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National Internet Safety Program at Upper Providence Elementary School Teaches Students and Teachers About Staying Safe Online

ROYERSFORD – The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children presented the NetSmartz Internet Safety program at Upper Providence Elementary School on Oct. 18, 2013.

The presentation was an award to the school as the grand prizewinner in the NetSmartz Lesson Builder Giveaway. The event included a hands-on educator training session, and a special visit from the NetSmartz spokes-robot, Clicky.

The school was selected as a winner after Jessica Hauseman, the school counselor for Upper Providence, entered an online contest through the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

“This year, we continue to use the information from NetSmartz in an effort to protect our children from the dangers that exist and teach them how to make responsible decisions,” Hauseman said. “Youths may encounter these risks during common online activities like school research, chatting with friends, playing games, or updating a social networking page. The program is designed to teach children (ages 5-17) how to be safer online.”

The program also covered online etiquette, safety while either online or offline, and offers lessons for parents, too.

“This program gives parents and schools a common language so that adults can have beneficial conversations with students,” said Principal Melissa Patschke. “Sometimes, people don’t know how to address certain issues, however this format helps to bridge that communication gap. It’s important for students to know not only how to be safe, but also that if something does happen, there is someone they trust that they can turn to.”

The NetSmartz workshop has been featured at Upper Providence since 2010. In previous years, Hauseman and Patschke would give an school-wide safety presentation and visit individual classrooms to inform students to educate students about safe practices while using materials and information provided by the NetSmartz program.

The initiative is an interactive, educational program produced by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, that includes age-appropriate resources to teach children how to be safe both on- and offline. The goals of the workshop are to educate children in recognizing potential Internet risks, engaging students and their parents in a two-way conversation about the risks, and empowering students so they can prevent exploitation and report an incident to a trusted adult.

Editor's Note: Media requests can be made with Sara Mosqueda-Fernandez at either 215-884-6499 or Sara@comsolutionsgroup.com.

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