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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG Kaul Provides Resources for Parents to Facilitate Online Safety Discussions with Kids During Keep Your Kids Safe Online Month

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today, during Keep Your Kids Safe Online Month, is reminding parents of the importance of talking to children about online safety early and often and sharing resources available to help facilitate these conversations.

“Talking to kids about online safety is a critical part of parenting in 2024,” said Attorney General Josh Kaul. “We must ensure that when kids are online, they’re able to navigate the internet safely.”

The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force suggests parents discuss online dangers and risks with their kids. They should have an open dialogue about their kid’s online activity, including the websites they’re visiting, the people they’re communicating with, the information they’re sharing about themselves, and any situations that make them feel scared, uncomfortable or confused.

There are many resources to help start the conversation—[NetSmartz](#) is the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children’s (NCMEC) online safety education program, and they offer many excellent tip sheets, age-appropriate videos and activities to help teach children (of all ages) about potential online safety risks and empower them to make safe choices online. These resources are free to anyone to access and print.

For younger children, [Into the Cloud](#) (NCMEC's online safety program geared toward children 10 and under), is an excellent resource to introduce online safety topics. This program uses data from actual CyberTip reports to create short, animated videos focused on different elements of online safety. These are fun, engaging, and age-appropriate videos that are like watching cartoons, but they also open the door for parents to start a conversation about internet safety with their young children. There are additional activities and tip sheets to accompany the videos.

As children get older, online safety conversations must grow with them. Short conversations when the opportunity arises are a great way to check in and find out what your kids are doing online and open the door to a quick conversation about being safe. Asking your teen what they like to do online or to teach you about an app they are interested in is another way to engage with your child, show interest in what they are into, and then talk about possible safety risks and what to do if they encounter something inappropriate.

The Wisconsin ICAC Task Force and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction created the *interact!* Program to help keep kids safe online. Together caregivers and children can go through [interact!](#), a three-module course that has the goal of creating basic discussions about online safety at home. Each module varies from 15-45 minutes and allows parents to reflect on their own technology use and set a good example for their children. There are also activities to complete alongside their children. After the modules are finished, discussions can continue with follow-up resources.

The Wisconsin ICAC Task Force also produces an educational podcast called Protect Kids Online (PKO) that serves as a resource for parents, grandparents, guardians, or caregivers of children to learn about tips for combating online child exploitation and sextortion, internet safety laws, cyberbullying, protecting your child from strangers online, safe sharing tips and more. PKO podcast episodes can be found here: <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/dci/icac/protect-kids-online-pko-podcast>.

Parents and guardians can also subscribe to the Wisconsin Community & Parent email list to receive online safety updates and information by emailing icac@doj.state.wi.us and requesting to be added. You can view a monthly newsletter at [Wisconsin Department of Justice \(campaign-archive.com\)](#).

If you or someone you know has information on potential child exploitation you can report it to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children online at <https://report.cybertip.org/> or by calling 1-800-843-5678. Visit the ICAC Task Force

page for internet safety tips for parents and caregivers at <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/dci/icac/resources-materials>.