

# KING COUNTY



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An innovative court awareness program developed to help child victim/witnesses and their families

*The development of the Internet has created endless opportunities for learning and access to nearly unlimited sources of information for people of any age. Our youth now have the world at their fingertips as they progress in school and explore and investigate their interests. Further, these tools enable instant communication with text, pictures and even live images. The positive and productive aspects of this technology are phenomenal and are being employed in wonderful and creative ways in homes, schools, libraries and many other settings.*

*Parents, educators and others involved with young people have increasingly become aware that, like many things, the Internet with all its promise also has its threats. Safety on the Internet is important to address. For young people, exposure to inappropriate images and content, meeting strangers and becoming the recipient of unwelcome solicitations are potential hazards.*

*This newsletter explores safety on the Internet and strategies and resources available to responsibly address concerns. We all want to help ensure that the Internet is a safe and positive tool for our young people for learning and communicating.*

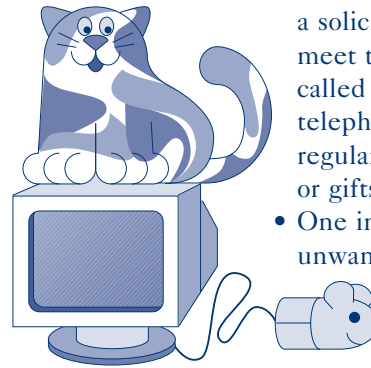
## Study Documents Extent of Online Victimization of Youth

by Debbie Doane, LICSW and Kerry Todd, LICSW

Congress has worked to protect children through legislation, including the *Child Online Privacy Act*. Internet safety information is available from a number of websites (see page 5). However, based on a survey conducted in 2000, *Online Victimization: A Report on the Nation's Youth*<sup>(1)</sup>, we must do more. As demonstrated in this report, children, especially teenagers, are continually exposed to unwanted sexual solicitations and approaches, unwanted sexual material and threatening and offensive behavior directed at them.

The following highlights of this report are based on interviews with a nationally representative sample of 1,501 youth ages 10 to 17 years who use the Internet regularly.

- Approximately one in five received a sexual solicitation or approach over the Internet *in the last year*.
- One in thirty-three received an *aggressive* sexual solicitation –



a solicitor who asked to meet them somewhere; called them on the telephone; sent them regular mail, money or gifts.

- One in four had an unwanted exposure to pictures of naked people or people

- having sex *in the last year*.
- One in seventeen was threatened or harassed.
- Approximately one quarter of the youth who reported these incidents were distressed by them.
- Less than 10% of sexual solicitations, and only 3% of unwanted exposure episodes, were reported to authorities such as a law enforcement agency, an Internet service provider or a hotline.
- About one quarter of the youth who encountered a sexual solicitation or approach told a parent. Almost 40% of those reporting an unwanted exposure to sexual material told a parent.
- Only 17% of youth and approxi

<sup>(1)</sup> *Online Victimization: A Report to the Nation's Youth*, Crimes Against Children Research Center, David Finkelhor, Kimberly Mitchell, Janis Wolak, June 2000.

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# The Internet and Kids: A Blessing and a Hazard

by Norm Maleng, *King County Prosecutor*



*Norm Maleng*

information has allowed children and families to enjoy the benefits of the finest research and information on the planet. When we were young, it was essential to learn the dewey decimal system to navigate our way around the library. The Internet is the library for today's kids, and they need to be taught how to search the "net" to seek the answers to their questions and complete their school assignments.

The advent of the Internet has forever changed our lives and the lives of our children. Instant access to billions of pages of

If knowledge is power, the Internet can make each child a super-student. But we also know of the dark side of the Internet, and it holds special dangers for children. In pre-Internet days, people who dealt in child pornography and exploitation had to operate in the seamy margins of society. Today, anyone with a computer and modem can access thousands of pictures of illegal child pornography. Even more alarming is the proliferation of predators cruising chat rooms looking to meet children for sexual exploitation.

### Can the Law Stop This?

There have been laws against possessing and dealing in child

pornography for decades. The harm is obvious: the photos are of actual crimes against children. In addition, abusers in the grooming process often use child pornography as they

try to convince their victim to engage in acts like those depicted in the pornography.

