



September 15, 2015

AG MADIGAN ENCOURAGES SCHOOLS TO PARTICIPATE IN "DELETE DAY"

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today encouraged educators around Illinois to teach students the importance of Internet safety by holding "Delete Day" during the 2015-2016 school year. Participating schools can visit the Attorney General's website beginning today to access materials and guides that promote respectful and safe online interactions.

"As students around Illinois settle into a new school year and spend more time online, it is important to promote positive online interactions," said Madigan. "Delete Day is an opportunity for students to evaluate their online habits and get rid of content or associations that could be harmful to themselves or to others."

Last year the Attorney General's office conducted a survey of Illinois students in grades three through eight to determine how they are using technology and social media. Results showed compelling information, including:

- 75 percent of surveyed students spend up to four hours a day using technology (not including television);
- the average youth is 10 years-old when they create their first social networking account; and
- more than 60 percent of youth are not concerned with the amount of personal information they make available online.

"Delete Day is an important opportunity for educators to teach students that once they post something online, it never really goes away," said Decatur's Garfield Montessori Magnet School Counselor Melissa Downs, who is implementing the school's second "Prevent and Delete" program this December. "We need to help students be proactive in removing and preventing interactions that could be harmful down the road."

By participating in Delete Day, Madigan said schools can help students think critically about their online connections, followers and posts, and promote safety and respect on the Internet. The Attorney General's office has prepared curriculum tools to help students examine their online footprints, such as the number of accounts they have, how much time they spend online, how well they know their online connections, the personal information they make available and whether any posts could be considered inappropriate.

Attorney General Madigan leads the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC), which investigates child exploitation crimes and trains local law enforcement agencies throughout Illinois to investigate these crimes. As of July 2015, Madigan's ICAC task force had been involved in more than 1,000 arrests of sexual predators. The task force has also provided Internet safety training and education to 448,815 parents, teachers and students and to 19,127 law enforcement professionals.

For more information, or to participate in Delete Day, schools should visit the Attorney General's online awareness website, www.ebully411.com, or contact the Attorney General's Internet Safety Specialists at e-info@atg.state.il.us.

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