

**Amsterdam grad a starter for No. 11 Eagles**  
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# THE DAILY GAZETTE

SCHENECTADY ALBANY COUNTY EDITION

**TODAY:**  
Early frost.  
High 55/Low 34.  
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SCHENECTADY, NY ♦ 50 CENTS

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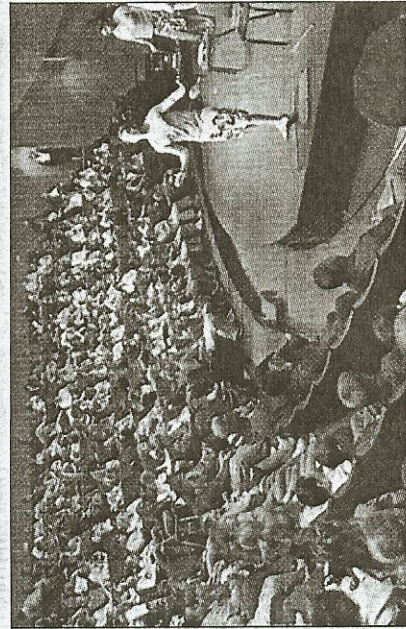
## ALBANY

# Forum helps untangle Web risks

BY ELI FANNING  
Gazette Reporter

The character named Bobby balanced on a swim paddle board resting on a mesh net bag during the debut of a children's play Thursday.

The adult actor told the audience of roughly 400 children that he was "surfing the Net." The crowd of fourth- and fifth-graders assembled in The Egg's Hart Theatre laughed.



HANS PENNINK/GAZETTE PHOTOGRAPHER

Members of Plays For Living take part in a production of "Cyber Smart in Cyber Space" as an audience of schoolchildren watches at The Egg in Albany on Thursday.

The play was called "Cyber Smart in Cyber Space," and was one of many events at the first-ever Cyber Security Awareness Conference held Thursday at The Egg in the Empire State Plaza. As Bobby "surfed," roughly 200 adults in another theater heard from Internet security experts and Gov. George Pataki, who spoke via satellite from New York City.

The adults were a mix of police officers, teachers, school board members and others from across the state, said organizer Tamara Wilson. The conference was sponsored by the state Office of Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Coordination, and focused on methods of protecting children while they use the Internet.

"The Internet is an integral part of education, but at this point there are too many risks

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## Safe surfing

Internet tips for elementary school students:

- ◆ Cyberpals are strangers.
- ◆ Never meet an Internet acquaintance without taking a responsible adult with you.
- ◆ Never give out your personal information without parental permission.
- ◆ Keep your passwords private.
- ◆ Ask your family to use firewall and anti-virus software to protect your computer.

SOURCE: THE CYBERSMART! EDUCATION COMPANY

## Safety

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that come with that opportunity," Pataki said.

The conference was split into an "adult track" and a "children's track." The adult track included panel discussions with people such as Jack Adams, head of information technology for the South Colonie School District, and Thomas Spina, a federal prosecutor based in Albany

office. "You wouldn't give a 5-year-old the keys to your new car, but would you let him sit down in front of a computer?"

The child's portion of the conference was aimed at teaching children ages 10 to 12 to be their own "Internet filters," said Jim Teicher, executive of The CyberSmart! Education Company. The company provided many of the play's messages, such as "In cyberspace, you have no way of knowing who you are talking to."

The play was written and directed by Dan McCormick of Plays For Living in Manhattan.

The goofy child characters were played by adult actors and interacted with a teacher named "Ms. Owens." At one point Bobby embarrassingly admitted to "using bad language while talking to his friends" via e-mail.

"It's matching the emotion of the kids so that they know what feeling uncomfortable feels like," said Teicher. "We are educating children so that they can be responsible on their own."

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