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## **U.S. Cable Industry Announces Landmark *PointSmart.ClickSafe*. Online Safety and Media Literacy Initiative**

*Major elements include [PointSmartClickSafe.org](http://PointSmartClickSafe.org) website, adoption of “Cable’s Online Safety Code of Conduct,” and plans for upcoming national summit on Internet safety*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In an effort to educate consumers and provide them with resources and tools designed to ensure that their children enjoy a safe and responsible Internet experience, the nation’s leading cable operators and networks today unveiled a comprehensive multi-media initiative, *PointSmart.ClickSafe*.

The cable industry is the leading provider of broadband services in the U.S., and the initiative, coordinated by the National Cable & Telecommunications Association (NCTA) and Cable in the Classroom (CIC), is designed to unify the industry’s efforts to offer consumers basic educational materials, simple training tips and easy-to-use controls, so that families and children can make appropriate choices while using the Internet.

All NCTA member companies, which include cable operators serving more than 90 percent of cable households and more than 200 cable networks, have pledged their participation in *PointSmart.ClickSafe*. The project was unveiled here today at a news briefing featuring Abbe Raven, President and CEO, A&E Television Networks; Tom Rutledge, Chief Operating Officer, Cablevision Systems Corp.; and Dr. Helen Soulé, Executive Director, CIC.

The launch of *PointSmart.ClickSafe*. extends cable’s longstanding commitment to assisting families in making choices about media use and content in their homes. For more than a decade, cable has been a leader in offering customers parental control technology and other resources to enable a

responsible TV viewing environment. *PointSmart.ClickSafe.* extends cable's commitment to the Internet.

“The Internet has dramatically changed how children communicate, are entertained, and learn. It offers access to an ever expanding variety of media sources, including some that aren't appropriate for young children,” said Kyle McSlarrow, President & CEO, NCTA. “*PointSmart.ClickSafe.* is designed to empower parents to take charge of their family's web use and to help them ensure that the Internet can remain a trusted, educational, and entertaining environment for everyone.”

### **Cable's Online Safety Code of Conduct**

A significant element of *PointSmart.ClickSafe.* is the adoption of an industry pledge to help all consumers experience a safer online media environment by fostering a better understanding of the evolving digital media landscape. The pledge – “Cable's Online Safety Code of Conduct” – says that cable companies will:

- Offer parental controls or filters free of charge to help families manage, and if appropriate, block online content;
- Offer educational resources for parents and children to better understand how they can manage their Internet experience and make good choices about their online activities;
- Participate in partnerships with leading school and community-based education groups to develop, promote and disseminate Internet safety and media literacy materials; and
- In conformity with all legal requirements, cooperate with law enforcement officials to help prevent, police and prosecute potential criminal activity online.

### **Website and Consumer Education**

To provide consumers with a central online resource for how they can learn more about safe and responsible web surfing, NCTA also unveiled the initiative's website, [www.PointSmartClickSafe.org](http://www.PointSmartClickSafe.org). The website provides a variety of materials – including video

vignettes and an online “guidebook” – offering parents and families simple instructions, tips and scenarios that can help them teach their children to make good choices about Internet use.

Cable companies and networks will drive traffic to this site by posting links on their consumer facing websites and distributing comprehensive customer communication materials that direct people to it. Also, CIC will provide planning tips to local cable systems and other partners for hosting community events in schools and libraries focused on online safety and media literacy.

“Ensuring a safe surfing environment for the family is a proactive process that involves a few basic steps, such as enabling parental control software, employing simple media literacy strategies, and communicating with your kids about their Internet use,” said CIC’s Helen Soulé. “When parents take a little time to work through these issues, they can rest assured that their children will benefit from the wealth of educational and pro-social resources available online.”

A number of national organizations are joining NCTA and CIC as partners in *PointSmart.ClickSafe*. in an effort to expand the reach of the project and carry its messages to groups with direct influence in online safety and literacy. These partners include **The American Association of School Librarians**; the **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children**; **National PTA**; the **Public Library Association**; and the **State Educational Technology Directors Association**.

“These partnerships with leading school, community, and expert groups will enhance our public education efforts by expanding our ability to provide information, resources, and education to families across the country,” said Soulé. “These organizations bring a wealth of expertise and content knowledge as well as significant distribution systems within communities.”

### **National Online Safety Summit**

Another significant element of *PointSmart.ClickSafe*. is the cable industry’s collaboration with two nationally-recognized Internet safety expert groups to convene a national inter-industry online safety “summit” meeting later this year. The objectives of the summit will include a discussion of best practices among technology and media companies for ensuring safe, fulfilling, and educational online experiences for children and families. They also will include the formation of a blue-ribbon

“commission” of experts to consider and recommend additional practices that can be voluntarily implemented by technology and media companies to ensure online safety for children and families.

NCTA and CIC will work with these groups in helping organize and facilitate summit activities and sustaining progress in developing voluntary actions by media and entertainment companies to enhance online safety and literacy for families. The organizations are:

- **Common Sense Media**, a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization, providing information and tools, and an independent forum, so that families can have a choice and a voice about the media they consume; and
- The **Internet Keep Safe Coalition (iKeepSafe)**, a non-profit organization founded by state governors and “first spouses” to teach basic rules of Internet safety to children and parents, reaching them online and in school.

NCTA and CIC will work jointly with iKeepSafe and Common Sense Media in reaching out to companies across several industries to participate in the summit, discuss best practices, and seek additional solutions for online safety and literacy.

"We believe passionately in giving parents and teachers the tools they need to help our children get the best out of the Internet. This summit represents a huge leap forward in keeping our children safe while helping them use this most powerful technology in a smart and ethical way," said Jim Steyer, CEO and Founder, Common Sense Media.

"We want to congratulate the cable industry for their proactive and thoughtful effort to help parents and children use technology safely. The National Cable & Telecommunication Association's initiative gives parents the tools they need to make informed choices and protect their children," said Marsali Hancock, President, Internet Keep Safe Coalition. "We look forward to working together with cable industry leaders as they reach out to families using the Internet."

Cable companies provide high-speed Internet services to more than 32 million residential and commercial subscribers, and growth of the service has risen dramatically since broadband was first introduced by cable companies in the mid-1990s.

*NCTA is the principal trade association for the U.S. cable industry, representing cable operators serving more than 90 percent of the nation's cable television households and more than 200 cable program networks. The cable industry is the nation's largest broadband provider of high-speed Internet access after investing \$100 billion over ten years to build a two-way interactive network with fiber optic technology. Cable companies also provide state-of-the-art digital telephone service to millions of American consumers.*

*Cable in the Classroom (CIC), the cable industry's education foundation, works to expand and enhance learning for children and youth. Created in 1989 to help schools take advantage of educational cable programming and technology, CIC has become a leading national advocate for media literacy education and for the use of technology and media for learning, as well as a valuable resource of educational cable content and services for policymakers, educators and industry leaders.*