

Online Safety in Queensland State Schools





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Online safety in Queensland state schools

The Department of Education (the department) supports every child and young person in Queensland state schools to learn and engage safely in the digital world. With the rise of technology and increasing access for young people, the Online Safety in Queensland State Schools document provides guidance on how the department responds and supports schools, students, parents and the community, in keeping young people safe online.

This document covers the available resources created by the department, tailored to inform and educate students, parents, teacher and the community to address online safety issues. It identifies the important roles played by government and non-government educators, the broader school community, and families. The Online Safety in Queensland State Schools document was developed in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommendations.



The Royal Commission highlighted the department's Cybersafety and Reputation Management team as a promising model to be considered for adoption by other jurisdictions.

Recommendation 6.23
Final Report, Making institutions child safe



The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission) was established by the Australian Government in January 2013 to investigate how institutions have responded to child sexual abuse.

The work of the Royal Commission has shown that members of the community lack understanding of the nature of child sexual abuse, including the characteristics of adult perpetrators, grooming practices, and risks to children in both physical and online environments. It raised concerns with the growing vulnerability of young children with the availability of digital technology and the boundaries between online and offline interactions are becoming increasingly arbitrary and invisible.

The Royal Commission recommendations seek to build and strengthen a culture and society where all children are safe, valued and their rights respected.

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (the National Principles) reflect the child safe standards recommended by the Royal Commission. The National Principles were endorsed by all states and territories and aim to drive implementation of a child safe culture across all sectors providing services to children and young people to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people across Australia.

The National Principles are underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to ensure a child-rights approach to build capacity and to deliver child safety and wellbeing in organisations, families and communities.

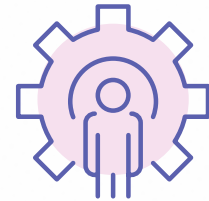
In the Final Report, *Making institutions child safe* under recommendation 6.23, the Royal Commission highlighted the Queensland Department of Education's Cybersafety and Reputation Management team as a promising model to be considered for adoption by other jurisdictions.



Our approach to eSafety

The department focuses on prevention through education and awareness to provide the skills young people need to be safe in online environments.

By building **awareness** within school communities – with students, parents and carers, teachers and school leaders – we are able to respond swiftly to protect young people when an incident occurs.



Awareness

Through **partnerships** with our stakeholders, social networking providers and other government agencies, we all work together to keep children and young people safe from harm online.



Partnerships

Importantly, the department's strong focus on student wellbeing ensures that young people, parents and the community receive appropriate support, guidance and resources to **respond** to and safely navigate the online world with confidence.

