



**SAMPLE OP-ED ARTICLE TO BE RETYPED,  
SIGNED BY APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATION'S LEADERSHIP,  
AND DELIVERED TO LOCAL NEWSPAPER.  
TAILOR THIS LETTER TO YOUR SPECIFIC COMMUNITY.  
INCLUDE PERSONAL DETAILS AND EXPERIENCES.**

***Do You Know Where Your Child Is?***

Our children are the first cyber generation. Everyday they face dangers online which we never would have dreamed as kids. We were taught by our parents not to talk to strangers, and we teach our children not to talk to strangers. But, despite our best efforts, 20% of students surveyed by i-SAFE in the past several years said they have met someone face-to-face after first meeting them on the Internet.

And, more than a third of students in grades 5 through 8 surveyed by i-SAFE said their parents would disapprove if they knew what they did, where they went, or with whom they chatted on the Internet. More than half of the students surveyed said they have given out their name, sex, and age online.

The cyber world is every bit as real as the physical world with adverse consequences that can last a lifetime. The only difference between the two is that the virtual world never sleeps. No matter what time our children are online, someone else—a stranger—is with them 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Anyone with an Internet connection has access to our children whenever and wherever they go online.

If adolescents don't know how to identify online risks and dangers and how to safely respond to them, they easily can become entrapped in the darkest, most detestable realms of human imagination. As a society, we do not allow children behind the wheel of a car without training and a license. So why do we allow them drive the Information Superhighway without teaching them how to do it safely? When a child is online at home, at a neighbor's house, in the classroom, at the school or public library, or on a cell phone he or she is vulnerable to the dangers lurking on the Internet. A seat belt (e.g., tip sheets and digital games) will only go so far to keep kids safe online. What they really need is an Internet version of Driver's Education.

In many schools throughout the nation, students are studying the free and comprehensive i-SAFE Internet safety curriculum. i-SAFE provides them with the awareness and knowledge to recognize, avoid, and respond to dangerous, destructive, or unlawful online behavior. The i-SAFE curriculum empowers kids to take control of their Internet experiences. If the schools in our community aren't teaching our kids the i-SAFE curriculum, we need do something about it so we aren't the ones LEFT BEHIND!

Sincerely:

Name  
Title and Organization  
Address

**Sample Letter to Elected Official**

The Honorable [Name]  
Office Building, Room Number  
Washington, DC

[Fax and Phone Numbers can be found at [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov) , members home pages. Find your representative there!]

Dear [ Official Title + Last Name]

The issue of Internet safety has risen to national prominence and your office can weigh in on this issue. People in our community want to protect themselves from fraud, predators and online victimization; we want to use the Internet safely to shop, travel and learn!

i-SAFE Inc. is a congressionally funded non-profit foundation that offers free K-12 Internet safety curriculum to schools, parents and law enforcement. These programs empower students to safely and responsibly take control over their Internet experience. Education IS the answer and it works!

Nationally, i-SAFE's Safe Schools Education Initiative has been adopted by, and integrated into, a wide cross-section of public and private schools:

- trained 3,182,567 students;
- empowered 63,529 educators to bring i-SAFE into the classroom; and
- 7,965 federal, state and local law enforcement agents with the ability to educate others using i-SAFE materials and curriculum

There is no other program like i-SAFE. It is changing the online culture of our students from unsafe, risky and naive to safe and responsible. Please support our state and local community by supporting the i-SAFE program and helping to bring i-SAFE curriculum to every school.

Sincerely,

[ Your Name]