

How do you get involved?

SOLOS is dedicated to collaborating with other interested parties in order to further explore the questions and strategies touched on here. The best way to teach online engagement (and really the only way for it to be tangible), is for all of us to role model it.

facebook

If you are a Facebook user, you can join the OOSWG Group. <http://www.new.facebook.com/group.php?gid=64216818523>

OR Log in and search Facebook

for "Online Outreach Strategies Working Group" and request to join.



If you are not a Facebook user, you can subscribe to my blog@ www.safeonlineoutreach.com/blog

Enter your email address in the "Subscribe by Email" box on the right hand side. Fill in the "Feedburner Subscription Request" and respond to the email Feedburner will send you (check your junk mail folder for it if you don't get it) in order to complete the subscription. Every time there's a posting to the Facebook group, it will also be posted on my blog which will automatically send you an email, (where you are free to read, comment or disregard). You don't have to worry about going back to my site to see if there is anything new.



More questions? Email SOLOS and ask.

info@safeonlineoutreach.com

**Youth,
Technology
and
Professional
Practices in
B.C.
TIME FOR A CHANGE?**



"Youth Workers NOT online today are like Youth Workers of the 19902 avoiding the streets?"
OOSWG Member

www.safeonlineoutreach.com

INFO @ the CLICKS!



The Safe OnLine Society has been educating British Columbians about online sexual, emotional, and criminal exploitation since 2002. To find out more visit our website.

SOLOS, Mission, B.C. Canada

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SOLOS Completes 500th Community Presentation

From Atlin to Osoyoos and Sparwood to Port Alberni and hundreds of points in between, SOLOS Presentations have been delivered in classrooms, community theatres and Friendship Centres across British Columbia. It's been a long time since the initial launch of SOLOS programs and pilots. Initially a National Crime Prevention Pilot, the materials, resources, in-person presentations and awareness distributed by this Mission-based Society is astounding. SOLOS presented to its 500th audience this spring in Port Hardy on June 8th. From a pilot project to a respected, thriving and relevant organization that presented to over 17,000 individuals last year alone, SOLOS is your source for knowledge and tools about online safety.

Objectives:

1. To engage organisations, government ministries, professional associations and First Nations communities in a consultative process that will clarify the current issues and concerns they have about online client/ professional contact.
2. To establish and sustain a 'Community of Practice' to respond to technological risks, challenges and opportunities currently being presented to youth services.
3. To research existing examples of online professional / client contact online and prepare a summary of established best practices from current examples.
4. To research and publish general (CARF compliant) guidelines for use by organisations in updating their policies and procedures:
 - 4.1. Academic research
 - 4.2. Identify the purpose of online client contact
 - 4.3. Create or modify existing best practices
 - 4.4. Increase youth serving professionals' awareness of (and skills to manage), privacy and professional boundaries in their off and online lives.
5. To create, host and moderate an online social network that would keep concerned stakeholders informed about the most current issues, research and practices regarding youth work and technology.



PROPOSAL

Goals:

1. Educate all levels of youth-serving organizations about the need to update professional practices in order to accommodate the risks and challenges that technological innovations are creating for youth-serving practices.
2. Develop clear policy and practice guidelines that respond to the opportunities and risks that technology is presenting to the human service sector.
3. Connect B.C. human service organisations via a secure, exclusive online portal that will encourage collaboration, cooperation and consultation, regardless of geographic region or economic capacity.
4. Provide all levels of the Human Service Sector with access to information that explains, validates, and outlines best/safe practices that support online contact between professionals and clients.
5. Increase public awareness about how technology is impacting child protection, law enforcement and health issues for youth.

"100% of the high-risk street involved youth we see, are on Facebook." OOSWG Member



Dear Reader:

The idea outlined in this booklet is based on research done by the Safe OnLine Outreach Society in November 2007. This document has been prepared for the FCSS June 18 & 19, 2009 AGM. The idea's focus is proposing a framework around which to address issues arising in the social service sector that are technology related (i.e. cyberbullying, child pornography, sexting, luring and gang recruitment). It is in response to requests from frontline workers who are being hamstrung in their jobs because they aren't supported to engage with youth online.

At the end of this document is information about how to get involved in this initiative. SOLOS hopes that through partnership with NGOs, associations, government and the corporate sector this idea can be developed and implemented, (despite the 'economic downturn', 'global warming' and even swine flu!).

Respectfully,

Merlyn Horton

Executive Director (and Founder)

Safe OnLine Outreach Society

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INFO & CLICKS!