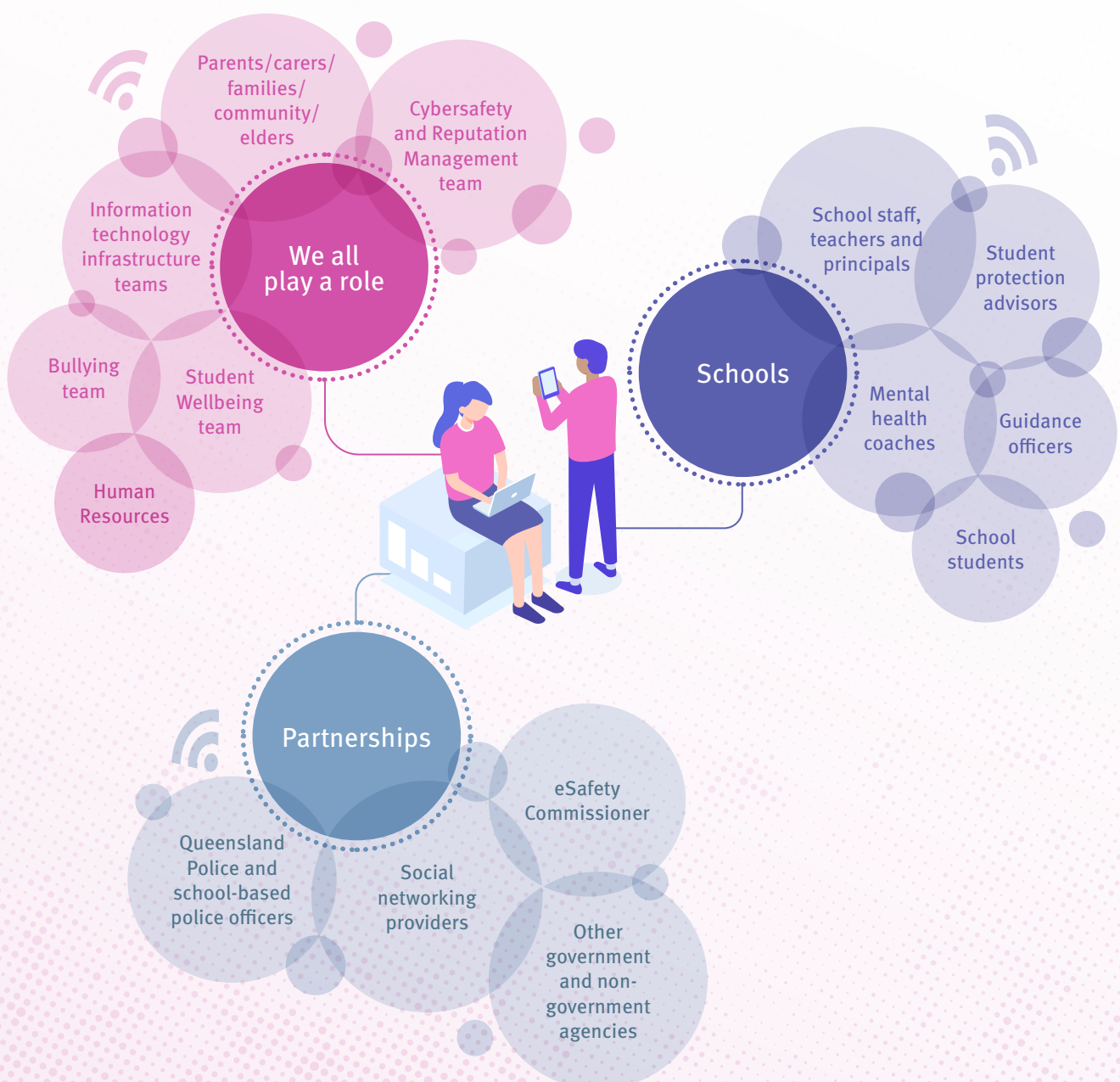


Responding

Keeping kids safe online is everyone's responsibility

Keeping students and young people safe online is a shared responsibility, and is not something that can be achieved without the combined efforts of schools, families, communities, elders and government.

Creating and strengthening child safe environments requires a collaborative approach from many key players in the community, within the department, and across other agencies.



Top 3 social media services used by young people 8–17 years

	Kids (8–12 yrs)	Teens (12–17 yrs)
 Youtube	80%	86%
 Facebook	26%	75%
 Snapchat	26%	67%

*Data source: eSafety Commissioner website:

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/>



In school communities

Students

To help prevent cybersafety incidents, students are taught how to use technology appropriately and responsibly behave in ways to enhance their own safety. Every Queensland state school has a Student Code of Conduct developed with the school community which details the school's behaviour policy including the appropriate use of technology, and the consequences and processes for addressing bullying (including cyberbullying).

School staff, teachers and principals

School staff, teachers and school leaders play a vital role in the safety and wellbeing of students and young people. They are responsible for providing a safe and supportive learning environment, where children feel protected, comfortable and accepted.