Congress has passed no fewer than five different laws in an attempt to legislate this arena. The Supreme Court has

overturned some, upheld others, and split the difference on others designed to prohibit material "harmful to minors."

But the Internet makes this crime so simple to commit – it is just a few mouse-clicks away from anyone seeking it. We have prosecuted dozens of people for possessing and trading child pornography via their computers. While these cases, and these individuals, were worth bringing to the court's attention, we are under no illusion that prosecution alone will stop this billion-dollar industry.

*Use this newsletter as a helpful tool to initiate discussion with children.*

*Included are resources and valuable suggestions to help ensure a safe Internet experience.*

### The Bottom Line

The answer, it seems, cannot rest wholly within law enforcement, but must lie with parents. No parent would dream of letting a child run through the red light district of a major city alone at night. The same seamy and dangerous elements are present on the Internet – alongside the most brilliant and beautiful thoughts and creations of mankind. Use this newsletter as a helpful tool to initiate discussion with children. Included are resources and valuable suggestions to help ensure a safe Internet experience.

Children are naturally inquisitive, fearless of new technology and will be drawn to the Internet. Our job is to encourage the love of learning, but also give them the tools to protect themselves from the dark side of the net. ☺

## 2003 - 2004 KING COUNTY KIDS' COURT STAFF

### Donna Belin - Executive Director

Kids' Court depends on a dedicated cadre of specialist and community volunteers.

They include judges, prosecutors, social workers, police officers, educators, child victim advocates and numerous caring members of the community.

Megan Allen	Shari Davis	Janet Menezes	Meagan Smith
Harry Anderson	Debbie Doane	Tracy Moran	Stacie Sommerhill
Shannon Ayars	Holly Gilmore	Keri Newport	Kerry Todd
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Lucy Berliner	Teri Kaiser	Dave Ryan	Nancy Woodland
Kim Cortez	Kristi Larch	Judge Wesley	Tabitha Yockey
Fitzwater	Johnna Lehr	Saint Clair	Nadya Zawaideh
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*Education and Recognition:* Starbucks; Keeney's Office Products; Redmond Kinkos; Bartell Drugs; King County Courthouse Facilities Maintenance; King County Courthouse Security.

# Task Force Cited for Cyber Crackdown

by Leanne Shirey, *Detective, Seattle Police Vice Section, Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC)*

According to a recent study by Internet Service Providers, just over one quarter of Internet users have children in their households who have access to the Internet.

The top-ranking concern related to children's online activities was the ability for kids to meet strangers over the Internet. A close second was children's access to websites with adult content. By 2002 there were an estimated 45 million children online. In a 2000 survey of children, 20% reported receiving online requests to engage in sexual activity within the past year. 97% of these solicitations were from strangers.

The Special Investigations Unit of the Seattle Police Vice Section is the home of the Regional Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force. This task force investigates computer crimes involving children anywhere in the states of Washington, Oregon and Alaska. These crimes can include:

- Sexual exploitation of children,
- Child pornography,
- Child cyber-stalking,
- Communication with a minor for immoral purposes, and
- Sexual assault of children.

Partners in the task force include the FBI, U.S. Postal Service, U.S. Customs, Seattle Police Department, Des Moines Police Department, King County Prosecutor's Office, Washington Attorney General's Office, and the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The NW Regional ICAC Task Force was recognized this year by MSN and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) with one of six national Cyber Safe City Awards, acknowledging their work to arrest cyber criminals and prevent the victimization of children. This task force serves not only investigators of Internet-related crimes, but they are also responsible for the educa-

tion of thousands of community members through PTA meetings, special interest group meetings, law enforcement investigators and public schools.

While the Internet is a wonderful place for information and activities, it is also a target-rich environment for criminals who want to prey on innocent users. It allows the interaction between your child and the outside world while sitting in your living room. Having computers removed from the home is not the best solution. Children will still be exposed to this technology at other locations –the school, the neighbors, the library.

So, what should a parent do? Become educated on the issues of cyberspace. Teach your child how to be safe online. Set rules regarding Internet use that apply, no matter where your child encounters a computer. Decide what activities are permitted on the Internet and where they can participate in these selected activities.

