

Media Release

9 July 2008

Industry heavyweights join forces to ensure the safety of the next generation of cyber citizens – our kids.

With police recently instigating the largest online paedophile crackdown in Australian history, arresting more than 2,000 alleged viewers of online child pornography, ensuring internet safety and security for our children has never been more important. The Australian Government's commitment to ensure that every Australian child will have computer access at school and increasing access to high speed internet connection has heightened the need for industry to play its part..

SMART ONLINE SAFE OFFLINE (SOSO) is a new social initiative bringing internet and media leaders, Cartoon Network, Habbo Hotel, Microsoft, NineMSN, Yahoo!7, Miniclip, Neopets, Piczo, Big Pond, MySpace and Channel Ten, to work together to deliver an online campaign aimed at educating young internet users about the dangers in their online environment.

The initial Smart Online, Safe Offline campaign focuses on educating users to online threats and predatory behaviours, including privacy invasions and grooming attempts. Future campaigns will include mobile technology and tackle electronic safety issues such as identify theft and cyber bullying.

By educating young people in a relevant, engaging way how to be smart online, the campaign aims to keep them safer from harm offline.

Smart Online, Safe Offline is a collaboration between digital marketing group Profero Sydney, consulting group SOCIAL and NAPCAN, Australia's leading advocate in preventing child abuse and neglect.

Initially funded by the Australian Government, SOSO has now been joined by the cream of Australian online publishers and internet industry partners leveraging the initial investment in this initiative some ten fold and harnessing the support of the online social networks and communities the kids frequent.

The consortium of social advocates and 10 interactive industry specialists is spearheading the adaptation of a proven UK campaign, of international interactive marketing agency, Profero, which informs about the risks and dangers of giving out too much personal information online and provides access to information and reporting in just two clicks.

"We asked our media foundation partners to come to the party with 5 fold investment, they turned up with 10 fold – we are delighted with their support and above & beyond approach to our campaign. Some partners are extending their involvement into producing TVCs and research for SOSO, providing this campaign with more reach than we could have expected," said Profero Media Director, Valentina Borbone.

The project is still seeking further sponsorship and support from organisations wanting to demonstrate their commitment to kids' safety.

NAPCAN National Program Manager, Marie Fox said: "This is a unique approach to working toward improving and protecting online and offline safety for our kids. It delivers a really important message through an experience that will engage young people through its creativity and language. We are tapping into the way young people interact online to help them manage their safety and engagement."

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PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

The campaign is due to go live in September 2008, and is seeking further sponsorship and support from organisations wanting to demonstrate their commitment to kids' safety.

Other members of the consortium supporting the project include: the Australian Interactive Media Industry Association, Inspire Foundation, and the Interactive Advertising Bureau and the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

Parties interested in being part of this valuable community initiative can contact NAPCAN on (02) 9211 0224 or via email: marie@napcan.org.au.

Further information:

Marie Fox
NAPCAN National Program Manager

Ph: (02) 9211 0224
Email: marie@napcan.org.au



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