Families and parents/carers

Parents and carers are a child's first teachers. They play a critical role supporting their children to engage safely online and avoid harmful experiences. Educating children from a young age is especially important, with technology accessible to children of all ages. Parents and carers can access a range of support, information and guidance through [esafety.gov.au](https://www.esafety.gov.au/) and can talk to their child's school if they have concerns about their child's online safety or cyberbullying. Adapted from www.esafety.gov.au/parents/skills-advice/good-habits-start-young

Guidance officers

Guidance officers provide a broad range of proactive and preventative services including psychoeducational assessments, advice and counselling on educational, behavioural, personal, social, career and mental health and wellbeing issues. Guidance officers also play an important role in supporting responses to critical incidents.



eSafety in Queensland schools – Cybersafety and Reputation Management team

The Cybersafety and Reputation Management team plays a vital role in creating a safer online environment and is leading the way in providing online safety education programs for students, school staff and parents in Queensland. The dedicated team of specialists provide direct support to state schools when responding to concerns of inappropriate online behaviour and misuse of digital technology.

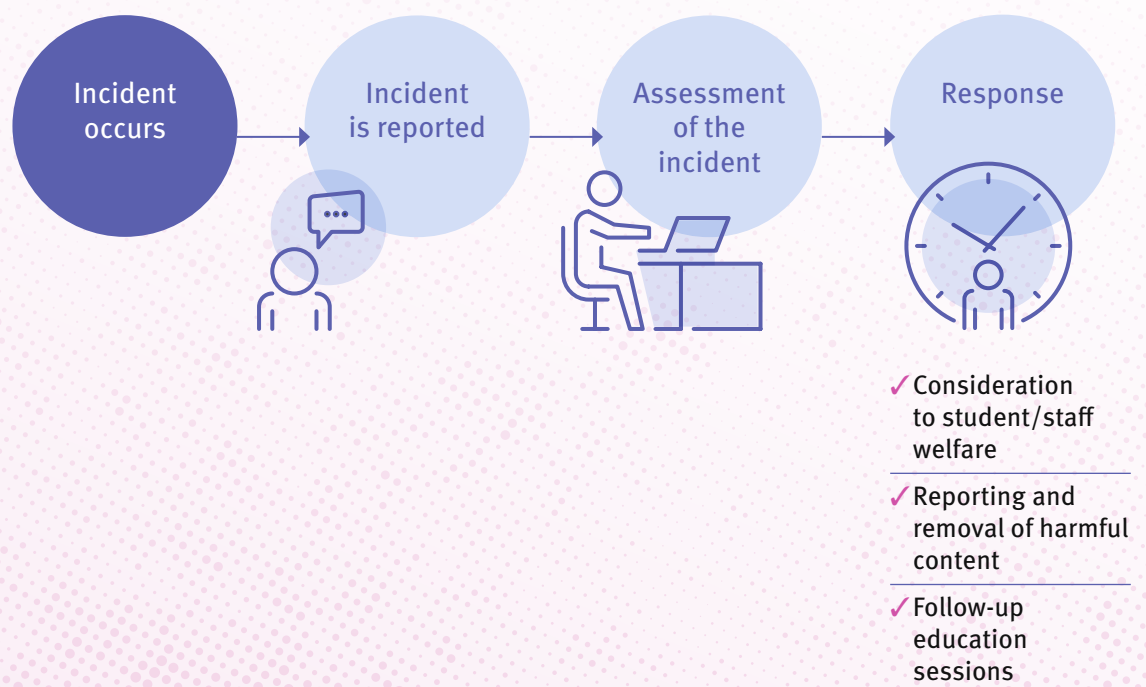


Responding

In responding to an incident, the Cybersafety and Reputation Management team provides investigative assistance, advice and resources in the resolution of online issues within state school communities and has established processes for the timely removal of online content.

When an incident occurs, either the Cybersafety and Reputation Management team or the school affected report the inappropriate content, an individual assessment is undertaken against each reported incident and responded to appropriately with advice provided to the individual schools.

How the team responds to an incident



System level support

Student Wellbeing team

The Student Wellbeing team provide resources, advice and support to schools to assist them to implement a whole school approach to supporting students' mental health and wellbeing.

