from being exploited around major events and help the world better understand this growing epidemic. ■

RACE TO RECOVER AMERICA'S MISSING CHILDREN

The KlaasKids Foundation has been chosen as the official charity of the 2010 Fireball Run and the Race to Recover America's Missing Children. Headquartered at Universal Studios Florida, the Fireball Run, at eight days and 3,500 miles, is one of the largest and most interactive adventure events in the country.

Beginning in Henderson, NV, on Sept. 25, 2010, and ending at a secret location in Wisconsin on Oct. 2, the Fireball Run is an entertainment-based, cross-country motorsport adventure rally. There is no illegal or unsafe activity allowed in this event. The goal is to provide a safe but challenging live action event.

Some 75 teams compete for official event trophies, glory, media attention, and to highlight the plight of missing children. It's Bentley vs. Lamborghini, Challenger vs. Camaro, and Ford vs. Ferrari as each Fireball Run team represents a missing child from their home region. The mission: to distribute 1,000 posters over 18 cities in an effort to aid in the recovery of that missing child. Annually, Fireball Run distributes nearly 75,000 posters, which to date have aided in the recovery effort of no less than 32 missing children.

Individual teams are comprised of corporate decision makers, community leaders, and celebrities. They use a combination of skill and savvy to solve clues and accomplish the missions necessary to score points and reach their finish line! Competitors earn points by line position at daily finish lines; by accomplishing missions and assigned tasks; and by earning points based upon accumulative speed at selected motorsports competition track events. The team with the most cumulative points at the final finish line wins the event. The vehicle and team that registered for the rally must complete the event.

Each day of the Fireball Run concludes at a different host city. The support of host cities makes it possible to maintain a low all-inclusive entry fee.

Cities host the Fireball Run to showcase its economic vitality to decision makers, which may lead to ongoing economic opportunity for them. Teams are welcomed by the media, public, leadership, and Mayor of each destination city. Participants may begin as 300 strangers, but by the end of this eight-day networking opportunity they have become 300 friends.

The Fireball Run is sanctioned by the United States Auto Club (USAC), which oversees the safety and training of the event and its participants. All participants must apply for and obtain a competition license to compete in the Fireball Run through USAC. The Fireball Run has been praised by members of Congress, endorsed by city leaders, and law enforcement.

Fireball Run founder JJ Sanchez oversees all facets of the event, ensuring that it meets the highest motorsport rally standards. "We are proud to be associated with the KlaasKids Foundation and hope that this is the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship. Together we can make a difference- together we can recover America's missing children," he told me.

Believe me, the feeling is mutual.

To register for the Fireball Run log onto our website at <http://www.klaaskids.org> and select the Fireball Run banner. ■



A MESSAGE FROM MARC



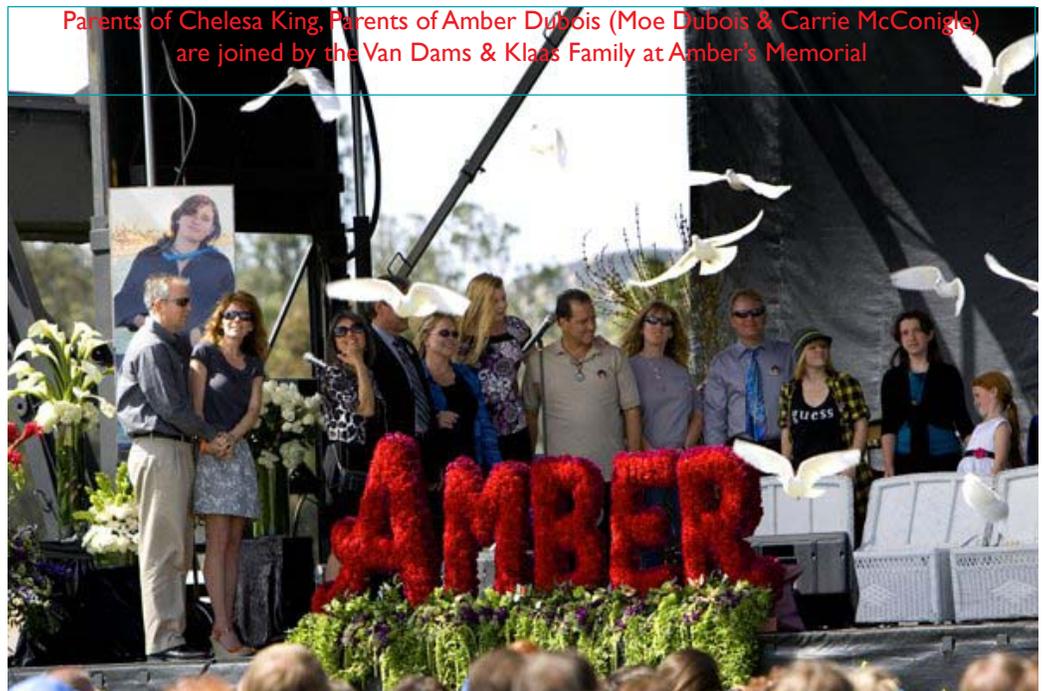
In Memory of
Amber Dubois (14) and Chelsea King (17)