Background:

In 2007, the Safe OnLine Outreach Society (SOLOS) prepared a report titled “Bridging the Gap: Best Practices and Policies to Address the Online High-Risk Activities of Youth in BC” with funding from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General of British Columbia. The 128-page report recommended that strategies to combat online sexual exploitation of youth be based on a human services approach, encourage cooperation and coordination amongst industry, government, NGOs and the public and focus on education, awareness, research and training. The report proposed strategies with priority placed on providing youth-serving professionals with information relevant to their existing practices and areas of specialization. Full copies of this report are available at: <http://www.safeonlineoutreach.com/bridgingGap.php>)

Majority of Internet child luring cases unsolved: Statscan

BY JANICE TIBBETTS, CANWEST NEWS SERVICE MARCH 12, 2009



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- * youth services in the Greater Vancouver/ Lower Mainland areas,
- * research the creation of a youth services social network that would connect and inform key players,
- * write a proposal to continue to coordinate and facilitate the OOSWG dialogue and include the ADM Committee, Youth Serving Organizations, and other concerned stakeholders.

Dialogue at the meeting included verbal agreement that all parties would enter into, and engage in, OOSWG as a collaborative “open-source” undertaking, and would share and exchange information without prejudice with other concerned groups and stakeholders. All content will be licensed under Creative Commons (share alike) Guidelines.

SEX AND TECH

Teen girls are swapping sex for ... just about anything

Article | Comments (9)

ZOSIA BIELSKI

From Thursday's Globe and Mail
April 23, 2009 at 8:40 AM EDT



www.safeonlineoutreach.com

In **February of 2009**, sponsored by Watari, a group (45 people) convened. The meeting, a full day of collaboratively developing content, resulted in a rough framework of issues to be addressed. The key areas of concern were around professional ethics and online communication.

For example:

- ★ rationale for online engagement,
- ★ legal considerations,
- ★ online privacy for workers,
- ★ strategies to use online technologies in their practice,
- ★ online concerns - areas and activities where exploitation and risk were of concern.

These concerns were collated, edited and posted on a Facebook group for all participants. (See back page.)

April 2009, a third meeting (18 people) was held and the key areas of concern were re-examined. Out of that discussion, some possible next-action steps were outlined:

- ★ write a PSA that workers could post on Craigslist to identifiable underage youth in the Erotic Services classifieds,
- ★ approach Craigslist about approving and endorsing youth worker involvement with underage youth in Erotic Services ads,
- ★ collaboration with asaferspace.com to create a centralised site for links to specific



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Why is policy change needed?



- With the increasingly profound role that technology is playing in teens' lives, youth workers in British Columbia are confronted with adapting their traditional approaches to youth work in order to meet the challenges;
- ★ youth prefer text messaging over phone calls but not all workers have the skill to respond in-kind,
 - ★ youth are engaging in high risk activities in online settings; gang recruitment, sexual exploitation, cyberbullying, sexting etc.,
 - ★ these activities are invisible to workers unless they are present and conversant in online culture,
 - ★ currently most youth workers are not supported by policy, supervision or procedure guidelines to engage with youth online,
 - ★ service delivery is being seriously compromised while institutions struggle to research, respond to and update their policies so they meet the current needs of youth culture.

Facing Facebook

'Gangsters using Facebook and Bebo to groom children into life of crime,' says police chief

By DAILY MAIL REPORTER
Last updated at 1:12 PM on 12th December 2008

www.safeonlineoutreach.com

Why would professionals seek online contact with youth clients?

- ★ Set up, confirm and remind youth of appointment,
- ★ Access for youth in remote areas to online support from specialized service providers,
- ★ To connect with missing or AWOL youth via social networking sites,
- ★ To refer youth to online supports, services and resource material relevant to their therapeutic needs
- ★ To engage in therapeutic conversations (i.e., research indicates that ‘dis-inhibition’ improves the quality of counseling interventions for male sexual abuse survivors).
- ★ To be present in youth environments and learn about the dynamics, pitfalls and trends happening online,
- ★ To become knowledgeable about online child protection concerns,
- ★ To demonstrate technical competence to youth thereby facilitating their disclosures of harmful experiences online,
- ★ To speak the same language as youth,
- ★ To teach youth about safer internet practices.

Have any meetings occurred? Involving whom?

In **2006**, SOLOS facilitated a discussion with front line youth workers (12 people) about the role of technology in their practices and sharing of resources. Sponsored by Onyx, the circle examined questions of:

- ★ How much online access do youth workers have? Are there agency/ministry restriction on sites they can view? Are the hours required to engage online at the expense of other responsibilities?
- ★ How are privacy concerns being handled? What are the boundaries between youth workers’ personal activities online and their professional ones? Are their supervisors aware of the need for support in developing and maintaining these?
- ★ Are workers able to develop and expand their technological skills? Do all workers know how to text? How is text contact with youth documented?

High Tech or High Risk: Moral Panics about Girls Online
 Justine Cassell and Meg Cramer
 Northwestern University, Center for Technology and Social Behavior



Gangsters go digital to recruit, intimidate

BY KATIE MERCER, THE PROVINCE MARCH 2, 2009 COMMENTS (132)



Jessie Hanaghan shows off his Family Affiliated (F.A.) tattoos on his Facebook group "Trug a Trug." Gang analysts say groups, like the petty thugs and prolific offenders that make up Kamloops-based F.A., are "net-banging" by using the internet to boast about their criminal activity and to intimidate others by posting the names of alleged police informants.

Photograph by: Handout, Facebook