Mental health coaches

A mental health coach is located in each region to provide advice and support to school and regional staff about best practice approaches to supporting students' mental health and wellbeing.

Student protection advisors

Student protection advisors are located in each region of the state. They strengthen the department's capacity to support schools in responding to student protection matters by providing a key point of contact for support and advice to principals, school leaders and regional staff.

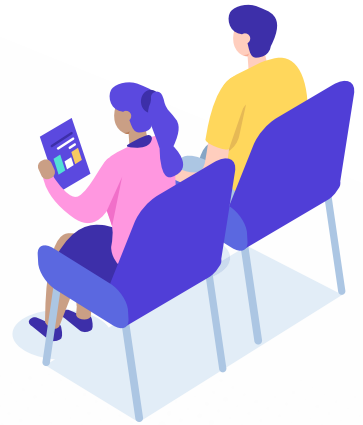
Bullying team

The department's Bullying team also works closely with regions to enhance capacity and provide support to resolve complaints of bullying in schools. They provide expert advice and assistance to schools, parents, carers and students about addressing incidents of bullying and cyberbullying.

Human Resources

Human Resources investigate student protection allegations involving staff of the department and support them to operate with the highest standards of integrity and ethics.

Human Resources also help to build awareness and educate staff about their obligations for reporting concerns and protecting young people through mandatory training and promotion of the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service and Standard of Practice.



Information and Communications Technology Security

The department is committed to providing a safe and secure Information and Communications Technology environment for students and staff within our schools for the purposes of teaching and learning.

The Cyber Security Unit undertakes cyber security threat and analysis, vulnerability and risk assessments, security architecture design, systems and process audits, Right to Information response and security incident investigation.

Partnered with Managed Services, the department provides a 24x7 monitoring and response service on both outbound and inbound risks and threats.



Almost all Australians have access to the Internet

99%

of parents with children aged 2–17 years report having an internet connection in the home



Talking to strangers

38%

used the internet to chat to someone they did not know

Kids (8–12 yrs) **27%** | Teens (12–17 yrs) **50%**

Sharing information



Information young people share with people they only know online

10%

Fake information

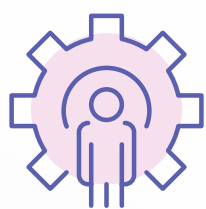
14%

Personal

19%

General

*Data source: eSafety Commissioner website:
<https://www.esafety.gov.au/>



Prevention through education and awareness

Awareness

To help students navigate the digital world, and to support parents, teachers and community members during this journey, the Cyber Safety and Reputation Management team have developed and quality assured a range of resources available to combat online incidents.

For Students



Enhancing your digital identity – The choice is yours, it's in your hands

Provides key messages for students to be mindful of when posting and sharing content online.



Cyber Heroes program

A program for primary students to cover safe, positive and responsible online behaviours. The program content is available in an online course titled 'Your Digital Journey' for students in Years 3 to 6.



Enhancing your digital identity

A secondary students program, covering topics such as managing your online reputation, privacy settings, online interactions, consequences and laws, respectful behaviours and strategies for young people confronted with cyberbullying and other inappropriate online behaviours.



Alannah and Madeline Foundation / Dolly's Dream eSmart Schools Program

Help schools to embrace the benefits of technology while reducing students' exposure to cyber risks, such as cyber bullying, online sexual predation, sexting, identity theft and fraud.



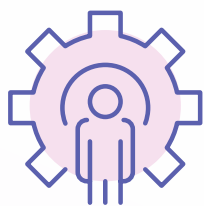
Daniel Morcombe child safety curriculum

Provide students with the knowledge and skills to recognise react to and report unsafe situations, including harm and abuse.



Respectful relationships program

Provides students with opportunities for social and emotional learning in self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationships, ethics, values, social norms, stereotypes, human rights, risk and responsible decision making



For parents and community members



Online awareness: Information for parents and caregivers

Provides advice for parents and caregivers if their child is the target of, or is responsible for, inappropriate online behaviour.



