

This child porn arrest is just one of dozens in the last year and represents a growing problem right here on the first coast. Tonight Paige is in the newsroom with a very special report on what the state is doing to protect your kids. Paige...

Paige Kelton: We all want to know if there is a sex predator living in our neighborhood. I mean almost all of us have gone onto the FDLE's website here to find sex offenders living in our area. But what parents don't know is that if you let your child surf the internet without any supervision at all you could be letting a predator move right into a child's room. Now tonight the problem is so big, there are so many dangerous people who have access to your kids that the state is about to spend millions of your tax dollars to catch them.

clip rolls titled "CyberCrime"

Meet Allen Nash a successful Florida engineer, he has a wife, kids, and he likes to send naked images of himself to fifteen year old girls, this is all that is fit for television. Nash showed up here in Jacksonville at St. Johns Town center with women's panties, a teddy bear, and a camera. But instead of meeting a young girl Nash was surprised to meet an undercover investigator with Florida's CyberCrime Unit.

Attorney General Bill McCollum: It's a huge problem.

Paige Kelton: Attorney General Bill McCollum is still unpacking his new office in Tallahassee. But he has already announced a plan to expand the Jacksonville based CyberCrime Unit from five people to fifty.

Attorney General Bill McCollum: On a weekday morning, in the middle of the morning, literally maybe hundreds of people in our state alone looking for opportunities to go after photographs, to trade photographs, or to find kids.

Maureen Horkan: Child pornography is literally I crime scene photo of child abuse, of live sexual child abuse, they are explicit, they are graphic, sometimes they involve cruelty, bondage, children who are sometimes crying on videos, images are staggering. And then the numbers a unbelievable.

Paige Kelton: Maureen Horkan a former juvenile prosecutor heads up the unit. Her team of four investigators are charged with one mission, to go after online predators. Florida ranks third in the nation for the number of child porn images being promoted and distributed.

Man: Young boy sex trade, teen sex pics, family sex, 122, one hundred percent legal sex trade.

Paige Kelton: There are literally hundreds of websites devoted to sex involving kids.

Man: Here we go, "so do you like older guys, or something?". So just within a few minutes.

Paige Kelton: On these graphic websites curiosity leads down a dangerous road.

Man: Obviously the propensity is there if they are viewing it. It doesn't matter how long it is going to be before they want to make contact with that child, and a lot of them have made contact with children we just haven't found out or actually identified those kids.

Paige Kelton: In the fifteen months since the CyberCrime has been created 34 arrests have been made, about half have gone to trial or pled out. The governor's new budget includes a four and a half million dollar expansion.

Paige outside of capital A bill has been introduced here in both the Florida House and Senate that would toughen penalties for people who solicit people online or distribute child pornography. But Attorney General Bill McCollum and law makers here agree that your first line of defense against sexual predators won't come from inside this house but rather it has to come from inside your own.

Attorney General Bill McCollum: One of the great tragedies in the whole arena of children in terms of the internet is that parents. Despite all the conversations that we hear often just aren't taking responsibility, or they aren't aware.

Maureen Horkan: Both parents and children need to become empowered because we can't ever be on their shoulder 24 hours a day, but kids need to have a level of awareness and a level of empowerment where they make wise choices.

Paige Kelton: CyberCrime investigators are working now with schools and Civic groups to teach parents and their kids about all the scary stuff that's out there on the internet. You may not be able to spot a sexual predator but you can keep them from getting close to your kids.

Maureen Horkan: They think they are just looking at pictures, well they are looking at live child abuse, and they are going to go to prison.

Paige Kelton: And if like many parents out there whose kids know a lot more about computers than you do, don't worry, there are resources that teach you how to keep track of where your kids go online. To find out more about that just go to CBS47.com and just click on links there. There are literally a dozen websites that can help parents, there easy to understand and help them understand where their kids are going.

Male Anchor: There is some legislation that is working its way through both houses of the state legislator, what's the status of that? Have they voted on it? Is it still in committee?

Paige Kelton: They have gone through one committee and just yesterday an amendment was attached to the house legislation, that right now predators have to register their name, address, where they are, but this would require that they would register there

online names and there chat names so that investigators have to go in and actually check their account see where they are.

Male Anchor: O.K. Paige thanks.