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ATTORNEY GENERAL HIGHLIGHTS SAFER INTERNET DAY

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today recognized 2016 Safer Internet Day by urging parents and educators to help students adopt healthy online habits.

To coincide with this year's theme, "Play Your Part for a Better Internet," the Attorney General's Office is encouraging educators to hold a "[Secure It Day](#)" for students to take inventory of online accounts and address vulnerable areas.

"We all know that our children are spending more time connected to the Internet, whether they are playing games or using social media," said Madigan. "Safer Internet Day is a good opportunity to make sure students are being smart about what they post and who they interact with when they are online."

Attorney General Madigan recommended that parents and teachers help youth take steps to make sure personal information is secure online:

- Change usernames that contain personal information;
- Create strong passwords;
- Turn on privacy settings;
- Remove unknown friends and followers;
- Never share passwords or account information;
- Be cautious if solicited for private information;
- Connect to trusted networks and websites; and
- Keep firewall, anti-spyware and anti-virus programs current.

During the spring of 2014, the Attorney General's office conducted a survey of over 800 Illinois students in grades three through eight to determine how they are using technology and social media. The results showed that the average child creates his or her first social networking account at 10 years-old, even though social networking sites require users to be at least 13 years-old to create accounts. While 70 percent of youth in the survey acknowledged their postings to social media and other websites can impact their futures, more than 60 percent said they are not concerned with the amount of personal information they make available online. Additionally, 40 percent of third through eighth graders believe they should be the only person to check their online and mobile activity.

On Safer Internet Day, the Attorney General encouraged parents and teachers to talk to youth about their online connections, followers and posts, and promote safety and respect on the Internet. Attorney General Madigan's office has generated new and updated resources for students, families and educators to support positive digital choices. These resources are available on the Attorney General's [Stay Connected, Stay Informed](#) website.

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 December 2015, Madigan's ICAC task force had been involved in 1,074 arrests of sexual predators. The task force has also provided Internet safety training and education to 500,975 parents, teachers and students, and to 19,472 law enforcement professionals.

For more information or to access resources, please visit the [Stay Connected, Stay Informed](#) website, or contact the Attorney General's Internet Safety Specialists at e-info@atg.state.il.us.

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