Knowing about Internet crime issues and how to avoid your family becoming a victim – or your child getting involved and becoming a junior criminal – is only a part of

the answer. A parent needs to be able to check on their child's cyberspace activities, just as they are already able to check their activities in the physical world.

Do you know how to find out if your computer is being used during times you don't approve of? Do you know how to learn what your children have been doing, what they have been viewing, whom they have been chatting with, to whom they have been writing? Do you know what personal information about your family is already posted on the Internet?

## Free training is available

If your answers are "no," don't despair. The Internet and Your Child (IYC) Parents Education and Safety Course is available **free** at various locations in Washington State. It is open to anyone over 18, and participants do not need prior computer experience. This 7-hour hands-on class covers a wide variety of issues and information, including:

- How to check on your child's online activities;
- Physical word clues and behavior changes that may indicate a problem;
- How sexual predators attempt to groom children;
- How filtering and monitoring

*Continued on back page*

## 2003 KIDS' COURT CALENDAR

<b>September 3</b>	HARBORVIEW GOLF CLASSIC at Newcastle
<b>September 20</b>	TEEN COURT
<b>October 25</b>	KID'S COURT

## 2004 KIDS' COURT CALENDAR

<b>January 24</b>	KID'S COURT
<b>March 27</b>	TEEN COURT
<b>April (TBA)</b>	"Heal a Child's Heart" Luncheon, Children's Response Center
<b>April 24</b>	KIDS' COURT
<b>July 24</b>	KIDS' COURT
<b>September 25</b>	TEEN COURT
<b>October 23</b>	KIDS' COURT



*Community and professional volunteers join in wishing King County Kids' Court a Happy Birthday!*



## King County Kids' Court Milestones

1989... Specialist and community volunteers convene to develop a court awareness model for child/victim witnesses based on research of programs in other communities.

First *King County Kids' Court* held.

1990... Boeing Company volunteers present *Kids' Court* with "Living Dolls" to serve as courtroom personnel during sessions.

1991... Junior League pledges funding support to program for two years.

"*A Children's Court Awareness Program Training Manual and Curriculum*" published.

1993... "*Introduction to Kids' Court*" videotape produced with support from KING-TV and actor Harry Anderson.

*Kids' Court* upheld as an educational program by State Court of Appeals.

*Teen Court* established.

1995... *King County Kids' Court* model presented at the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC) National Colloquium.

1999... U.S. Office of Crime Victim Advocacy (OCVA) recognizes *King County Kids' Court* as a model program – featured in training video.

2001... Lee Ann Miller Award presented to *King County Kids' Court* by Children's Justice Interdisciplinary Task Force in recognition of furthering the mission of the Children's Justice Act: "Promoting the Safety and Protection of Children." (See article on page 7.)

# Tips for Internet Safety

## How Parents Can Reduce the Risk for Children and Teens on the Internet

The website for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children offers advice on Internet Safety. Some of the basic rules that parents should address with their children and teens are adapted below. Simple risk reduction strategies can help ensure the safety of children and teens. Be aware that teens are more at risk than younger kids because they are more likely to use the computer unsupervised and to engage in discussions of relationships or sexual activity.

- ❖ “Surf the net” as a family event – plan activities, pick out a movie, plan a vacation! If you’re unfamiliar with the computer or the Internet, ask your child to teach you.
- ❖ Get to know the Internet services your child uses. Have your child show you what he or she does online.
- ❖ Set reasonable expectations. Be open. Encourage your child to come to you if he or she experiences a problem online.
- ❖ Learn about blocking, filtering and ratings. Find out what is appropriate for your family.
- ❖ Make it a family rule to never give out identifying information – full name, address, school, phone number, place of work. Never post a child’s photograph on a website or newsgroup that is available to the public.
- ❖ Never allow your child to arrange a meeting with another computer user without your permission. If a meeting is arranged, make sure the first one is in a public place and that you accompany your child.
- ❖ Never respond to messages or bulletin-board items that are suggestive, obscene, belligerent or threatening. Encourage your child to tell you if he or she encounters such a message.
- ❖ If you or your child receives a message that is harassing, threatening, or of a sexual nature, forward a copy to the Internet Service Provider (ISP) that provides your Internet access and ask for their assistance. The ISP address is usually on the service’s main web page:  
**www.servicename.com**. When in doubt, report the message to **postmaster@servicename.com**. (Substitute the name of your service for “servicename”.)
- ❖ If you or your child receive a message or image that is obscene, lewd or indecent with the intent to harass, abuse, threaten, or annoy, or if you become aware of the transmission, use or viewing of child pornography while online, immediately report the event to the **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children’s Cyber Tipline** or **Child Pornography Tipline**. (See box at right.)

