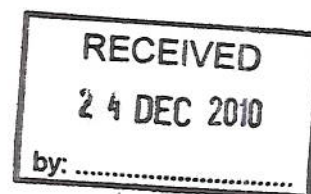




Commissioner for Children and Young People
Western Australia



All enquiries

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Our reference: 10/10147
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**Supplementary
Submission No. 54.1**
Inquiry into Cyber-Safety

The Secretary
Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety
R1 – 109 Parliament house
PO Box 6021
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Inquiry into cyber safety

I am writing in response to the letter from Senator Dana Wortley dated 30 November 2010 regarding the provision of additional information to the Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety.

I have previously provided a submission to the Committee on this matter and am now providing further comments on the terms of reference for the information of the Committee members.

Since preparing my earlier submission in June 2010, I have released a major report titled *Speaking out about wellbeing – the views of Western Australian children and young people*. This report is the result of an extensive research project that spoke with nearly 1000 children and young people aged between 5 and 18 from diverse backgrounds across Western Australia. The full report and a summary of the research findings are available on my website www.ccyp.wa.gov.au. I have attached a copy of the summary report for your information.

Most of the participants in the research reported that they were faring well and were positive about their future. The importance of a loving family, good friends and a supportive school environment were consistent messages but there were clear areas of concern including family conflict, alcohol-related violence, bullying and being safe in public spaces.

Bullying was significant issue of concern for many children and young people. Sixty percent of respondents to the online survey stated that they had been bullied and 44 percent agreed that they had bullied someone else. Data from the survey and the qualitative research confirmed that children and young people are bullied in a range of environments including school and online spaces.

In addition more than 35 percent of the children responding to the online survey reported they agreed with the statement they had too much stress in their life. Of concern 38 percent of respondents stated that they did not have anyone to talk to or

Caring for the future growing up today

would prefer to keep problems to themselves. This response was considerably higher amongst boys and Aboriginal young people.

The findings of this research reinforce how important it is to talk directly with children and young people to ascertain their views and opinions. Children and young people are not a homogenous group. Like the adults they become they have diverse needs, interests and opinions. Mechanisms for including the views of children and young people in identifying issues, their needs and developing programs, services, policies and strategies to address these needs is central to the provision of effective responses to issues such as cyber-safety.

If you would like further information on the wellbeing research please contact my Principal Policy Officer, Trish Heath, on 08 96213 2211 or email trish.heath@ccyp.wa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

MICHELLE SCOTT

Commissioner for Children and Young People WA

 December 2010

Enc. Speaking Out about Wellbeing: The views of Western Australian children and young people