

The Internet Safety Technical Task Force
Third Quarterly Report to the Attorneys General
October 21, 2008

I. Introduction.

The Internet Safety Technical Task Force was created in February, 2008, in accordance with the Joint Statement on Key Principles of Social Networking Safety announced by the Attorneys General Multi-State Working Group on Social Networking and MySpace in January, 2008. This report is the third of four quarterly reports that the Task Force will submit to the Attorneys General, in addition to the Final Report due on December 31, 2008.

II. Task Force Meetings.

Since the last quarterly report, the Task Force held a one-and-a-half day public meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on September 23 and 24, 2008. Attorney General Blumenthal and Attorney General Coakley attended and opened the meeting. The meeting continued with approximately 5 minute presentations by 15 of the technology companies that submitted technologies for review by the Task Force, followed by approximately 10 minute question and answer sessions with each company. All companies who submitted technologies to the Task Force, regardless of whether they formally presented, were invited to participate in a poster session that took place during the public meeting. The public meeting also included presentations by MySpace, Facebook, and the TeenAngels, as well as an open discussion period.

The entire public meeting was simultaneously webcast as well as video recorded. The video recording and printouts of the slide presentations used by technology companies at the meeting will be made available to the public on the Task Force's website.

After the close of the public meeting, the Task Force met on the afternoon of September 24, 2008. The Task Force heard reports from the Technical Advisory Board and the Research Advisory Board on the work they did over the summer and on their next steps. Minutes of that meeting are attached as Exhibit 1 hereto. The Task Force also heard from Dr. Sam McQuade, a Professor at the Rochester Institute of Technology, who presented his quantitative study of youth in Rochester, New York. A print-out of the slides Dr. McQuade used during his presentation and a video recording of his presentation will be made available to the public on the Task Force's website.

The next Task Force meeting is planned for November 19, 2008 in Washington, DC. The purpose of that meeting is to discuss the Final Report that is due to the Attorneys General on December 31, 2008.

III. Technical Advisory Board Activities.

As reported in the Second Quarterly Report, the Technical Advisory Board to the Task Force published its call for technology submissions on June 23, 2008. Submissions were due on July 21, 2008.

Initially, the TAB received 41 submissions from 38 companies. One was subsequently withdrawn on September 23, 2008. The remaining 40 are attached as Exhibit 2 hereto. The submissions fell into one of 5 categories as follows:

- Age verification
- Filtering/Auditing
- Biometrics
- Text Analysis
- Other

Three members of the TAB were assigned to review each submission. Where needed for review purposes, one or two additional reviewers read the submission. The TAB held initial review discussions on August 14, 21, and 28. The TAB sent questions to each submitter, and all submitting companies responded back. TAB Observer comments were due to the TAB on September 2, 2008.

On September 4, 2008, the TAB held a fourth review discussion. During that discussion, the TAB considered the Observer comments as well as the submitting companies' answers to the TAB questions. In addition, the TAB determined which companies to recommend the Berkman Team invite to present at the public meeting. The TAB based its recommendations on several criteria, including a desire to hear from the range of technologies submitted as well as to incorporate innovative approaches. The recommendations were in no way intended as an endorsement of any one technology or company over any other technology or company that participated in the submission process.

Final reviews of the technology submissions are underway at this time.

IV. Research Advisory Board Activities.

In addition to presenting at the September 24th meeting, the Research Advisory Board (RAB) completed the first draft of its Literature Review of scholarly research on Internet child safety issues that concern the Task Force. This draft examines over 400 different articles concerning children and safety. The RAB shared an early draft with members of the Task Force and is currently vetting the draft with researchers in the field.

V. Exhibits.

1. Minutes of Internet Safety Technical Task Force meeting on September 24, 2008
2. Copies of the submissions received by the TAB*

*Note: Submissions can be found at <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/events/2008/09/isttf>

Berkman Center Internet Safety Technical Task Force
Third Full Membership Meeting
Cambridge, MA
September 24, 2008

Minutes

Introduction

Task Force Chairman **John Palfrey** opened the meeting. He began by addressing the Final Report that is due to the AGs on December 31, 2008. He said that because the final report cannot be a consensus document, each task force member will have the opportunity to submit an individual statement to be appended to the report. These statements afford participants an opportunity to voice their individual responses, clarifications, and comments on specific areas of concern. John noted that the next meeting will be held in Washington, D.C. on November 19th with the purpose of reviewing a first draft of the final report. Feedback from the meeting will be incorporated into a final draft, which will be circulated among TAB members to give them an opportunity to respond.

Presentations

Laura DeBonis, Chair of the TAB, began with a review of the TAB's process to date. The TAB first drafted a technology submission template and posted the template with a request for submissions. There were 41 submissions, one of which was later withdrawn. At least 3 TAB members have reviewed each submission, and the final evaluations are still in progress. The submissions fall into the following categories: 18 age verification submissions, 13 filtering/auditing submissions, 5 text analysis submissions, 1 biometrics submission, and 4 "other" submissions (blocking, machine profiling, RSO database).

Laura emphasized that there is no single technological solution; these are point solutions. She also introduced the question of how to measure the success of technologies (i.e. via benchmarks or some other system). Ultimately, Laura stressed, there appears to be a need for multiple solutions using both technology and education.

Of the submissions themselves, Laura highlighted the concerns associated with storage/exposure of personal information. She noted the need to balance gains in child safety with losses in privacy, and the seemingly inverted relationship between these two. She also noted that the financial costs are unclear and price could be in obstacle since large adoption levels would be necessary for at least some of the technologies. Laura clarified that the TAB did not have the time or resources to fully test all of the products, so the Board will not be offering specific technological recommendations.

A discussion ensued concerning how to integrate technical and other solutions, including particular sites' home-grown technologies, into the final report.

Next, **danah boyd**, Berkman Center Fellow, introduced Sam McQuade, Professor at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Dr. McQuade presented to the TAB his Cyber Safety and Ethics Initiative, an overview of the findings of the RIT Survey of Internet and At-Risk

Behaviors. His presentation was video recorded, and the video and the slides he used during his presentation will be made available on the Task Force website.

Following the presentation, a discussion ensued concerning the definition of “social network sites.” Participants also discussed potential measures of privacy and voiced the concern that although it may be relatively easy to identify adults, it can be very difficult to identify children. The implications of national identity cards were also briefly discussed.

Next, **danah boyd** and **Andrew Schrock** provided a short overview of their literature review on child safety and the Internet, which will be made publicly available sometime in November. The review focuses on exposure to unwanted content, and harassment and sexual solicitation of and among minors. The review is based on over 400 different research articles addressing these issues of online safety. The goal of this review is to provide a general overview of what is and is not known about child safety issues, using over 400 different articles to provide an extensive analysis of different issues.

Finally, John Palfrey closed the meeting with a discussion of how to get from where the Task Force is today to the final report. The report is to be released to Attorneys General on December 31st and will be made public sometime after that. Task Force members will be afforded time to respond to the final draft before it is submitted to AGs.