## Internet Safety Contacts

### CHILD IN DANGER:

If you know of a child at risk or in danger, call your local police or the Northwest Regional ICAC Task Force at **(206) 684-8660**.

### NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN:

**www.missingkids.org**

### CYBER TIPLINE:

**www.cybertipline.com**

### CHILD PORNOGRAPHY TIPLINE:

**1-800-THE-LOST – or – 1-800-843-5678**

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, in partnership with the FBI, the U.S. Customs Service, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and state and local law enforcement in Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces, serves as the national CyberTipline and Child Pornography Tipline. The U.S. Congress has funded these initiatives. Contact them to report:

- Leads concerning sexual exploitation of children.
- Possession, manufacture and distribution of child pornography.
- Online enticement of children for sexual acts.
- Child prostitution.
- Child-sex tourism.
- Child sexual molestation.

Your information will be forwarded to law enforcement for investigation and, when appropriate, to the Internet Service Provider.

### www.getnetwise.org

A public service by Internet corporations and public interest organizations to help ensure that families have safe, constructive and educational or entertaining online experiences. The Internet Education Foundation wants families to be “one click away” from resources they need to make informed decisions about Internet use.

### www.cyberangels.org

CyberAngels, a program of the Guardian Angels, was the first cyber-neighborhood watch and is one of the oldest in online safety education. Their mission is to function as a “virtual 411” safety destination, and to address concerns of parents, needs of children, online abuse and cyber crime, while supporting the right to free speech.

### www.safekids.com

Tips, advice and suggestions to make your family’s online experience fun and productive.

### www.netfamilynews.org

Featuring the Net Family Newsletter, family-relevant Internet news that keeps parents, teachers and other caregivers in more than 50 countries up to speed on the Information Superhighway. Based on the premise that informed, engaged parents and educators are essential to improving Kids’ quality of life online.

## Internet Safety Tips for Children

### Set up rules for going online.

Decide together with your parents the time of day and length of time you can be online. Establish appropriate areas to visit.

Don't access other areas or break any online rules.

### Don't give out personal information.

Never tell anyone your name – use a cyber-nickname on the Internet.

Never give out your address, phone number, the name or location of your school, parent's work address/phone number.

### Don't send anyone your picture.

Never send anyone your picture or anything else without checking with your parents first.

### Don't buy anything or accept gifts.

Never buy toys or games, join a club or accept a gift without your parent's permission.

### Don't agree to meet or call.

Never agree to get together with someone you meet online without checking with your parents.

If they agree to a meeting, be sure that it is in a public place and bring an adult along.

### Don't respond to uncomfortable information.

Never respond to any messages that are mean or upsetting.

If you see something on the Internet that makes you feel uncomfortable...

**...TELL YOUR PARENTS OR A TRUSTED ADULT RIGHT AWAY!**



## Internet Safety Tips for Teens

### Set up rules for going online.

Talk with your parents about their expectations and ground rules.

### Keep your identity private.

Avoid giving out your full name, password, mailing address, phone number, school information, names of clubs or teams, parent's employer or anything that could help someone determine your identity.

### Keep private information private.

Never post anything on the Internet that you wouldn't want known to the public at large.

### Don't accept a gift, enter a contest or join a club.

Never accept a gift or money from someone you meet online. Never register for a contest or join a club without your parent's permission. It could be a trick or a way to obtain your personal information.

### Don't agree to meet or call.

Never agree to get together with someone you meet online unless you've discussed it with your parents.

Never go to a meeting by yourself. Meet in a public place.

You never know for sure if the person is really who they say they are.

### Don't respond to uncomfortable information.

Never respond to e-mail, chat comments or newsgroup messages that are hostile, belligerent, inappropriate, or in any way make you feel uncomfortable.

Show it to a parent or trusted adult to see if there is any way to make it stop.

