

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 15, 2002

MISSION, B.C. – The Safe OnLine Outreach Society (SOLOS) has received funding from the National Crime Prevention Centre (Community Mobilization Program) to present an internet safety awareness campaign, "Road Show" in five isolated British Columbia communities.

The first Road Show will be from April 4th – 13th, in Mackenzie, Dawson Creek and Fort St. John.

"The concerns of parents, teachers and professionals regarding the safety of their children on the Internet have been growing for the last several years", says Merlyn Horton, Executive Director of SOLOS. "We have heard many anecdotal stories of B.C. youth lured out of their homes, exposed to increasingly graphic examples of pornography online and cases of death threats via text messaging on cell phones. In 1998 youth outreach workers in Prince Rupert reported intercepting a youth on her way to a 'modeling' job offered to her by a pimp in Burnaby. The workers were able to approach her at the local bus stop where she was picking up the bus ticket paid for by her Burnaby 'friend' and convince her that the person who was inviting her to a supposed life of glamour and wealth was indeed an identified pimp and recruiter well known to street workers in the Burnaby area and convinced her to remain in her community."

Presentations will be held in Mackenzie April 5th and 6th (contact Lisa Evans at 997-3288), Dawson Creek on the 7th and 8th (contact Joanne Dueck, Central Middle School) and Fort St. John on the 11th and 12th (contact Bev Mitchell 785-3329). Or call 604-615-7899 to contact Merlyn Horton.