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NEW STUDY REVEALS PARENTS NEED BETTER CYBERSMARTS

Children's Advocate John Walsh, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and Cox Communications Announce Results of Parental Internet Monitoring Survey

ATLANTA – A new survey commissioned by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) and Cox Communications reveals that, while nearly half of the parents surveyed monitor their children's online activity daily or weekly, the other half admit they don't even know that such monitoring tools are available. The results are a compelling backdrop for Internet Safety Month in June.

Other key findings:

- Over half (51%) of parents either do not have or do not know if they have software on their computer(s) that monitors where their teenager(s) go online and with whom they interact.
- 42% of parents do not review the content of what their teenager(s) read and/or type in chat rooms or via instant messaging.
- Teenagers who Instant Message use chat lingo to communicate and parents don't know the meanings of some of the most commonly used phrases. 57% don't know LOL (Laughing Out Loud), 68% don't know BRB (Be Right Back), and 92% don't know A/S/L (Age/Sex/Location).
- 95% of parents couldn't identify common chat room lingo that teenagers use to warn people they're chatting with that their parents are watching. Those phrases are POS (Parent Over Shoulder) and P911 (Parent Alert).
- Nearly three out of 10 (28%) of parents don't know or are not sure if their teens talk to strangers online.
- 30% of parents allow their teenagers to use the computer in private areas of the house such as a bedroom or a home office. Parents say they are more vigilant about where their teen(s) go online if the computer is in a public area of the household.
- 58% of parents surveyed say they review the content of what their teenager(s) read and/or type in chat rooms or via Instant Messaging; 42% do not.

To promote awareness of the tools and software parents can easily access to better protect their children online, John Walsh, children's advocate and host of "America's Most Wanted," will appear live in local broadcast television and radio interviews across the country on Wednesday, May 25, 2005. Walsh also will host a program addressing Internet safety and highlighting steps parents can take to better manage what their children see and do online. The show will air on Cox Cable channels nationwide starting in June.

The media effort being undertaken by Walsh, NCMEC, and Cox is part of a larger campaign to encourage parents and caregivers to become more involved with their children's online habits and behaviors and show how families can get the most out of their Internet experiences – safely. Launched in partnership with Walsh in 2004, "**Take Charge! Smart Choices for Your Cox Digital Home**" hopes to increase awareness and use of the parental controls and Internet filtering tools that are already available in Internet and cable customers' homes. A major component of Take Charge! is NetSmartz,® an interactive, educational safety resource from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® and Boys & Girls Clubs of America that uses

age-appropriate, 3-D activities to teach children and teens how to stay safer on the Internet.

At www.cox.com/TakeCharge, parents and children can find the complete survey results, online safety tools and tips, links to NCMEC, NetSmartz, and the CyberTipline, and a glossary of common Internet chat lingo.

“We all know that the Internet is a fantastic tool for children to use and learn from,” said Walsh. “However, parents need to be engaged with their children’s online habits to prevent the unthinkable from happening within their own home. NetSmartz.org and Cox’s Take Charge! web site are great places for parents to learn how they can take charge of their family’s web usage.”

Take Charge! consists of a comprehensive web site at www.cox.com/TakeCharge, free parents’ guide, and Public-Service Announcements featuring Walsh and local educational activities within the communities Cox serves. Teaching young children and teens how to stay safer online is a major element of the program thanks to Cox’s partnership with NetSmartz. In addition to Take Charge! PSAs, Cox has donated \$3.3 million of PSA airtime to NetSmartz and nearly \$900,000 to NCMEC.

About the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

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 313,000 leads. Since its establishment in 1984, NCMEC has assisted law enforcement with more than 106,000 missing child cases, resulting in the recovery of more than 92,000 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.

About Cox Communications (www.cox.com)

Cox Communications Inc., a Fortune 500 company, is a multi-service broadband communications company with approximately 6.7 million total customers, including approximately 6.3 million basic cable subscribers. The nation's third-largest cable television provider, Cox offers analog cable television under the Cox Cable brand as well as digital video service under the Cox Digital Cable brand, featuring advanced services including digital video recording, high-definition television and video-on-demand. Cox provides an array of other communications services including local and long-distance telephone under the Cox Digital Telephone brand, high-speed Internet service under the Cox High Speed Internet brand, and home networking. Commercial voice and data services are offered 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 services including Discovery Communications Inc. Cox Communications is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Cox Enterprises Inc.

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