



MEDIA RELEASE

The New York City Anti-Violence Project Mourns the Death of George Weber; Calls for Increased Awareness around Internet Dating Safety

For Immediate Release

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March 27, 2009

New York - The New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP) mourns the death of George Weber, a WABC radio newsman and Brooklyn resident, and extends our deepest condolences to his family and friends. Weber was brutally murdered in his home on Friday, March 20, 2009 by an attacker he met on the internet site Craigslist. A 16-year old Queens resident, John Katehis, was arrested on Wednesday March 25, 2009 and charged with second degree murder and criminal possession of a weapon.

"We extend our sympathies to the family and friends of George Weber," said Sharon Stapel, Executive Director of AVP, "and we want to take this opportunity to share critical safe dating tips to help everyone stay safe. If you or someone you know has questions about safe dating, or has been a victim of dating violence, please call our free and confidential 24-hour hotline at 212.714.1141." AVP is dedicated to promoting safe dating awareness and internet dating awareness. Below are our online safes dating tips which are available on our website www.avp.org :

Online Safety Tips:

- **Protect your security.** Never give anyone else your password. No matter why they say they need it or who they say they are, it is not safe. If someone asks you for your

password, report them to your online service provider. If you think someone knows your password, change it.

- **Protect your privacy.** Surfing the internet may seem anonymous, but Web sites you visit may gather your e-mail address or other information, or record which sites you've visited which can be retrieved by anyone, without your knowledge or consent. Learn about the privacy and security features of your Web browser and use them. For example, you may want to get a warning if a site tries to record your visit to it (called a "cookie"), or disable cookies altogether. You can customize your Web browser's e-mail settings to use a pseudonym instead of your real name, and a blank or false e-mail address. If you want to give someone your real name or e-mail address, you can give it to them in your message. Most browsers will let you delete cookies and your browser history.
- **Be cautious about revealing information that could identify you.** For example, if you give someone a listed phone number, they can get your real name and street address.
- **Remember that when you meet someone you've chatted with online, you're really meeting them for the first time.** When you're online you don't have non-verbal cues such as voice inflection or body language to guide your judgement of their honesty or intentions. Take online precautions the same way you would if you were meeting in public for the first time.
- **For your first meeting, pick a place that's public and neutral where other people are around.** If you're traveling to visit them in their town or neighborhood, you should pick a place you're comfortable with when you arrive.
- **If you can, try to tell at least one person where you will be and with whom.** Ideally, that friend would have the address where you'll meet and the name and phone number of the new person you are meeting. Introducing your date to even one person at the place where you meet can also be a good safety measure.
- **Read our general [safe dating tips](#)** for other safety tips to keep in mind for that first date at www.avp.org.
- **Report it.** If you're in the New York area, **call the AVP hotline at 24-Hour Hotline** if you're harassed online or victimized by someone you've met. **All of AVP's services are free and confidential.**
- **Elsewhere in the United States,** to find the nearest anti-violence program, you can review [our list](#) of anti-violence programs in the country on www.avp.org, visit www.ncavp.org or call **(212) 714-1184**. You don't have to deal with violence alone.

The New York City Anti-Violence Project is dedicated to eliminating hate violence, sexual assault, stalking, and domestic violence in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and HIV-affected communities through counseling, advocacy, organizing and public education.

In 2008, the Anti-Violence Project served over 2,000 victims of violence. The Anti-Violence Project's Safe Dating and Internet Safe Dating Tips, as well as the National Coalition of Anti-

Violence Program's annual reports on hate violence and domestic violence, can be accessed online at www.avp.org or by calling 212-714-1184.

The Anti-Violence Project provides free and confidential assistance to LGBTQH victims and survivors of violence through its 24-hour bilingual hotline: 212-714-1141