



WASHINGTON STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL
ROB MCKENNA
AG REQUEST LEGISLATION - 2008 SESSION

YOUTH INTERNET SAFETY TASK FORCE PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

THE PROBLEM

In 2006, the Pew Internet & American Life Project found that of all teens using the Internet:

- 17 percent reported they have friends they have never personally met
- 49 percent say they use social networking sites online to make new friends
- 82 percent include their first name in their profile
- 79 percent include photos of themselves
- 61 percent include the name of their city/town
- 49 percent include the name of their school
- 32 percent have been contacted by strangers

In a 2000 study issued by the Federal Bureau of Prisons, 76 percent of offenders convicted of Internet-related crimes against children admitted to contact sex crimes with children previously undetected by law enforcement and had an average of 30.5 child sex victims each. (Source: American Prosecutors Research Institute, 2004)

Prosecutors say proving possession of child pornography on computer hard drives is more difficult to prove than viewing.

BACKGROUND

In 2006, Attorney General McKenna requested legislation increasing the penalty for possession of child pornography from an unranked felony to a Level VI with a minimum one year of prison time. This legislation was incorporated into SB 6172 and signed into law.

In August 2007, AG McKenna convened the Youth Internet Safety Task Force to take advantage of Washington's unique position as a technology leader and identify educational, collaborative and law enforcement strategies to make the Internet safer for the people of Washington and their families.

The committee is comprised of representatives from across Washington's education, law enforcement and technology communities who have formed three working groups to address Internet safety.

- Law Enforcement
 - Consumer Education
 - Research and Technology
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LEGISLATION

The committee's Law Enforcement Work Group recommends two immediate and targeted changes to RCW 9.68A: (1) create a new crime of "Viewing Child Pornography," and (2) amend 9.68A.110 to allow non-commissioned police personnel trained in forensic analysis to assist in child pornography investigations.