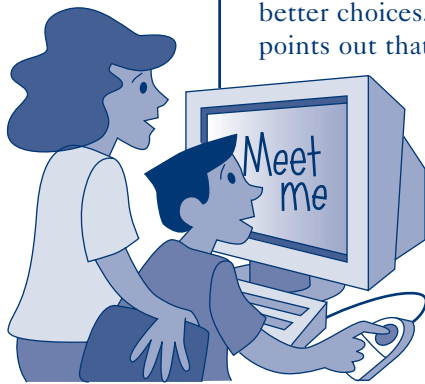


# Effective Internet Safety Education

by Kerry J. Todd, LICSW, Education and Training Department,  
Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress

Our children deserve to have safe Internet experiences. Young people are increasingly using the Internet for school projects as well as for personal use. They are high volume users, and they are easy targets for abuse by others trying to take advantage of them. However, making good choices while using the Internet relies on more than just handing our youth a set of rules and expectations. Social scientists are contributing to our understanding of effective strategies for helping to ensure Internet safety.

In a study by David Finkelhor and Ruth Luna at the Center for Research on Crimes against Children, University of New Hampshire, certain features



associated with *more effective* Internet safety education programs are highlighted. These features include active, systematic and specific skills training, classroom training combined with parent involvement and interactive instructional techniques. *Ineffective* approaches included lectures, use of fear tactics and efforts to only change attitudes. There is an assumption that increasing knowledge will result in kids making better choices. The Finkelhor study points out that if the education is only about what one *should* do, Internet usage behavior does not change. Parent involvement and parental support are cited as important components of a comprehensive

prevention program for youth.

Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress (HCSATS) has been providing Internet safety education to students in several schools in the Seattle area. However, due to limited funding, most schools request training in response to a crisis rather than reaching out in a proactive and preventive manner. HCSATS is in the process of exploring the option of partnering with several local agencies that also provide Internet safety training, with the goal of reaching a larger community of youth. HCSATS is also exploring the option of working with Internet software companies that are interested in increasing safety among our youth. This collaborative effort would ideally result in the creation of a comprehensive Internet safety prevention program that emphasizes parental involvement, thus increasing the program's effectiveness.

Interested agencies/companies are asked to contact Kerry Todd by phone at (206) 521-1800 or e-mail at [kjtodd@u.washington.edu](mailto:kjtodd@u.washington.edu). ☺

## King County Kids' Court Receives Lee Ann Miller Award

Annually, Washington's Children Justice Interdisciplinary Task Force presents the *Lee Ann Miller Award* to the individual and to the group or program which have made the greatest impact and/or contribution in furthering the mission of the federal government's Children's Justice Act. The mission of this Act is...

*"Development, establishment and operation of programs that promote the safety and protection of children, by improving the legislative, administrative and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner which limits additional trauma to the child victim; and the handling of suspected child maltreatment fatalities."*

This award is named for long-time state attorney general Lee Ann Miller who represented the Department of Social and Health Services Children's Administration for many years before her untimely death.

*King County Kids' Court* truly reflects the mission of this Act. Since its inception, the program has worked to ensure that child victim/

witnesses impacted by abuse and trauma, including sexual assault, have access to an educational experience that enhances their ability to fully participate in the criminal justice system process. In April 2001 *Kids' Court* was recognized as a model program for community involvement, longevity and commitment. ☺

## Happy 15th Birthday, King County Kid's Court by Judge David Steiner

Congratulations *Kids' Court* and all of those who have worked so hard for the last 15 years! Every person who has appeared in court can recall how terrifying his or her first appearance truly was. For children, it would be far worse, but for *Kids' Court*. So when you're wishing *Kids' Court*



a Happy Birthday, take a moment to think about the countless children who have appeared since *Kids' Court* began. For all of those children, *Kids' Court* put a human face on our court system. By reducing the trauma of their court appearances, *Kids' Court* helps kids remain kids. ☺

*Study Documents Extent...*  
*Continued from page 1*

mately 10% of parents could name a specific authority (such as the FBI, CyberTipline, or an Internet service provider) to which they could make a report, although more said they had heard of such places.

- In households with Internet access, one third of parents said they had filtering or blocking software on their computer at the time they were interviewed.

