

Internet Safety Awareness Class

Lakedale Communications has sponsored numerous Internet safety awareness classes throughout Lakedale's serving areas for students and parents. We have provided these classes to elementary, middle, and high school-age students. Lakedale has also provided evening classes for parents and children.

Lakedale has led the charge of promoting Internet safety throughout our industry on a state level. Lakedale, along with the Minnesota Telecom Alliance (MTA), partnered with NetSmartz to provide educational material to schools such as worksheets, safety tips for both parents and students, and fun Internet games for families. This information can be found at www.netsmartz.org.

Along with Lakedale's efforts, other organizations throughout our serving communities such as **school districts, community education organizations, local police departments, county sheriff's departments, Youth First organizations, and local churches** are all helping to spread the awareness of Internet safety.



The instructor that has given Internet safety awareness classes is Chris Dobratz. He is a Sergeant with the Hutchinson Police Services in Hutchinson, Minnesota. Sergeant Dobratz has been a police officer for 15 years, ten of which have been as an Investigator/Detective. Since 2001, Sergeant Dobratz has been a Forensic Examiner/Investigator with the Minnesota Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. In that capacity, Sergeant Dobratz investigates cases of child exploitation via the Internet and investigates those persons who possess, distribute, or manufacture child pornography.

Our Internet safety awareness classes highlight the following areas:

- Basic introduction to the World Wide Web
- Statistical information on crimes against children
- Case examples and scenarios of how children are victimized
- What to look for on your home computer
- Danger/warning signs to watch for
- Preventive measures
- Resources



MySpace.com operators recently reported a frightening statistic: As of the spring of 2007, they believed there were 7,000 registered sex offenders who had profiles on the popular social-networking site. Just recently, that number has grown to 29,000.

Even scarier is that the latest number is likely a tiny percentage of the problem. MySpace probably missed thousands of other deviants, as the ones they identified and deleted from their site had used their real names. Who knows how many others might remain under aliases. In addition, that site is just one of a thousand online places where young people interact and can become victims to predators.

Purging predators from Web sites that appeal to young audiences is an important element of protecting children online. Still, it is only one of several things that must be done to help keep children safe from Internet villains. Parental and other adult monitoring and stronger laws to help catch and prosecute offenders are also part of the solution.

As your local Internet Service Provider, Lakedale feels that spreading the awareness of the dangers on the Internet and how to take preventive measures to avoid predators on the Internet is important.