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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFENOWPROJECT® PARTNERS TO INFORM COMMUNITIES ABOUT A NATIONAL EFFORT TO DONATE ADVANCED INTERNET PROTECTION SOFTWARE

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI...SAFENOWPROJECT®, a national 501c3 nonprofit organization has recently partnered MAX.com, an innovative developer of security software, to launch a national program to provide school administrators with software to combat online pedophile and pornographic activity.

To demonstrate a combined commitment to prevention, SAFENOWPROJECT® will be working with MAX.com to donate MAX Protect for Kids to any school desiring to control, filter and monitor activity on computers proactively. This donation is in response to a bill referred to as “DOPA”, the Deleting Online Predator Act, introduced and passed in the US House of Representatives last year which would require all public schools and libraries to install filtering software to stop access by online predators and pornographers.

As featured on *FOX & Friends in the Morning* in late November, MAX Protect for Kids is software that proactively monitors and filters all communications on a computer desktop such as instant messaging, chat room, email or documentation preparation. It is particularly effective in thwarting unwanted activity in peer to peer networking as is used in popular community rooms such as “MySpace”. This software filters all communication against a unique law enforcement recommended database of known language used by online sexual predators. Any violation of the database language prompts the computer to proactively terminate all communications and immediately notify authority figures of the specific communication: including time, date, screen images of the activity, and the involved computer IP address that prompted the shut-down. The MAX Protect for Kids database can be enhanced to include personal information that parents do not want released such as addresses, phone numbers and other personal information.

In 2004, the developers of the software conducted a research program to review the impact and effectiveness of combating unwanted sexual content and communications on school computers using an enterprise version of MAX Protect of Kids. The software was installed on 1600 school computers in a school with 1800 students. In the monitoring-only mode which identified violations but did not terminate the activity, the software reported over 20,000 violations in the first two weeks. After a full version of the software was implemented, the level of violations dropped to less than 10 per week.

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With the significant decrease in online violations, this study also revealed a direct improvement in school academic performance following activation of the MAX software: The grade point average of the students increased by an average of 10 points in the subsequent school term. This was attributed to a direct correlation of school computers being utilized for study rather than personal communications.

SAFENOWPROJECT® worked with a panel of experts to test the product's effectiveness before providing an endorsement of the product. According to the organization's founder Margaret Bullens, "SAFENOWPROJECT® recommends MAX Protect for Kids for all parents and schools as the most comprehensive software solution available to protect children from online dangers posed by Internet sexual predators and pornography. Safety education, along with the proactive, preventative software provided by MAX is necessary to ensure that the children we love have the greatest protection possible."

According to Dr. Jim Tanner, a computer forensic expert, "there are at least 621,000 convicted sex offenders in the US currently accessing the Internet. The rise in social networking site usage and the expansion of the Internet into other technologies sharply increases the chance of youth receiving unwanted solicitations." The actual number could exceed 7 million.

The recently released Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later¹ indicates youth are still being victimized over the Internet. The study revealed 9 out of 10 children have Internet access at home and in the past year 1 in 7 were exposed to unwanted sexual solicitations, 1 in 3 were exposed to unwanted sexual content, 1 in 3 used the Internet to communicate with someone they did not know in person, and 1 in 11 were harassed on-line. And all of this is despite the 40% increase in the usage of parental filters. Parental filters are simply not effective.

SAFENOWPROJECT® and MAX are working together to educate communities about online risks and much needed protections. According to David Lott, President of the Board for MAX, "The first line of defense is our homes. The second line is at our schools. Therefore, we are providing the usage of our software for schools at no charge. We appreciate members of Congress in their willingness to combat this problem. It is time to take a stand to offer the greatest protection for our children against online predators. 'NOT in my home, NOT with my children'."

SAFENOWPROJECT®, a national nonprofit organization that creates advocates and promotes community-based strategies and resources to eliminate child sexual abuse. To learn more about MAX Protect for Kids, or to join and support SAFENOWPROJECT®'s efforts, visit www.safenowproject.org.

¹ To review this document, logon to www.missingkids.com/en_US/publications/NC167.pdf