



JIM PETRO
ATTORNEY GENERAL

STATE OF OHIO
www.ag.state.oh.us

Attorney General Jim Petro Provides Safe, Fun Destination For Children On The Internet

COLUMBUS – Last December, a Marion man logged on to the Internet, entered a chat room and arranged a rendezvous with a 15-year-old boy in Mt. Gilead. Fortunately, in this case, the boy was actually a Mt. Gilead police officer who had learned how to navigate the Internet to nab potential sexual predators through a course he took at Attorney General Jim Petro’s Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy.

While an arrest was made and no one was harmed in the Mt. Gilead case, all too often, an actual child is on the other end of the Internet chat with a potential sexual predator. In an effort to educate children about the dangers of the Internet, Petro has created an interactive Kids Page on his Web site (www.ag.state.oh.us), complete with educational puzzles and games.

“It’s very important that parents monitor how their children are using the Internet,” Petro said. “While the Internet provides us with instant access to a wealth of wonderful knowledge, it is also filled with dangerous places where predators lurk.”

Petro’s site is designed for children of all ages, including teens. It provides clear and understandable safety tips, fun facts about Ohio and online safety pledges that can be printed out and posted near your computer.

Petro’s Kids Page also includes a link to the NetSmartz Workshop, an interactive, educational resource that uses age-appropriate, 3-D activities to teach children and teens how to be safer when using the Internet. NetSmartz, created by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and Boys & Girls Clubs of America, is designed for children aged 5 to 17, parents, guardians, educators and law-enforcement officials. The goal of NetSmartz is to extend the safety awareness of children to prevent victimization and increase self-confidence whenever they go online.

“We are happy that Ohio has chosen to share the NetSmartz program with children and teens in their state,” said Rick Minicucci, President of the NetSmartz Workshop. “NetSmartz is a positive way to teach children about the important issue of Internet safety. Children respond well to the games and activities because they are computer-based and interactive.”

Another important safety tool offered online by Petro is the electronic Sex Offender Registration and Notification (eSORN) database, which tracks the whereabouts of convicted sex offenders throughout Ohio. Visit www.esorn.state.oh.us to sign up to receive free e-mail notification whenever a sex offender moves within one mile of any address you register.

–30–

CONTACT: Bob Beasley, Attorney General’s Office, at (614) 466-3840
www.ag.state.oh.us