

American Decency Update

American Decency Association
P.O. Box 202
Fremont MI 49412

Encouraging Christians to guard their hearts

July 2007

The minefield of myspace.com



In the past we have attempted to shed light on the harmful material available on MySpace.com. We have warned of the danger to our youth – not only from the sexual predators that lurk on MySpace, but also from the rampant immoral content on the site.

First this explanation of what MySpace is. MySpace.com (or MySpace) is a free service that uses the Internet for online communication through an interactive network of photos, weblogs, user profiles, e-mail, web forums, and groups, as well as other media formats. This all-inclusive service is sometimes called a social networking interface. Persons can and do place favorite pictures of themselves upon the web (scantily clad or beyond). They can and do also place unedited

video clips as well.

The article below reports the frightening statistic that “thousands of known sex offenders have been confirmed as MySpace members” and quotes Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal who referred to MySpace as a “virtual playground” for sexual predators. Stating: “That combination of sex offenders and children is a recipe for tragedy.” It is encouraging to see law enforcement taking a look at this concerning site. However, even if law enforcement is successful in stopping some sexual predators, MySpace still poses great risk to our youth – both physical and spiritual. We urge you to read the article below followed by the important comments by Steve Ensley, executive director of Cleanwww Inc./AFO.net.(850-897-3842) Parents need to be aware that allowing children and teens access to MySpace is the equivalent of permitting youth to roam through a virtual minefield. There’s a great chance that damage will incur.

RALEIGH, N.C. - Top law

“... even if law enforcement is successful in stopping some sexual predators, MySpace still poses great risk to our youth – both physical and spiritual.”

enforcement officers from eight states asked MySpace.com [recently] to turn over the names of registered sex offenders who use the social networking Web site.

In a letter, the attorneys general asked MySpace to provide information on how many registered sex offenders are using the site, and where they live. North Carolina Attorney General Roy Cooper signed the letter, along with attorneys general from Connecticut, Georgia, Idaho, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

In a statement, Cooper’s office said media outlets in 2006 “reported almost 100 criminal incidents across the country involving adults who used

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My Space to prey or attempt to prey on children."

In December, MySpace announced it was partnering with Sentinel Tech Holding Corp. to build a database with information on sex offenders in the United States.

"It is our understanding that the data from Sentinel reveals that thousands of known sex offenders have been confirmed as MySpace members," the letter said. In an interview, Cooper said the information was provided by "absolutely credible" sources, whom he declined to identify.

The attorneys general also asked that MySpace describe the steps it has taken to warn users about sex offenders and remove their profiles. They asked the Web site to respond to their requests by May 29.

"They are by far the largest social networking site," Cooper said. "They certainly should be the standard bearer for changes that need to be made."

Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal called the site

a "virtual playground" for predators. "That combination of sex offenders and children is a recipe for tragedy," Blumenthal said. ...

MySpace's policy prevents children under 14 from setting up profiles, but it relies on users to specify their ages. Cooper said MySpace should confirm ages ... and also require parental permission for young users.

"MySpace can certainly take its own action to remove those sex offender profiles from their site," Cooper said. "They say they are doing that but we want to know ... exactly what steps they are taking."

Cooper has presented legislation to the North Carolina General Assembly that would make it a felony for registered sex offenders to use social networking sites.

In North Carolina last year, a former sheriff's deputy was sentenced to 15 years in prison after being convicted of molesting a 15-year-old boy he met on MySpace, and a Boiling Spring Lakes police officer was charged with the statutory rape of a 14-year-old girl he communicated with on the site, Cooper said.

MySpace and other social networking sites al-

low users to create online profiles with photos, music and personal information, including hometowns and education. Users can send messages to one another and, in many cases, browse other profiles.

[AP Writer, Monday, May 14, 2007]

Steve Ensley, a leader in the field of Internet protection services, has a mission to assist families and individuals in guarding their hearts and minds from the dark side of the Internet. He comments below regarding MySpace.com.

The article is correct when it states that MySpace is a social site, but so is a strip club! For us Christians, we need to be very concerned that if MySpace cannot stop the worst of the worst (registered sex offenders), why would we think they will try to stop any of the other extremely destructive and immoral material! MySpace is a cesspool of immorality and yet Christians use this site every day! Christians who would not go to a strip club or let children view pornography think nothing of the activity on MySpace. This ought not to be brothers and sisters.

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