

VA Governor Declares August 1 Internet Safety & Online Predator Awareness Day; Recognizes Safe Surfin' Foundation

Safe Surfin' Founder & Inaugural Commander of SOVA-ICAC, Sheriff Mike Brown Presented with Proclamation at Liberty University

FLOYD, VA, UNITED STATES, September 17, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Safe Surfin' Foundation is proud to announce that Governor Glenn Youngkin has officially proclaimed August 1, 2025 as 'Internet Safety and Online Predator Awareness Day' in the Commonwealth of [Virginia](#). This achievement follows a request initiated by the foundation earlier this year, with the strong support and advocacy of Delegate Wendell Walker, who presented the request on March 20, 2025.

The proclamation recognizes the critical and growing need for education, awareness, and prevention strategies to combat the dangers of the internet, including cyberbullying, identity theft, and the exploitation of children by online predators.

According to the proclamation, in 2024 alone, Virginians aged 60 and older filed 3,841 complaints with the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3), resulting in over \$106.6 million in losses, ranking Virginia 11th nationwide for elder fraud losses. National statistics from the FBI also indicate that over 500,000 online predators are active daily, with one in five children aged 10 to 17 experiencing online solicitation by strangers. A 2025 Journal of Medical Internet Research study found that 83% of youth had been exposed to harmful online content related to self-harm or suicide on social media, and more than half reported experiencing cyberbullying.

"Since its inception, Safe Surfin' Foundation's mission has been focused on creating safer online spaces for everyone," said Eddie Worth, President and Executive Director. "This day is a powerful



Governor Youngkin presents Sheriff Mike Brown (Retired) with a Framed Copy of Proclamation at Liberty University's Demoss Hall Official Photo by Kaitlyn DeHarde, Office of Governor Glenn Youngkin

reminder that through awareness, education, and collaboration, we can protect our communities from online threats."

This mission of collaboration is exemplified through the Safe Surfin' Foundation's groundbreaking partnership with [SkylI](#), a leader in innovative safety solutions. Together, they have developed Movie Games, a new curriculum launching September 15 in West Virginia school districts - a direct result of progressive legislative efforts to mandate internet safety education.

"The program is essentially designed to turn play into protection," notes Graeme Page, SkylI CEO, and Safe Surfin' Foundation Board Member. "Students navigate interactive stories where they step into real-life online dilemmas. Every episode delivers lessons in online safety, and digital literacy. Wrong choices bring about real consequences; right decisions build stronger skills."

To ensure that learning extends beyond the classroom, Movie Games also includes a dedicated dashboard for students, teachers, parents, and administrators. This feature allows communication to flow freely, strengthening the partnership between schools and families while supporting a safer digital journey for every child.

The proclamation also underscores the vital role of Virginia's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force Program. The Northern Virginia/DC ICAC is coordinated by the Virginia State Police, while the Southern Virginia (SOVA) ICAC—one of the first 10 ICAC task forces established by the U.S. Congress—is proudly managed by the Bedford County Sheriff's Office. SOVA ICAC was founded under the leadership of Safe Surfin' Foundation Founder and Chairman, Sheriff Mike Brown (Ret.), who served as its first Administrator.

Bedford County is not only home to SOVA ICAC but also the birthplace of the Safe Surfin' Foundation, making this proclamation especially meaningful. Both agencies deliver investigative



1st row: Graeme Page (SkylI), Governor Youngkin, Sheriff Mike Brown (Retired), and Delegate Walker.
2nd row: Sheriff Mike Miller (BCSO), Sheriff Whit Clark (CCSO), Major Jon Wilks (BCSO) Official Photo by Kaitlyn DeHarde, Office of Governor Glenn Youngkin

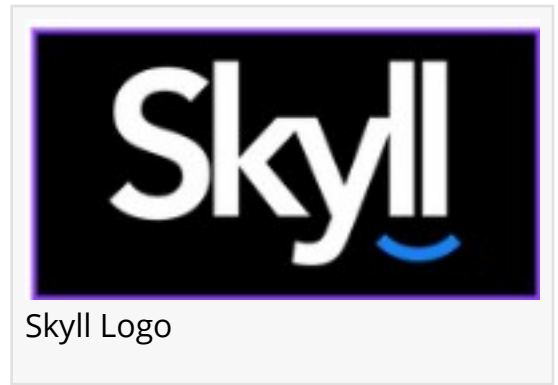


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Safe Surfin' Foundation

support, cutting-edge training, and proactive prevention programs across the Commonwealth.

"We are proud to have led the effort to make this important recognition a reality, and we extend our deepest thanks to Delegate Walker for championing the cause and to Governor Youngkin for making it official," said Sheriff Mike Brown (Ret.). "By designating August 1 as Internet Safety and Online Predator Awareness Day, Virginia is taking a bold stand to protect our children and communities from online threats."



The proclamation calls on all Virginians to embrace digital safety, take proactive steps to protect themselves and their families online, and support public awareness initiatives year-round.

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*Sheriff Mike Brown (retired),
SSF Founder and SOVA-ICAC
Inaugural Commander*

Worth stressed the importance of these collective efforts: “We hope this proclamation serves as a call to action for all of us to stand together against online exploitation. Our children’s safety and futures depend upon it—and with tools like Movie Games, we are better equipped than ever to meet that challenge. By working collectively with legislators, and ICAC task forces, we can strengthen protections and expand awareness across every community. We thank Governor Youngkin, Delegate Walker, Skyll, law enforcement agencies around the nation, and all our partners for their dedication to raising awareness and standing with us in the fight against online

crime. Together, we are raising awareness, driving innovation, and building a safer digital future for Virginia’s families.”

A PDF copy of Governor Youngkin’s proclamation is available on the Governor’s official website. Additional high-resolution photos are located on the Office of the Governor’s Flickr site at: t.ly/31h3d.

For more information about the Safe Surfin’ Foundation, its programs, and the Deputy AI initiative, please visit www.safesurfin.org.

Eddie Worth, President
Safe Surfin' Foundation
+1 540-885-7432

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