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## **1-800-905-GEEK Survey Reveals Children Introduced to the Internet at Three or Younger**

*Computer services and solutions company encourages early Web safety education, with the “bits and bytes” talk preceding the “birds and bees”*

*Survey unveils that women are leading the charge with one-quarter of females introducing children to the Web at three or younger*

**NORFOLK (August 15, 2007)** – 1-800-905-GEEK, a premier national provider of on-site computer services and solutions, today announced the results of an independent survey conducted by Harris Interactive® and commissioned by 1-800-905-GEEK, revealing that children are being introduced to the Internet at young ages. Specifically, 20 percent of online adults with children under 18 in the household report that at least one child in their household was introduced to the Web at age three or younger. An even higher proportion of these adults – 41 percent – are allowing children online at six or younger.

Specifically, the survey shows that women with children under 18 in the household are driving the family online. 25 percent of females surveyed introduced at least one child in their household to the Internet at the age of three or younger. Comparatively, only 15 percent of males said they introduced at least one child in their household to the Internet at such a young age. Younger females between the ages of 18 and 34 – the first generation to grow up with the Internet – are leading the charge: 53 percent of females between the ages of 18 and 34 introduced at least one child to the Internet at the age of six or under, and 28 percent of women 18 to 34 introduced at least one child to the Web at three or younger.

Southern adults with children under 18 in the household are more likely to allow children online at an early age, as 27 percent say they introduced at least one kid in their household to the Web at three or younger, compared to just 11 percent of Midwestern adults.

As the survey results show, many children are being introduced to the Internet at a very young age. With this fact in mind, 1-800-905-GEEK understands that parents have a growing need to protect their kids from online predators, sexually explicit material and cyber bullies. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, one in five children are inappropriately or sexually solicited on the Internet, and one in 17 is threatened or harassed.

“The Internet can be a wonderful resource for children, filled with educational possibilities and constructive fun,” said Richard Cole, 1-800-905-GEEK Chairman and CEO. “But the Internet can also be a dangerous place, especially for children who don’t understand the boundaries of online communications. For this reason, we at 1-800-905-GEEK want to make parents aware of basic rules and guidelines they can share with young Internet users.”

### **Giving “The Talk”**

With the goal of helping parents to educate young children about safe online habits, 1-800-905-GEEK encourages adults to give a “bits and bytes” talk to all young ones venturing online. Though these tots are not yet ready to learn about the “birds and bees,” they risk being exposed to unwanted, explicit content each time they surf the Web. Therefore, 1-800-905-GEEK suggests that parents follow these guidelines when talking with their children about proper Internet usage:

1. **KEEP IT PRIVATE** – Make sure your children know how important it is to remain anonymous on the Internet. This means they should never give out personal or private information of any kind. Encourage them to tell you if anyone on the Internet pressures them to reveal personal information.
2. **DON’T CONNECT IN THE REAL WORLD** – Remind your kids how dangerous it is to have a real-life face-to-face meeting with someone from the Internet.
3. **PLAY BY THE RULES** – Consider creating household rules governing when your children can use the Internet and what they are allowed to do online.
4. **KEEP IT REAL** – Remind your kids that not everything they read online is true. Although official news Web sites like [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com) and [www.msnbc.com](http://www.msnbc.com) can be trusted to post credible news stories, many sites created by “average Joes” contain gossip, rumors, misleading information or outright lies.
5. **IF IT SEEMS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE...** – Let your children know that advertisements appearing too good to be true – such as those offering free products – are usually a trick of some kind.

### **Controlling Online Content**

Even the most intelligent, well-informed child can still succumb to the temptations of the Internet. To best protect children, 1-800-905-GEEK also suggests that parents do the following:

1. Remove computers from your child’s bedroom or any places where the Internet can be accessed in private. Instead, put the computers in an open area, like the family room or kitchen, where you can supervise the Internet activities.
2. Keep an eye on the Web sites your kids visit, and don’t be afraid to read their e-mail.
3. Use parental-control software to filter Web and chat-room content.

4. If you or your relatives have a personal Web site, do not post pictures of your children on it.
5. Learn what safety methods are used to protect your children at other places they might use computers, such as their school, local library, a friend's or relative's house, etc.

For more information about how 1-800-905-GEEK is helping parents keep children safe online, please download the 1-800-905-GEEK "Parents Guide to Internet Safety" at [http://www.1800905geek.com/images/press/1\\_800\\_905\\_GEEK\\_Parents\\_Guide\\_to\\_Internet\\_Safety.pdf](http://www.1800905geek.com/images/press/1_800_905_GEEK_Parents_Guide_to_Internet_Safety.pdf).

### **Methodology**

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Interactive® on behalf of 1-800-905-GEEK between June 11 and 13, 2007, among 2,246 adults (aged 18 and over), of which 549 have children under the age of 18 living in their household. Figures were weighted for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region, household income, and hours spent online per week. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and, therefore, no theoretical sampling error can be calculated. A full methodology can be obtained by contacting 1-800-905-GEEK.

### **About 1 800 905 GEEK**

1 800 905 GEEK (a Geeks On Call Company) is a premier national provider of on-site computer service and solutions in the U.S. Founded in 1999, the company helped to pioneer the on-site residential and business IT service concept. Since then, over 250,000 customers have trusted 1-800-905-GEEK's certified IT professionals to provide computer privacy and security solutions, hardware and network installations, troubleshooting, repairs, upgrades and consulting. The company began franchising in 2001 and today has 300 franchises from coast to coast, with new locations opening regularly.

Recognized for its growth by *Franchise Times* and *Entrepreneur Magazine*, the company was named the #1 new franchise company in America in *Entrepreneur's* January 2006 issue.

All 1-800-905-GEEK franchises are independently owned and operated. For more information, visit [www.1800905GEEK.com](http://www.1800905GEEK.com).

### **About Harris Interactive**

Harris Interactive is the 12th largest and fastest-growing market research firm in the world. The company provides innovative research, insights and strategic advice to help its clients make more confident decisions which lead to measurable and enduring improvements in performance. Harris Interactive is widely known for The Harris Poll, one of the longest running, independent opinion polls and for pioneering online market research methods. The company has built what it believes to be the world's largest panel of survey respondents, the Harris Poll Online. Harris Interactive serves clients worldwide through its United States, Europe and Asia offices, its wholly-owned subsidiaries Novatris in France and MediaTransfer AG in Germany, and through a global network of independent market research firms. More information about Harris Interactive may be obtained at <http://www.harrisinteractive.com/>.

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