



Cybersafety in the Digital Schoolyard

Children around Australia are now returning to school and a new study shows a majority will take an internet connected device with them.

School kids aged seven to seventeen and their parents were surveyed about the student's ownership and use of internet connected devices such as mobiles, laptops and tablets.

While parents were keen to provide their kids with these devices, almost all had concerns about the risks of cyber bullying and communication with strangers online.

The committee chair Senator Catryna Bilyk observed that the new survey focuses on the widespread prevalence of mobile phone use in schools.

"By the time kids are 13, seven out of ten students will take mobile phones to school, and one in three of these phones will be a smart phone," Senator Bilyk said.

"Smart phones are wonderfully useful things but they also pose new opportunities for cyber abuses because they can contain so much personal information".

"Children who use these devices need the advice and support of parents about the cyber risks involved."

Late last year Parliament's Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety tabled its report, *Hire Wire Act: Cybersafety and Young*, which was in part based on the results of a comprehensive online survey of young people's experiences and views.

The report made 32 recommendations to Government to help parents, kids and schools manage the challenges posed in a digitally wired educational environment.

The committee is currently inquiring into Cybersafety for Senior Australians to uncover the obstacles to internet use for older people, and to find ways to build their skills and empower them socially and economically.

Submissions for the Inquiry into Cybersafety for Senior Australians are invited by Friday 17 February 2012, with extensions available on request.

Further information on the inquiry, including the terms of reference and information on preparing a submission, is available from the committee's web site <http://www.aph.gov.au/jscc> or from the secretariat on (02) 6277 4202.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

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Background: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 4202