### What is “online victimization”?

Although people can be victimized in a variety of ways, the Youth Internet Safety Survey identifies four themes:

- *Sexual solicitations and approaches:* Requests to engage in sexual activities or sexual talk or give personal sexual information, that were unwanted or, whether wanted or not, made by an adult.

- *Aggressive sexual solicitations:* Sexual solicitations involving offline contact with the perpetrator through regular mail, by telephone, or in person, or attempts or requests for offline contact.
- *Unwanted exposure to sexual material:* Without seeking or expecting sexual material, being

exposed to pictures of naked people, or people having sex, when doing online searches, surfing the web, opening e-mail or e-mail links.

- *Harassment:* Threats or other offensive behavior (not sexual solicitation), sent online to the youth or posted online about the youth for others to see. ☺

*Task Force...*  
*Continued from page 3*

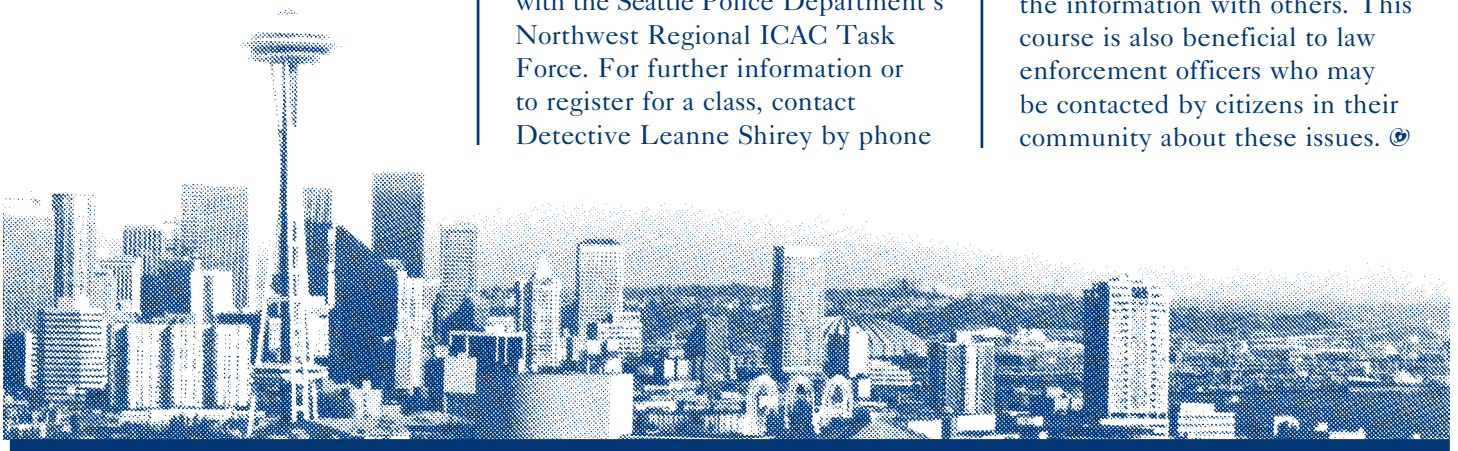
software works and whether this will assist your family.

Instructors go online during class and pose as a child, allowing the students to watch as this fictitious child is approached in chat rooms by sexual predators. Participants receive written reference materials for further information and assistance. They are also given instructors’ direct contact information for questions and assistance after attending the course.

The IYC program is partnered with the Seattle Police Department’s Northwest Regional ICAC Task Force. For further information or to register for a class, contact Detective Leanne Shirey by phone

at (206) 684-8651 or by e-mail at [leanne.shirey@seattle.gov](mailto:leanne.shirey@seattle.gov). Or visit the IYC website at [IYC@theinternetandyourchild.org](http://IYC@theinternetandyourchild.org) for the dates and locations of upcoming classes.

So often detectives see cases in their offices that could have been prevented or caught earlier if parents had been provided comprehensive Internet safety education. “If only I had known” has been said by many distraught parents. Don’t let this happen to those you care about. Find the time to attend this valuable training and then share the information with others. This course is also beneficial to law enforcement officers who may be contacted by citizens in their community about these issues. ☺



## KING COUNTY KIDS’ COURT

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*The mission of the King County Kids’ Court newsletter is to share news about Kids’ Court as well as related information with a network of concerned members of the community, social services and criminal justice system.*

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