Social media and the school community

Informs parents and caregivers about how to use social media in relation to comments or posts about their school community.

For department employees



'Managing your online reputation' and 'I'm a teacher and have a personal social media account'

Assists teachers to help identify the level of risk connected with their online presence and ways they can improve their social media use and privacy.



Online incident management guidelines for school leaders

Information for Principals and school leaders on initial responses and investigative strategies, when responding to online incidents affecting school communities.

Plans and initiatives

In response to the **Queensland Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce**, the department has developed the **Stand out from the crowd action plan** to help prevent and address bullying and cyberbullying in Queensland schools.

Supporting frameworks, policies and procedures

The department's Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework guides schools in the development of a whole-school approach to support student mental health and wellbeing. It emphasises the importance of explicitly teaching and modelling social and emotional skills to support student wellbeing, as well as providing learning opportunities for students through curriculum focused on mental health.

The Supporting Students' Mental Health and Wellbeing procedure outlines the specific roles and responsibilities of key staff in promoting mental health and wellbeing, intervening early, and providing specialised intervention and case management for students with mental health difficulties.

Other resources

- **National Principles for Child Safe Organisations** – Collectively show that a child safe organisation is one that creates a culture, adopts strategies and takes action to promote child wellbeing and prevent harm to children and young people.
- **eSafety's Parents page** – learn about what children do online and how you can encourage them to be positive digital citizens at different ages.
- **Be deadly online** – Explores cyberbullying, digital reputation and respect for others, through short videos and posters created by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- **Stay Smart Online** – read about how to protect personal and financial information.
- **ThinkUKnow Parents Portal** – contains information about technologies that are popular with kids and advice about app safety.
- **Computers and your child** – learn how you can help your children to stay safe online, and set boundaries for how to use technology.
- **Who's chatting to your kids?** – provides tips to help you keep your children safe from online predators.
- **Bullying. No way!** – information about bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence in schools.
- **Social media and the school community** – a guide offering information to parents and caregivers about how to use social media in relation to comments or posts about their school community.

These resources are complemented by a wide range of tailored resources, guides and support for children, young people, parents and educators developed by the eSafety Commissioner, available at <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>



Building a safer online environment – our shared responsibility

Partnerships

Our most important partnership to better support online safety is young people and children themselves.

Building awareness and giving students the tools they need to be safe online is the most important step to empowering students to take control of their experiences online and know when to recognise unsafe situations.

Through partnerships with our stakeholders, social networking providers and other government agencies, we are able to respond swiftly to protect young people when an incident occurs.

Our key partners include:

eSafety Commissioner

The eSafety Commissioner is Australia's national independent regulator for online safety responsible for leading and coordinating online safety efforts across Commonwealth departments, authorities and agencies, and engaging with online safety stakeholders internationally.

Queensland Police and school-based police officers

School-based police officers provide support at some secondary school campuses. They support students at risk of offending and help create environments that support student welfare, learning and enhance community safety.

Other government and non-government agencies

A cross-sectoral-stakeholder cybersafety reference group has been established which includes Queensland Government and non-government schooling sectors for the purpose of sharing issues, responses and solutions to inappropriate online behaviours which impact on school communities.

Social networking providers

The department fosters key professional relationships with large social networking providers such as Facebook, Instagram, Google, Twitter and Snap Inc to report urgent and serious incidents directly to these companies, allowing for swift removal of content affecting the health and wellbeing of students and staff.



For more information

Cybersafety and Reputation Management team

Email: cybersafety.reputationmanagement@qed.qld.gov.au

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Email: gsp@qed.qld.gov.au

Advice for students or parents can also be found through contacting:

- *Lifeline* – phone 13 11 14
- *Kids Helpline* – phone 1800 551 800 for free and confidential counselling for young people aged 5–25
- *Parentline* – phone 1300 301 300 for support, counselling and parent education

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