

2010 Cyber-safety and YAG Summit

Good Morning Everyone, I'm delighted to be attending the first ever summit of the Youth Advisory Group.

Can I start by acknowledging:

- Members of the Youth Advisory Group
- The parents and teachers who are accompanying the students
- And Members of our Consultative Working Group and Cyber-bullying Sub-committee Group

I'd like to welcome everyone to the National Museum of Australia for our inaugural Summit and I appreciate that many of you have travelled a long way and taken time off school and work to be here.

The internet offers huge opportunities for education, social interaction, innovation and convenience, and it is important that all Australians can safely enjoy the benefits.

As everyone here knows, young people are some of the most avid technology users in our community.

Young people today are true digital natives, having grown up with the internet and mobile phones.

Yours is a world of constant connection and communication.

At school, at home and in between, young people are immersed in a virtual world of opportunity.

The internet has opened up a whole new environment for so many people, but unfortunately there are risks that can make the online world unpleasant and potentially dangerous.

About the YAG:

We know that if we really want to tackle cyber-bullying, we need advice from **young people themselves**, and that's why we have established the Youth Advisory Group – or the YAG as we like to call it.

The role of the YAG is to provide the Government with advice on cyber safety from a young person's perspective, including:

- The **nature** of cyber-safety risks faced by Australian children;
- How **best** to address cyber-safety risks; and
- How to *communicate* cyber-safety messages to other **young Australians**.

In 2010, we have expanded the YAG to include around 500 primary and secondary school members, aged from eight to 17 years, from 30 different schools from around Australia.

Last year, YAG members provided **nine** pieces of formal advice to the Government on topics including cyber-bullying, mobile phone safety, privacy, social networking sites and online computer games.

I can assure you that your thoughts and your advice are important to us.

Today, I can announce that we have **listened and acted** on the advice that YAG members gave us last year.

Cyber Safety Help Button:

Firstly I can announce that the Government will soon be introducing a **Cyber Safety Help Button**.

This Button will provide internet users, particularly young Australians, with easy online access to cyber-safety information and assistance.

It has been developed in response to advice from last year's YAG members **who told Government** they wanted a **one-stop-shop** for cyber-safety advice and assistance.

The Government is now delivering on this.

This year's YAG members will be testing the Button over the coming weeks and offering their thoughts on it before it is finalised and made available to everyone.

When it's ready, you will be able to download the Help Button from my Department's website.

The Button will look like this on your page and you can choose to show it on screen or minimise it to the task bar.

By clicking on the Button, you will have access to information and tips on how to deal with cyberbullying, unwanted contact and offensive or illegal content.

As you can see there will be links to sources of further help including the Australian Federal Police and the Kids Helpline.

There are also links to the cyber-safety centres for popular social networking sites.

Teachers and Parents Advisory Group on Cyber-safety:

A common theme that arose from YAG consultations last year was that young people wanted **teachers and parents** to be even more involved in addressing cyber-safety issues.

Today I can also announce that the Government will establish an **advisory group for parents and teachers**.

I will be inviting up to 350 parents and teachers from across Australia to form this new online group.

I'll be asking them to talk about their experiences with the internet and their understanding of cyber-safety issues.

The Teachers and Parents group will provide a forum to share ideas on how to best protect children and how to promote online safety messages to Australian families.

This advice will help us to create cyber-safety policies and programs that can keep **families** safe online.

The group will also allow teachers and parents to share information on cyber-safety programs that have been successful in their local area.

In the workshops today, we would like all of the parents and teachers to give us some ideas about how we can set up this new group.

I expect to have this advisory group up and running in the second half of this year.

2010 YAG So Far:

In April, I was delighted to launch the 2010 YAG at Ballarat Grammar.

Since the launch, the YAG online site has had more than **6,000 comments** on cyber-safety topics; and more than **600 quiz responses** on cyber-bullying have been completed by YAG members.

Last week I talked online with YAG members about cyber-safety and social networking sites.

I was very impressed with your informative comments and advice, in particular, about the dangers of sharing private information online and the importance of educating students about online safety.

As I said, advice from YAG members in 2009 assisted the Government's development of cyber-safety initiatives.

YAG members told us they wanted more online assistance, more education and information for their parents, teachers and peers – and that this information needs to be accessible and written in 'plain English.'

In response, the Government provided an additional \$16.6 million to the ACMA to continue and expand its cyber-safety education, awareness and counseling activities.

This includes the new CyberSmart website – which also links children to online counseling delivered by KidsHelpline.

The Government is also working with industry representatives to develop an 'easy guide' to cyber-safety features for social networking sites that young Australians can check when signing up to various sites.

The Government recently provided \$3 million funding to the Alannah and Madeline Foundation for a national cyber-safety pilot to address cyber-bullying in 164 schools across Australia.

The Government is also undertaking two research projects to better understand these issues.

The research is examining a range of cyber-safety issues including the prevalence of cyber-bullying and the effect it has on Australian children.

Conclusion:

Addressing cyber-safety and cyber-bullying is a key issue for the Rudd Government, and the YAG is an important part of our work.

You will soon be participating in workshops and asked to provide your views and opinions on a range of Government cyber-safety projects including:

- the Cyber-safety Help Button;
- the Teachers and Parents Advisory Group;
- the award winning Cyber-security *budd:e* modules; and
- the AFP's **Think-u-Know** program and crime prevention messages.

You know from the experiences of last year's YAG members that ***you can make a difference.***

Please make sure you have your say.

You have an important job this year and I hope the summit will be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for you.

Once again thank you for attending and I look forward to hearing all your views and great ideas.

Thank you.

Link: <http://www.minister.dbcde.gov.au/home>