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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**National i-SAFE Survey Finds Over Half of  
Students Are Being Harassed Online**

Carlsbad, CA, June 28, 2004 — The Internet is becoming the 24/7 playground for bullies looking to humiliate their peers. i-SAFE America, an Internet safety education foundation, announce results of a national study among 1,566 students (grades four to eight) who are online. The results are:

- 57 percent of students said someone has said hurtful or angry things to them online with 13 percent saying it happens “quite often”
- 53 percent of students admit saying mean or hurtful things to someone online with 7 percent admitting to doing it “quite often”
- 35 percent of students have been threatened online with 5 percent saying it happens “quite often”
- 42 percent of students have been bullied online with 7 percent admitting it happens “quite often”
- 20 percent of students have received mean or threatening e-mails
- 58 percent of students have not told their parents or another adult about someone being mean or hurtful to them online

“Cyber bullying is the latest trend in childhood harassment,” said Teri Schroeder, president of i-SAFE. “With a click of a mouse, bullies can extend their harassment to their victim’s home. It’s more important than ever that kids are educated about cyber bullying and parents are aware of their child’s Internet behavior.”

Bullying is being taken to the next level, some of today’s adolescents — a generation that is always connected and always wired — are falling victim to harassment in chat rooms, email, web sites and instant messages says Schroeder.

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Ryan Halligan, a 13-year-old student of Albert D. Lawton School in Essex Junction, Vt., fell victim to cyber bullying. “Ryan tried to escape the bullying at school by seeking refuge on his computer at home, but it followed him into cyberspace,” said John Halligan, Ryan’s dad. “After his death by suicide, I found out that Ryan was harassed online by his school day bullies, and he unfortunately tried to retaliate in unhealthy ways. As a parent, I know now that I should have stepped up the monitoring of my son’s computer activities. I wish I had known the potential for this to occur and how to prevent it.”

i-SAFE offers a Cyber Bullying supplement to their educational curriculum in schools — grades four through eight. Students learn “netiquette” or rules to use on the Internet and how to keep from being bullied online. In addition, students learn what to do if they are being cyber bullied. The tips are:

- Tell a trusted adult about the bullying, and keep telling until the adult takes action.
- Don’t open or read messages by cyber bullies.
- Tell your school if it is school related. Schools have a bullying plan in place.
- Don’t erase the messages — they may be needed to take action.
- Protect yourself — never agree to meet with the person or with anyone you meet online.
- If bullied through chat or instant messaging, the “bully” can often be blocked.
- If you are threatened with harm, inform the local police.

i-SAFE was developed in 1998 to work with schools and the community to educate people on Internet dangers. The program started by educating children about sexual predators in chat rooms, but now has expanded to teaching children about plagiarism, theft of intellectual property, cyber security and personal safety. The i-SAFE Internet safety education program is already implemented in schools in each of the 50 states. For additional information on i-SAFE America, visit [www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org)

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**About i-SAFE America**

i-SAFE America Inc. is a non-profit foundation whose mission is to educate and empower youth to safely and responsibly take control of their Internet experiences. The goal is to provide awareness and knowledge that enables students to recognize and avoid dangerous, destructive, inappropriate or unlawful online behavior and to respond appropriately. [www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org)

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