John Gardner was not subject to Jessica's Law for evaluation as a potential SVP as he had at that time just the one victim. Instead, he was referred for psychological evaluation under the MDO Law, as he had a documented history of mental symptoms and a violent crime. However, two DMH psychologists, beneficiaries of a new contract bidding process, recommended Gardner for parole. In past years, SVP and MDO cases were assigned to a core group of competent and experienced evaluators with national reputations as experts in sexual recidivism. However, the new contract assigns cases to the lowest bidder. Evaluators are required to bid a flat fee for both evaluation and testimony, providing a strong incentive to not refer the prisoner for civil commitment.

If you are as outraged as I am that California's Department of Mental Health is ignoring the law

at the expense of public safety, please contact your elected leaders today! You have the right to demand that Attorney General Jerry Brown, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, and your state legislators investigate these practices. We cannot allow our government to ignore our wishes or the letter of the law.

Californians have consistently voted on the side of increased public safety measures. In 1994, Proposition 184, known as the Three-Strikes-And-You're-Out law, which enhances prison sentences for repeat offenders, was passed by a resounding 72% - 28%. In 2006, Proposition 83, or Jessica's



Parents of Chelsea King, Parents of Amber Dubois (Moe Dubois & Carrie McConigle) are joined by the Van Dams & Klaas Family at Amber's Memorial

Law, which more closely tracks registered sex offenders, was supported by 70% of voters.

In November we will elect a new governor. We need assurances from all of the candidates that they will finally listen to the will of the people and prioritize public safety. To do less is a blatant betrayal of the public trust. To learn more, please log onto <http://klaaskids.org> and select "Jessica's Law." ■

CALIFORNIA FINALLY CRACKS DOWN ON “FAUXFILES”

Children are most often sexually abused by someone they know and trust. Approximately three-quarters of reported cases of child sexual abuse are committed by individuals who are considered part of the victim’s “circle of trust,” according to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Today, children have been made still more vulnerable by the advent of social networking sites, which provide an escape from the world of parental controls, real-world responsibilities, and personal problems. Children very often get to know sex offenders who hide behind a fake social networking profile—a “fauxfile.” With a fauxfile, a predator has not only the ability to hide his or her identity, but to operate and manipulate in an environment where there are no appropriate safeguards.

In fact, in the State of California, there are currently no laws at all against the use of social networking Internet websites by registered sex offenders. Some efforts have been made on the federal level to monitor sex offenders online, but do not as yet protect children on social networking sites. Several states have therefore passed more specific legislation banning registered sex offenders from social networking. However, the State of California is just starting this critical process.

This article examines new bills which will be coming up for Public Safety Committee review this month in Sacramento to help increase child safety online. It is a reduction of a white paper analyzing the problem of sex offenders hiding behind a fake identity online. To read the complete paper, please go to http://www.klaaskids.org/internet_fauxfiles.pdf on the KlaasKids website.

The Current State of Child Abuse

Since the hallmark of the crime of child sex abuse is secrecy, it is difficult to track and accurately report statistics on child sex abuse victimization. We know that approximately 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before the age of 18. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (1988), the typical child sex offender molests an average of 117 children. It is believed that 90% of sexual abuse victims never tell, fearing that disclosure will bring consequences even worse than being victimized again.

Not surprisingly, sex offenders are drawn to the secret aspect of interacting with children on social network sites via fauxfiles. These sites provide a nearly unfettered ability to befriend children. Add to the mix the growing divide between today’s more tech-savvy children and diminished parental oversight, and it is unequivocal that children are extremely vulnerable on social networking sites.

