

New Website a Resource for Online Safety

In an effort to assist parents, teachers, and others on how to protect their children from online predators, Iowa's Division of Criminal Investigation's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) launched a new website, www.iaicac.org. The website also contains information for older kids about the dangers of sexting - the sending of nude, partially nude, or sexually provocative pictures.

ICAC's Task Force is multi-agency, and is responsible for capturing and prosecuting online predators, as well as training law enforcement, prosecutors, parents, and communities. The Task Force fosters statewide and regional coordination, collaboration, information sharing, networking, and service integration.

The Division believes that having this educational material available on a website makes it more accessible to Iowans. While schools, businesses, and community groups can ask the Task Force to make presentations, not everyone is able to attend.

The website offers suggestions to parents on how to talk with their kids about the dangers of online strangers and advises kids what information to never give out while on the computer. Sexting can have unforeseen consequences such as having pictures posted on the internet or even possible criminal charges.

The Task Force awarded the Iowa Attorney General's Office the 2010 Outstanding Service Award for its continued public outreach and education, as well as its efforts to prosecute those who use the internet to prey on children. In 2009, twenty-five online predators were arrested in the state of Iowa.