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**National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
Releases “Blog Beware” Report and Safety Tips at
NetSmartz.org**

***President and CEO Ernie Allen to Testify Before Congress on
the Sexual Exploitation of Children Over the Internet Today***

Alexandria, VA (April 4, 2006) – The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children’s (NCMEC) online safety program, NetSmartz.org, is releasing a new report today entitled “Blog Beware.” The report is being released as NCMEC’s President and CEO Ernie Allen testifies in front of the U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee’s Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations about the sexual exploitation of children over the Internet.

“As technology evolves, so does the creativity of the online predator,” said Mr. Allen. “It is essential to give parents, guardians, and children the tools to help protect their families from this possible risk. Additionally, the recent blogging phenomenon reinforces the importance of educating teens on to how to play a part in their online safety.”

According to NCMEC’s Online Victimization Report:

- One in five children online is sexually solicited.
- One in thirty-three received an aggressive sexual solicitation—a solicitor who asked to meet them somewhere; called them on the telephone; sent them regular mail, money, or gifts.
- One in four had an unwanted exposure to pictures of naked people or people having sex in the last year.
- About one quarter of the youth who encountered a sexual solicitation or approach told a parent. Almost 40 percent of those reporting an unwanted exposure to sexual material told a parent or guardian.

The report has tips about safer blogging and activities to help open the lines of communication between parents, guardians, and their children about Internet safety. The report can be found at <http://www.NetSmartz.org>.

The NetSmartz Workshop is a program of NCMEC and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America and has educated millions of children, parents, and guardians since its inception in 2002.

About the NetSmartz Workshop

The NetSmartz Workshop is an interactive, educational safety resource from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) and Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) that uses age-appropriate, 3-D activities to teach children and teens how to be safer when using the Internet. NetSmartz uses the latest technology to create high-impact educational activities that are well received by even the most tech-savvy kids of any age group. The NetSmartz Workshop content is available at no charge to the public at www.NetSmartz.org

About the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)

NCMEC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. NCMEC's congressionally mandated CyberTipline, a reporting mechanism for child sexual exploitation, has handled more than 365,600 leads. Since its establishment in 1984, NCMEC has assisted law enforcement with more than 117,100 missing child cases, resulting in the recovery of more than 99,500 children. For more information about NCMEC, call its toll-free, 24-hour hotline at 1-800-THE-LOST or visit its web site at www.missingkids.com.

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