

U.S. Newswire

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NCMEC Joins with Federal Agencies to Launch Innovative Initiative to Tackle Child Pornography

WASHINGTON, August 23, 2006 /U.S. Newswire/ – The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) Child Victim Identification Program (CVIP) is partnering with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP) Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces (ICAC) to launch the first-ever U.S.-based Victim Identification Lab. Law enforcement officers and prosecutors from across the country, who are participating in the Crimes Against Children Conference in Dallas, Texas this week, will participate in this U.S. initiative to potentially generate new leads to aid in the identification of child victims. The Victim Identification Lab will feature 50 images that have been sanitized and the graphic material removed. The exposed parts of the photos are potential clues to where the picture was taken and where the child is located.

“The goal of the Victim Identification Lab is to be proactive in identifying child victims of sexual exploitation without sacrificing the dignity of the child,” said Ernie Allen, president of CEO of NCMEC. “These are very difficult cases to crack. This is the first step in an ongoing effort to collaborate with law enforcement and prosecutors across the nation to aggressively track down and rescue children that are being abused in this country and the world.”

The Victim Identification Lab is the U.S. law enforcement response to tracking child pornography and was created in cooperation with the 46 ICAC Task Forces, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (<http://www.usdoj.gov/oig/reports/plus/e0107/results.htm>), U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) and Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE). There is no child pornography in the Lab and all content was agreed upon by all partnering law enforcement agencies. The computers for the Lab were provided by the ICAC Task Forces. As part of the Lab, participants will be able to view the sanitized images and contribute comments and clues related to the images. These comments will be available to everyone in the lab through a real-time message board. NCMEC staff will analyze and compile all comments during and after the conference and then distribute leads to the appropriate law enforcement agency to assist in the investigation.

Due to the highly sensitive nature of this type of crime, the consideration of the child victim's dignity is of the utmost concern. For this reason, only law enforcement investigators and

prosecutors who are registered for the Crimes Against Children Conference and are actively working these types of cases will participate in the Lab.

NCMEC houses the Child Victim Identification Program and its Exploited Child Unit serves as a technical and informational resource for law enforcement. Because investigating child-sexual-exploitation cases may require specialized technical skills outside the scope of usual investigation methods, analysts are available to assist in any child-sexual-exploitation case. The Victim Identification Lab will evolve into a permanent secure database where trained law enforcement investigators will be able to remotely examine additional images.

PHOTO AVAILABLE: A high-resolution, publication-quality photo supporting this story is available for free editorial use at <http://photos.usnewswire.com>

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/>). NCMEC's congressionally mandated CyberTipline, a reporting mechanism for child sexual exploitation, has handled more than 413,200 leads. Since its establishment in 1984, NCMEC has assisted law enforcement with more than 122,600 missing child cases, resulting in the recovery of more than 104,900 children. For more information about NCMEC, call its toll-free, 24 hour hotline at 1-800-THE-LOST or visit its web site at <http://www.missingkids.com>.

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