Professionals believe that 1 in 5 children are solicited sexually while on the Internet. About 1 in 33 experiences an aggressive solicitation where an individual requests a meeting, telephones, or sends regular mail, money or gifts. Only 1 in 4 children typically tell their parents about these episodes, according to the Office of Justice Programs. Some recent stories in the news:

- Matthew Martinez Castaneda, a 33 year-old man, is accused of luring a 12-year-old girl on MySpace with a fauxfile and treating her to two theme parks, then raping her in an Anaheim motel.
- Peter Chapman, a 33-year-old English convicted rapist, is now in jail for life for killing 17-year-old Ashleigh Hall in October 2009.

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Chapman pretended he was a handsome teenager in his Facebook fauxfile.

- A 47-year-old man from Pomona, California lured a 14-year-old boy online and sodomized him.
- In Illinois, a 42-year-old sex offender tried to target a 14-year-old Naperville girl by posing as a teenage boy on Facebook. The girl’s mother was suspicious and alerted law enforcement, which thwarted their potential meeting.

Current State-Level Legislation

Some states have taken action to combat the threat of sexual predators on Internet social networking sites. The most forward of these new laws is in the State of New York. Known as “e-STOP,” it was the first legislation also to support preemptive measures; permitting law enforcement, at the request of the operator of a website, to provide email addresses of convicted New York sex offenders. Under the law, these websites in turn are allowed to purge the accounts associated with these email addresses, but only at their own discretion.

Notably, this law does not apply to what New York classifies as Type 1 offenders (risk of repeat offense is deemed low), but only to Type 2 (risk of repeat offense is deemed moderate) and Type 3 offenders (risk of repeat offense is deemed high). The law requires sex-offenders to provide email addresses at the time they register with the state, and update them on an ongoing basis with any new accounts. A violation of the law is a felony. In

December 2009, New York attorney general Andrew Cuomo told reporters that in compliance with the e-STOP law, 2,782 Facebook accounts and 1,796 MySpace accounts had been closed.

A number of states have either passed laws to combat sexual predators on Internet social networking sites or are in the process of passing them, including Illinois, Michigan, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Georgia. Social networking websites are generally supportive of these laws.

New Laws Proposed in CA

Under California Penal Code § 290, all individuals convicted of sex offenses in the State of California are required to register as sex offenders in a statewide database. The law requires registered sex offenders to notify law enforcement of any changes to their address or whereabouts. There is currently no law against registered sex offender’s use of social networking Internet websites, but there are four bills pending in the California legislature:

- AB 2208 Torres (D-Pomoma)
- AB 1850 Galgiani (D-Stockton)
- SB 1204 Runner (R-Antelope Valley)
- SB 1361 Corbett (D-San Leandro)

AB 2208 – Torres: AB 2208 would prohibit any person who is required to register under Penal Code §290 from using any Internet social networking website. Similar to New York’s e-STOP law, it would allow the California Department of Justice to collect email addresses from registered sex offenders, and provide those

addresses to social networking sites that request them in order to purge sex offenders from the sites. However, AB 2208 (also true of AB 1850) would be the

© 2010 by the KlaasKids Foundation. The *Klaas Action Review* is published quarterly for Foundation members. Dedicated to the memory of Polly Klaas, the Foundation’s purpose is to inform parents, children and communities about how to prevent crimes against children through personal action and support of legislation. Design Concept: Blackburn Design, Petaluma, CA. Printing: MSI Litho, San Rafael, CA.

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CALIFORNIA FINALLY CRACKS DOWN ON “FAUXFILES”

strongest law in the country, as it applies to all sex offenders covered by California Penal Code §290 (not just Type 2 and 3). A violation of this law would be a misdemeanor punishable by jail up to 6 months and/or a fine up to \$1,000.

The legislation would carve out an exception for an offender who seeks to use a social network site for legitimate business purposes, such as to seek employment. This use would be monitored by the appropriate parole or probation agency.

AB 1850 – Galgiani: This bill, similar to AB 2208, would require a sex offender to register and update all email addresses with law enforcement. It would require the information to be provided to social networking sites so they can prescreen or remove these accounts. This bill goes further than AB 2208 to require, as a condition of probation or parole, that a person already required to register as a high-risk sex offender be prohibited from using the Internet to access pornographic material, to access social networking sites, or to communicate with any person under 18, except his or her own children.

