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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**50 Percent of Students Talk with Internet Strangers;
20 Percent Admit Face-to-Face Meetings**
*i-SAFE National Assessment Center (NAC) Report on Online Behavior
is Largest of its Kind*

Carlsbad, CA, November 6, 2006 – Millions of school-age children possess naive attitudes about their online safety and are engaging in a range of high-risk behaviors. i-SAFE Inc., the world leader in Internet safety education, announces results of a 2005–2006 National Assessment Center (NAC) report: *At Risk Online: National Assessment of Youth on the Internet and the Effectiveness of i-SAFE Internet Safety Education*. Based on surveys of more than 170,000 school-age American children, it found a vast majority of students are Internet users, often interacting in dangerous ways with strangers online.

- 50 percent of high school students “talk” in chat rooms or use instant messaging (IM) with Internet strangers.*
- 49 percent of high school students have posted personal information on their Web pages—such as name, age, or address—that could assist a stranger to identify or locate them.**
- 20 percent of students in middle school as well as high school admit that they have met face to face with someone they first met on the Internet.***

- 38 percent of high school students sometimes hide their online activities from their parents.****
- 65 percent of high school students admit to unsafe, inappropriate, or illegal activities online.*****

Survey results show that girls in grades 5–12 are more likely than boys to use virtually any online communication method. For example, they are more likely to: keep a personal “blog” (32 percent versus 25 percent), have a personal Web page (37 percent versus 28 percent), chat and/or instant message (58 percent versus 47 percent), and have a personal e-mail account (68 percent versus 59 percent).

According to the NAC parent survey of more than 4,000 respondents, 93 percent of parents stated that they know “some” or “a lot” about where their children go and what they do on the Internet. Yet only 42 percent of high school students—and 62 percent of middle school students—stated that they share where they go and what they do on the Internet with their parents. Also, 81 percent of high school students consider their Internet skills to be superior to their parents, suggesting the need for Internet safety education for parents.

“Children are at risk of becoming targets of online predators or cyber bullies when engaged in these risky behaviors on the Internet,” said i-SAFE president and CEO Teri Schroeder. “Often parents are oblivious to this behavior. That’s why it’s so important

that parents are involved in their child's Internet activities to help avoid becoming a victim.”

Education plays a significant role in changing youth beliefs and behaviors online.

Among more than 50,000 students in grades 3-12 who had unsafe online habits prior to i-SAFE training, 91 percent indicated that they would be able to make better choices about where they go and what they do on the Internet, and 88 percent indicated that they would be more careful about sharing personal information online.

During the 2005-2006 school year, more than 2.3 million students received i-SAFE Internet safety education. Topics included cyber predators, cyber bullying (online threats, insults, or harassment), personal safety, cyber-security issues, cyber citizenship, social networking, and intellectual property theft.

i-SAFE now provides Internet safety education, in the form of classroom curricula and professional development training, worldwide through the i-SAFE International Education Program. At the same time, i-SAFE continues to partner with organizations globally promoting responsible use on the Internet. Recently, i-SAFE became an associate European Union (EU) member node of Insafe, a network of national nodes that coordinate Internet safety awareness in Europe.

“Our assessments are now worldwide,” said Eric Christopherson, i-SAFE analyst and program evaluation manager. “Exporting i-SAFE overseas allows us to do regional

comparative analyses. Ultimately, we'll learn more about online dangers and the factors placing children at risk.”

About i-SAFE Inc.

Founded in 1998 and active in all 50 states, i-SAFE Inc. is the leader in Internet safety education. i-SAFE is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate and empower students, parents, seniors, and community members to safely and responsibly take control of their Internet experiences. i-SAFE provides knowledge that will enable them to recognize and avoid dangerous, destructive, or unlawful online behavior and to respond appropriately. This is accomplished through dynamic K through 12 curriculum and community-outreach programs to students, parents, law enforcement, and community leaders. i-SAFE is the only Internet safety foundation to combine these elements.

www.isafe.org

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*survey of 2,384 students in grades 9-12
** survey of 1,864 students in grades 9-12
*** survey of 13,351 students in grades 5-12
**** survey of 2,296 students in grades 9-12
***** survey of 3,256 students in grades 9-12

For Media: If you are interested in a state-by-state breakdown or the complete NAC report, please contact media@isafe.org.

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