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Date: June 3, 3036

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Prosecutor: Online Tips for National Internet Safety Month

In 2005, the U.S. Senate designated June as **National Internet Safety Month** to raise awareness of internet dangers and highlight the need for education about online safety.

For prosecutors in particular, June is a time to highlight youth safety, especially for kids with social media access, as online risks have increased dramatically over the years.

In 2025, there was a staggering increase nationally in the number of reports the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's (NCMEC) CyberTipline received related to online enticement of children for sexual acts. Enticement is when a person communicates with someone believed to be a child on the internet with the intent to commit a sexual offense or abduction.

This type of crime may include sextortion, in which a child is being groomed to take sexually explicit images or ultimately meet face-to-face with someone for sexual purposes, or to engage in a sexual conversation online or, in some instances, to sell or trade the child's sexual images. This type of victimization takes place across every type of platform, including online gaming, social media, and messaging apps, according to NCMEC.

"Children and teens are accessing technology earlier than ever, increasing the need for proactive education and monitoring," said Mr. Marshall. "The goal of Internet Safety Month is to promote protective measures and encourage early digital safety conversations at home."

Mr. Marshall explained there are several safety tips parents and guardians can follow with their kids. Building trust, having open communication, and setting boundaries are crucial. Parents should:

- Set clear rules around screen time, social media use, and online gaming.
- Only use apps and platforms with verified parental controls and privacy settings.
- Supervise internet access and teach basic online safety rules such as not clicking on unknown links, not accepting friend requests from strangers, and not sharing locations.
- Keep devices in shared spaces and teach kids about 'safe strangers' online.
- Start conversations early about digital footprints, encouraging them to be cautious about sharing personal information and pictures online.

- Regularly review your child’s apps, privacy settings, and device activity.

Mr. Marshall encourages community members to report suspicious online behavior to law enforcement immediately, including cyberbullying, exploitation attempts, or impersonation.

“Educate your kids at a young age to report to an adult right away when they feel uncomfortable in a situation online,” Mr. Marshall said. “Point out red flags to look for (asking for pictures or money), and the precautions to take when situations turn dangerous.”

Other resources for online safety include:

- [National Center for Missing & Exploited Children](#)
- [June is Internet Safety Month — Indiana Center for the Prevention of Youth Abuse & Suicide](#)
- [Indiana Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force: Parenting Tips](#)