

## **UK CHILDREN MARK SAFER INTERNET DAY 2009**

### **AS CHILD EXPLOITATION AND ONLINE**

#### **PROTECTION (CEOP) CENTRE:**

- gives essential advice to parents at [www.ceop.gov.uk/parents](http://www.ceop.gov.uk/parents)
- unveils new resources for teachers
- coordinates online safety activities across the UK
- teams up with O2, Microsoft and Visa to make children safer
- launches hard-hitting advertising campaign targeting parents

Thousands of schoolchildren across the UK are now even better equipped to protect themselves online thanks to brand new teaching resources from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre.

To mark Safer Internet Day on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009, CEOP has made available two new short assemblies: original, thought-provoking films which, within ten minutes, incorporate the very latest online safety advice and provided under CEOP's Thinkuknow education programme.

The assemblies, which come with comprehensive guidance notes, suggested lesson plans and child protection information, are available to teachers registering at [www.thinkuknow.co.uk/teachers](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/teachers) for both primary and secondary school audiences.

The CEOP Centre is also coordinating a host of activities taking place across the UK to mark Safer Internet Day 2009 in conjunction with Insafe, the European Safer Internet awareness-raising network which is co-funded by the European Commission.

From the highlands of Scotland to rural Wiltshire and central London, schools, children's associations and youth centres are being supported by county councils, local authorities and police forces who have signed up to support activities in their areas. Social networking workshops, online safety training with parents, debates, competitions and awareness-raising surveys are just some of the events taking place this week to promote online safety messages.

In addition, three of the CEOP Centre's partners – Microsoft, O2 and Visa Europe – will be working on a new volunteering programme to mark Safer Internet Day 2009.

More than 100 volunteers from these companies are going out into schools across the country to speak directly to children and young people about internet safety.

With training and support from the CEOP Centre's education team, the volunteers will be the first people from industry to deliver the Thinkuknow education programme directly to children.

The CEOP Centre is piloting this new joint programme with a few partner organisations in the hopes of generating additional support to expand and reach as many children and young people as possible in the future.

Jim Gamble, Chief Executive of the CEOP Centre said: "There are many resources out there aimed at helping young people stay safe online – software and other tools which can feel reassuring. But none of these will help unless people take notice of what the threat really is. This is where CEOP comes in, providing information on what children are actually doing in the virtual world and how offenders are using online environments to target young victims.

"That is why we are encouraging all parents, teachers and anyone working or caring for children or young people to use the Thinkuknow resources: they're there for you and they're free. Critically, Thinkuknow is informed by what our own work in tackling this horrific crime is telling us. It helps break down some of the mystique, is realistic about what children are doing and gives very practical and often simple advice to help children stay safe online.

"That is also why we are launching today what many would see as a controversial advertising campaign. Parents can help themselves to protect their children if they visit [www.ceop.gov.uk/parents](http://www.ceop.gov.uk/parents) . Many have already done so and registered for regular updates from CEOP.

"O2, Microsoft and VISA Europe are working with us by supporting our pilot volunteer programme, thousands of teachers are downloading our resources and more and more parents are visiting to register for our updates. Visit us online today and see for yourself how we can help children and young people stay safer online."