

Police launch Internet safety campaign

November 19, 2007

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STAFF REPORTER, Toronto Star

The spread of online sex crimes has grown beyond the ability of the Toronto police to fight it.

Det. Sgt. Kim Scanlan, who heads the 15-member child exploitation section of the Sex Crimes Unit of the Toronto police, says that although the Toronto office is one of the biggest in the world, the officers can't keep up with the changing technology and the growth of online predators.

"We're seeing more cases than we can possibly handle," Scanlan said in an interview. "And that's a real problem for us. We just don't have enough investigators, not in my unit, not in any unit in the country, that can really handle the flow of the occurrences heading our way."

The detective said that the Toronto police need the public's help, both to be aware of Internet safety and to report offences to the authorities.

Scanlan has rolled out a campaign with the slogan, "Every keystroke has consequences," and the police will be presenting this message to high schools in the Toronto area.

The police have recruited cast members from the hit musical *We Will Rock You* to help provide public service messages.

"When you're posting images, you have to think down the road," Scanlan said. "Could this come back to haunt you?"

The Toronto police are also working with Canada's national tipline, cybertip.ca, to promote awareness of the reporting centre.

When cybertip.ca receives a report from the public of potentially illegal activity, it sends the report to police for investigation.

Reports to that website have resulted in several arrests and the closing of almost 1,000 websites.