SB 1204 – Runner: This bill would prohibit sexual predators on parole from opening accounts on social networking websites. The bill also requires sex offenders who have completed parole to register all of their online addresses with the California Department of Justice. Runner also authored California’s Jessica’s Law and Amber Alert.

SB 1361 – Corbett: This bill would prohibit a social networking site from displaying the home address or telephone number of a registered user who is under 18 years of age. This bill would impose a fine of up to \$10,000. This is the least restrictive of the laws and imposes only a civil penalty.

Certain opponents feel that the current and proposed Internet predator laws are ineffective because they rely on the assumption that sex-offenders will police themselves. The counter to this concern is that self-policing is already an aspect of most existing sexual predator laws. In California, for example, sex offenders are already required to self-police under California Penal Code §290. These new Internet-related laws do not require a new enforcement paradigm. They simply add more information (email addresses) that are required to be given at the time of registration and thereafter.

If you are a California resident, play your part by contacting your legislator to express your support for the strongest of these laws for child safety.

Keeping Children Safe When Social Networking?

There is no doubt that in addition to new laws, in the long term we need to further educate parents and children about ways to protect children online. One benefit of the public debate and media coverage surrounding these new laws is that the public is beginning to be educated on this important issue.

To accomplish this goal, it would be optimal to fund online youth outreach programs, school anti-bullying programs, and online mental health services to help children including those who are arguably engaging in risky off-line behavior. No doubt prevention efforts may have a dramatic impact if they focus on the psychosocial problems of youth, and educate children and parents on what types of behavior can lead to interpersonal victimization.

CALIFORNIA FINALLY CRACKS DOWN ON “FAUXFILES”

However, we live in a state with a severe budget crisis and have few resources to dedicate to such expansive new programs. The new legislation described above will act as a roadblock to stop the commission of sex crimes originating on social network sites.

How the UK is Securing Social Networking

How are other countries policing social networking? In the UK, a large “report button” appears on every social networking site profile, allowing users to access law enforcement with a single click. The button also leads to direct links to many sources of help on safety issues, such as cyberbullying. Reports show that around 10,000 people a month are already utilizing the button across other online services, initiating more than 5,000 reports this way each year.

In November 2009, Bebo.com, which is owned by AOL and is host to most of the young children on social networking sites, broke new ground by adopting the report button for their UK users. MySpace and Facebook provide their own abuse reporting functions and provide indirect access to officials of the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre, a UK-based multi-agency service dedicated to tackling the exploitation of children.

The idea of a universal icon is intriguing and potentially a very valuable option for protecting our children. It is difficult for children to know when they are being courted by a sexual predator, and it can provide a huge benefit to link directly from a social networking site to a portal providing advice about anything they are worried about online. All too often, children are deterred from reporting because they do not want to share distressing information with their parents.

Cybersafety Tips for Concerned Parents

If you are a concerned parent who is reading this article and is wondering what you can do right now to help keep your children safe, here are some common-sense cybersafety tips that you can implement immediately:

- Always “friend” your child on each site so that you are able to monitor your child’s social networking.
- Make sure that you have your child’s usernames and passwords to their accounts, this way you can remove photos or comments that may allow predators to identify where they live or go to school.
- Keep the computer your child uses in a room of your home where your child does not have privacy to chat online without your knowledge.
- Do not give young children smart phones with more features than you understand how to use or that allow them to access social networks outside of the home.

The Internet poses many new challenges for law enforcement and parents. Our children are vulnerable to the manipulation of anonymous Internet predators, and we need to support efforts to curtail new modes of dangerous sexual solicitation. Megan’s Law has been an important component of protecting children in the offline world. The tireless fight to put Megan’s Law on the Internet was a first step into allowing the public to access the information regarding mandated registered sex offenders from any computer. Now we simply need additional safeguards in this emerging Internet playground to protect children in the online world.■

This article is a reduction of a white paper analyzing upcoming legislation in California. To read the complete paper, please go to http://www.klaaskids.org/internet_fauxfiles.pdf and contact your legislator today!

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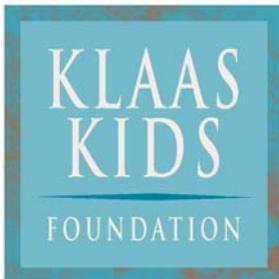
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