

New York Teams With The Guardian Angels to Promote Online Safety

Oct 10, 2006

Governor George Pataki announced that the New York State Office of Cyber Security & Critical Infrastructure (CSCIC) will partner with [The Alliance of Guardian Angels](#) to promote online safety in New York's classrooms and communities.

Forming a "Strike Force on Cyber Safety," CSCIC will combine its technical expertise with The Guardian Angels' decades of experience to empower youth and communities to stay safe and resist criminal influences online. With a \$200,000 grant from CSCIC, The Guardian Angels' [CyberAngels](#) program will bring practical safety lessons to New York schools and communities through school-based workshops, online support and community outreach programs.

"Over the last twelve years, we have made tremendous strides in protecting young people from dangerous sexual predators," Pataki said. "This historic new partnership will build on what we've been able to accomplish by providing yet another critical resource in our comprehensive effort to educate kids about potential dangers and help keep them safe."

"When the Guardian Angels was founded in 1979, the safety risks facing New Yorkers were on the streets and in the subways. Yet today our children face even greater threats in the online world from pedophiles and cyber-bullies," said Curtis Sliwa, founder and leader of The Guardian Angels. "In fact, adults are not immune either as citizens report hundreds of thousands of online fraud and identity theft complaints each year. The Strike Force on Cyber Safety will help communities resist these modern dangers and take control of their own online safety."

The Guardian Angels organization possesses a unique ability to make an impact with students, teachers and parents. Members hail from diverse professional backgrounds -- education, law enforcement, information technology, and law -- reflecting the new challenges that face our communities. At the same time, The Guardian Angels carry the credibility that is so essential to earning the respect of young people participating in their educational programs.

Despite the sometimes obvious risks posed by the Internet, parents often do not know how to monitor their children's online activities, and older children often understand the Internet better than their parents making them able to "outsmart" most filtering software and parental controls. The Strike Force on Cyber Safety will work with community groups to teach young people the importance of safe operations in cyberspace, and will partner with parents to help them monitor their children's online activity while maintaining a constructive dialogue with their children about online safety. The Strike

Force on Cyber Safety will also provide instruction on acting safely and appropriately online in the academic setting.