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## **Cox Communications Joins Forces with John Walsh to Help Parents TAKE CHARGE of TV and Internet Content**

*New research measures parental concerns about their children's viewing and surfing habits*

**ATLANTA** –Following the infamous 2004 Super Bowl half-time show, parental sensitivity to their children's access to TV and Internet content has increased significantly. Research conducted on behalf of Cox Communications, Inc., reveals that 85 percent of American parents say they are concerned about the images their children see on TV programs and web sites. Forming an alliance with children's advocate and TV host John Walsh, Cox has launched "Take Charge! – Smart Choices for Your Cox Digital Home" to help parents better manage their family's mass media experience.

"Although many people want to better manage their kids' exposure to things they find objectionable, a lack of time and knowledge often prevents them from doing so," noted Walsh, the tireless crusader for victims' rights and missing children and host of *America's Most Wanted*. "That's why Cox's Take Charge! program provides parents with proactive, easy-to-use tools and resources to promote safe and smart usage."

With Take Charge!, Cox wants to increase customers' awareness and use of the parental controls and filtering tools already available in a digital home — on their cable TV, Internet, and telephone services. Through an easy-to-use, comprehensive new web site ([www.cox.com/takecharge](http://www.cox.com/takecharge)) and a free resource guide, Cox will also provide families with tools and resources to help them not only block content they find objectionable, but identify and get the most enjoyment out of exciting family-friendly content.

"We took a snapshot of the American mindset and gauged concerns about the content available via broadband and digital technologies," said Jim Robbins, President and CEO of Cox Communications, Inc. "It became clear that parents enjoy having so many choices for their entertainment and news, but they want help in monitoring and making the most of the mass media content coming into their homes. That's why we launched Take Charge! to empower parents."

### **Research Findings Identify Growing Concerns**

Over 30 percent of parents surveyed indicate that they are more concerned now than before the Super Bowl half-time incident on February 1. Additional findings of two national surveys conducted for Cox by Ketchum Global Research Network include:

- More than half of American parents surveyed are either somewhat or very concerned about their children seeing images from the war in Iraq.

- Respondents are most concerned about the appropriateness of online content. Outranking TV programs, movies, video games, and print media, Internet sites were named by 40 percent of parents as their number one concern when it comes to inappropriate content.
- Sexual images are considered more objectionable than other kinds of content. When it comes to TV, 51 percent of parents surveyed cited sexual content as most objectionable (over violence, reality TV, and war coverage), while 56 percent rated it as the most disturbing content on the Internet (over spam, open chat rooms and violent images).
- Almost all respondents believe they should be responsible for ensuring that their children use technology appropriately, yet they want help in doing so. In fact, 71 percent of respondents indicated they are interested in having a printed or online guide to help identify family-appropriate content, as well as how to block inappropriate content.

### **Time to Take Charge**

The Take Charge! web site ([www.cox.com/takecharge](http://www.cox.com/takecharge)) is a central repository of helpful information. For example, almost 60 percent of parents surveyed indicated that parental controls on cable boxes are the most valuable monitoring tool for TV, so the site features step-by-step instructions on activating those controls. Additional online tools include tips for responsible Internet, TV, and telephone use; a family media usage contract; a resource list to help identify good educational programming; links to valuable web sites; ongoing features on protecting families; and games, quizzes, and other fun offerings that educate children about safe usage practices.

Public Service Announcements featuring John Walsh will be distributed throughout Cox markets and a printed Take Charge! resource guide is available upon request. With back-to-school time approaching, Cox cable systems plan to launch a number of community activities throughout the fall to educate parents, kids, and educators. Initiatives include “Cox Family Fun Night,” which will bring families together to watch positive programming; peer video testimonials featuring students presenting information on positive Internet content and usage tips; and educational presentations at Family Fairs, instructional workshops, PTA meetings and other venues.

Take Charge! will also help parents teach young children and teens how to stay safer online through Cox’s new partnership with NetSmartz<sup>®</sup>, an interactive, educational safety resource created by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children<sup>®</sup> and Boys & Girls Clubs of America. NetSmartz combines the newest technologies available and the most current information to create high-impact educational activities that are well received by even the most tech-savvy kids. NetSmartz uses 3-D animation to create characters like Clicky, Webster, and Nettie to teach kids about online dangers using interactive games and activities. The goal of NetSmartz is to extend the safety awareness of children to prevent victimization and increase self-confidence whenever they go online. Parents, guardians, educators, and law

enforcement also have access to additional resources for learning and teaching about the dangers children may face online.

The surveys, with 1,452 total respondents, were conducted in May and June, 2004. Additional research findings can be viewed at [www.cox.com/takecharge](http://www.cox.com/takecharge).

**About Cox Communications:**

Cox Communications (NYSE: COX), a Fortune 500 company, is a multi-service broadband communications company with approximately 6.6 million total customers, including 6.3 million basic cable subscribers. The nation's third-largest cable television provider, Cox offers both analog cable television under the Cox Cable brand as well as advanced digital video service under the Cox Digital Cable brand. Cox provides an array of other communications and entertainment services, including local and long distance telephone under the Cox Digital Telephone brand; high-speed Internet access under the Cox High Speed Internet brand; and commercial voice and data services via Cox Business Services. Local cable advertising, promotional opportunities and production services are sold under the Cox Media brand. Cox is an investor in programming networks including Discovery Channel. More information about Cox Communications can be accessed on the Internet at [www.cox.com](http://www.cox.com).

**About John Walsh**

Children's advocate John Walsh has turned his passion for justice into the nation's number-one crime-fighting show, Fox's *America's Most Wanted: America Fights Back*. Touched by tragedy when his six-year-old son Adam was abducted and murdered in 1981, John and his wife Revé turned their grief into positive energy to help missing and exploited children. Battling bureaucratic resistance and legislative nightmares, their work led to the passage of the Missing Children Act of 1982 and the Missing Children Assistance Act of 1984. The latter bill founded the *National Center for Missing & Exploited Children*, which maintains a toll-free hotline number (1-800-THE-LOST) to report missing or sexually exploited children. Named by CBS portraits as one of the *100 Americans Who Changed History*, John Walsh's life has also been chronicled on A & E's *Biography* program and MSNBC's *Headliners and Legends with Matt Lauer*. In 1988 he was named the *U.S. Marshals' Man of the Year*, and two years later received the same honor from the FBI, the Bureau's highest civilian award. Walsh has received hundreds of other honors, including the *1984 Father of the Year Award* from the National Father's Day Committee and is the only private citizen to receive a Special Recognition Award by a U.S. Attorney General.

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