



## *Cable Puts You in Control: PointSmart.ClickSafe.*

### Fact Sheet

The National Cable & Telecommunications Association (NCTA), whose members include cable companies collectively serving more than 90 percent of the nation's cable television households, and Cable in the Classroom have launched *Cable Puts You in Control: PointSmart.ClickSafe.*, a comprehensive initiative to educate consumers and parents about online safety and the appropriate use of the Internet by children. *PointSmart.ClickSafe.* is designed to take a holistic approach to online safety, emphasizing three key components:

**Control** – online parental controls and setting rules for children about online use;

**Education** – media literacy skills especially in an online environment; and

**Choice** – helping children make the right choices online.

A key component of *PointSmart.ClickSafe.* is a **pledge** by NCTA members to:

- Offer **parental controls or filters** free of charge to help families manage online content and if appropriate block content that they may determine is unsuitable for use by their families.
- Offer various **educational resources** for parents, children, and other consumers about online parental controls and Internet-related media literacy.
- Participate through Cable in the Classroom in **partnerships** with school-based and community-based education groups to ensure that information on Internet safety and literacy is available to teachers, parents and caregivers.
- In conformity with all legal requirements, **cooperate with law enforcement officials** to help prevent, police and prosecute potential criminal activity online.

Other elements of *PointSmart.ClickSafe.* include:

- **Partnerships** with expert organizations, including the American Association of School Librarians, Common Sense Media, iKeepSafe, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, the National PTA, the Public Library Association, and State Educational Technology Directors Association, which will help develop and deliver resources for parents.
- Plans for a major **summit** focusing exclusively on child online safety, where a variety of participants including safety advocates, Internet service providers and software companies will discuss “best practices” for online safety.

- Plans for the establishment of an **inter-industry commission** to develop “gold standards” for online safety practices.
- A resource-rich web site, **PointSmartClickSafe.org**, especially designed to give parents information about online parental controls and media literacy, and help children make the right choices when online.
- The distribution of **comprehensive customer communication materials** to cable companies and programming networks to help them communicate about the initiative and its resources for parents.
- The use of **community events** focused on online safety and media literacy to be held in schools and libraries as another means of reaching parents.

***Cable Puts You in Control: PointSmart.ClickSafe.*** is the latest effort in the cable industry’s **long-standing commitment** to help parents manage media coming into their homes and to ensure its appropriateness for their children. Past highlights include:

- The cable industry’s pledge in **1994** to support a violence rating system and technology that eventually would become the “V-Chip.” Also in **1994** NCTA, Cable in the Classroom, and the National PTA formed a partnership that would become *Taking Charge of Your TV*, an initiative to promote media literacy.
- In **1996** the TV industry announced the creation of the TV Parental Guidelines, a system for rating TV programming and, in conjunction with the V-chip, for blocking programming based on those ratings. In **1997** the TV industry and public interest groups announced revisions to the rating system including content descriptors to accompany age-based ratings.
- NCTA, in partnership with leading children’s advocacy groups, launched in **1998** *Tools to Use to Help You Choose: A Family Guide to the TV Ratings System*, a public education effort to help parents understand and use the TV ratings system. In **1999** NCTA joined the National Association of Broadcasters, the Motion Picture Association of America and leading children’s advocates to promote the *V-chip Education Project*, to give parents information they need to use the TV ratings and V-chip effectively.
- In **2004** the cable industry introduced the *Cable Puts You in Control* initiative, featuring a commitment by cable companies to provide free channel blocking technology, and a website, [www.ControlYourTV.org](http://www.ControlYourTV.org), offering information on cable’s parental controls, programming suitable for families, and media literacy resources. This initiative was expanded in **2005** as *Cable Puts You in Control: Take Control. It’s Easy.* with additional information about the use of parental controls, the TV ratings system and the V-chip, and media literacy.
- In **2005** several leading cable operators announced family programming tiers. Program networks on these tiers vary, but all feature primarily content suitable for family viewing.
- In **2006**, the cable industry joined the Advertising Council and a broad cross-section of media and entertainment industries to launch a national public service advertising (PSA) campaign, still ongoing ([www.thetvboss.org](http://www.thetvboss.org)), calling on parents to take a more active role in their children’s television viewing habits.