



Children's Charities Coalition for Internet Safety *Working to Make the Internet a Safer Place for Kids*

Comments on the Communications White Paper



In *A New Future for Communications*, the White Paper published in December, 2000, the Government has proposed for the first time ever to give a public body, OFCOM, an explicit responsibility for promoting child safety on the Internet



6.10.5 Parents must have (rating and filtering) tools, and they must be both easy to use and robust. (OFCOM) will work with the IWF and industry to drive forward their development, to promote understanding of them and their use...



The Children's Charities Coalition for Internet Safety (CHIS) very much welcomes this acceptance by Government that the public sector has a responsibility in these areas.



We acknowledge that the IWF's work as a HotLine is first class, although more advertising and wider publicity would not come amiss and might draw in more reports of illegal material.



However the IWF is completely reliant on the UK's Internet Service Providers for its resources and so far they have not felt able to provide it with sufficient funding to allow the IWF to undertake any significant wider campaigning or awareness-raising work. We greatly regret this.



Perhaps pressure and surveillance from OFCOM will change that situation otherwise, to get the job done, we fully expect that OFCOM will have to develop its own independent means and channels.

CHIS will be numing its own Internet safety campaign throughout 2001, hopefully working closely with the IWF and other interested bodies. The principal objectives of our campaign are set out below and affect several different parts of the Internet industry, hardware and software manufacturers, PC retailers, Government and Parliament.

In 2001

- All computers sold into the domestic market should have child safety software pre-installed and set by default to a high level of security.
- Internet Service Providers (ISPs) that allow children onto their networks at all should have safety messages prominently displayed on their home page with a quick link that takes you straight to them on most if not all other pages.
- ISPs that allow children on to their networks at all should prominently advertise the availability of child-friendly search engines.

- ISPs should ensure that any staff employed to moderate children's chat have been frilly trained and police-checked. This may require the Government to bring forward legislation to change the law.
- Current ISP procedures should be reviewed to include wherever possible the recording and storing of chat room conversations, as is already the practice with premium rate telephone services, linked to the given identities of the participants.
- Minimum standards should be established governing sign up procedures for new Internet accounts and greater efforts should be made to verify both the age and the true identity of account holders.
- Newsgroups containing child pornography on a regular basis should be blocked and Chat Rooms which appeal to or encourage paedophile behaviour should be barred
- Every ISP should bar access to telephone lines which have blocked CLI
- Clearer guidance should be offered to schools on the safe use of the Internet, for example covering such matters as the use of emails, the form which email addresses should take, access to Chat Rooms, the use of children's photographs on school web sites and the proper deployment of filtering and blocking software.
- A major offline, public advertising and awareness campaign on Internet safety for children should be mounted and paid for by all sections of the Internet industry, including content providers
- Parliament should establish and finance a new and wholly independent body with representation from parents, children, young people and other consumers to tackle concerns and issues about the development of the Internet in the UK

-ends-

31st January, 2001

For further information contact: John Carr, Internet Adviser, NCH, on (020) 7704 7159 or by email: john.carr@nch.org.uk