

# CHILD SAFETY NEWSLETTER



## In the Spotlight

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### NCPCR HOSTS "VATSAL BHARAT" SYMPOSIUM

The National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) organized a regional "Vatsal Bharat" symposium dedicated to child protection, child safety and child welfare on 12 August 2023, at the Srimanta Sankaradeva International Auditorium, Guwahati. The seminar, conducted on behalf of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India forms a part of a series of regional events planned nationwide. These events aim to enhance awareness and outreach on issues of child protection, safety and welfare.

Participating states, at the seminar, included Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura. Distinguished dignitaries who graced the event included Dr Munjpara Mahendrabhai, Minister of State for Women and Child Development; Priyank Kanoongo, Chairperson, NCPCR; Sanjeev Kumar Chadha, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development; Indra Mallo, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development; and Rupali Bannerji, Member Secretary of NCPCR.

During the symposium, Dr Mahendrabhai elaborated on the objectives of “Mission Vatsalya,” an initiative designed to establish a robust safety net for children facing challenging circumstances. Dr Mahendrabhai emphasized that this mission aims to provide higher-quality services to children needing protection, focusing on critical factors like foster care, special education and sponsorship. He expressed his unwavering commitment to protecting every child in India, ensuring the effective implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 and enhancing the functioning of childcare institutions under Mission Vatsalya Bharat.

Priyank Kanoongo, Chairperson of NCPCR, underscored the commission's ongoing efforts to combat social issues such as child marriage, illegal trafficking and drug consumption. To address drug and substance abuse among children in the Northeast, the Northeast Cell of NCPCR Pilot has initiated workshops at the district level. Kanoongo also highlighted the Joint Action Plan (JAP) by NCPCR, aimed at tackling drug abuse and trafficking around educational institutions. He emphasized that tracking mechanisms have been maximized to monitor cases of child sexual abuse effectively.

Under the Mission Vatsalya Bharat initiative, significant enhancements were introduced in 2014. Sponsorship or foster care benefits were increased to Rs 2,000 (previously Rs 500), while the aftercare allowance was elevated from Rs 750 to the current amount of Rs 4,000. Moreover, a comprehensive expansion of the State Child Protection Society, State Adoption Agency, Juvenile Justice Board and Child Welfare Committees has been prioritized in every district.

Prospective adoptive parents shared their positive experiences with the adoption procedures facilitated by recent changes, emphasizing the effectiveness of these measures.

The symposium also highlighted successful interventions under Mission Vatsalya Bharat, including sponsorship, foster care and mental health support for distressed children. The event witnessed active participation from Women and Child Development department officials, Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) members, Anganwadi workers and other officials involved in child rights protection mechanisms.



## FBI RELAUNCHES SAFE ONLINE SURFING CHALLENGE

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has unveiled an updated version of its Safe Online Surfing (SOS) Internet Challenge, a free educational programme designed to teach children about cyber safety. The SOS programme has been revamped with a new interface and updated content.

This programme is specifically tailored for students in grades three through eight, covering age-appropriate topics such as cyberbullying, password security, malware awareness, social media etiquette and more. Additionally, the programme offers teachers a curriculum that aligns with state and federal Internet safety requirements.

The SOS Internet Challenge immerses students in grade-appropriate games and activities on their designated island. While the SOS website is accessible throughout the year, the testing and competition phase is limited to registered teachers and schools from September 2023 to May 2024.

With the commencement of a new school year, the FBI has introduced a refreshed version of the Safe Online Surfing (SOS) Internet Challenge. This educational initiative employs a game-driven curriculum to instruct students on online safety practices and responsible digital citizenship.

The SOS programme, designed for students in grades three through eight, encompasses various subjects, including cyberbullying, password management, malware protection and responsible use of social media. Furthermore, it equips teachers with a curriculum that complies with state and federal Internet safety regulations. The latest iteration of the SOS programme offers students an enhanced, modern and mobile-responsive gaming experience as they progress through the course. Importantly, this update reflects the latest online threats that children may encounter.

In the SOS Internet Challenge, students navigate through six thematic areas, responding to true/false, multiple-choice and matching questions. Upon completing all levels, students are required to take a final exam.

Since its launch in 2012, the SOS challenge has engaged over 1.6 million students. The SOS website and its activities are available year-round in educational settings and for individual use. This year, the challenge officially commences on 1 September and continues through May 2024. Each month within this timeframe, classes with the highest exam scores nationwide will be awarded an FBI-SOS certificate and whenever possible, will receive a congratulatory visit from FBI personnel.

To participate in the SOS Internet Challenge, teachers are required to register their classes on [sos.fbi.gov](https://sos.fbi.gov). Teachers are responsible for managing their students' participation in the programme, with the FBI neither collecting nor storing any student information.

## ONLINE GROOMING CASES AT RECORD HIGH IN THE UK

Thousands of online grooming cases have surged while waiting for an updated online safety legislation. Advocates are urgently calling on tech companies and lawmakers to support the Online Safety Bill, stressing on the need for no further delays.

The Online Safety Bill, aimed at curbing illegal content, has encountered repeated setbacks and revisions. Since 2017, when children's charity the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) first demanded stricter laws, police in the UK have documented incidents of 34,000 online grooming.

The proposed regulations assert that tech companies should be able to access private message content if child safety concerns arise. Numerous popular applications offer encrypted messaging services, ensuring only the sender and recipient can access the content, with even the tech firms having no access to such content. These privacy features benefit various individuals, including victims of domestic abuse, journalists and political activists.

However, these safeguards are accessible to everyone and platforms argue that implementing a backdoor would compromise overall security.

Aoife, a survivor of grooming, shared her story. At 15, she was targeted by an adult male on the social network Yubo, who posed as a teenager. Coercing her to download a secure messaging app, he pressured her into sharing explicit images and threatened to publish them on her social media if she refused. Aoife sought help through the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), eventually involving her school and parents, leading to her abuser's arrest.

Yubo emphasized its commitment to user safety but acknowledged the challenges in protecting users.

The NSPCC revealed that 6,350 offences involving sexual communication with children were recorded last year, marking a record high, according to data from a section of the police force. Shockingly, over the past six years, 5,500 offences targeted primary school-age children, constituting a quarter of the over 21,000 known victims between 2018-2023.

The research also disclosed that 73% of these crimes were linked to either Snapchat or Meta-affiliated websites.

While some of the ministers defend the Online Safety Bill, some tech companies argue that the legislation could jeopardize encryption, prompting threats to withdraw from the UK entirely.

Encryption advocates contend it plays a pivotal role in safeguarding vulnerable individuals and preserving privacy. The NSPCC stresses the importance of investing in technical solutions to balance privacy and safety for all platform users.

Moreover, the NSPCC seeks assurances that the legislation will encompass the regulation of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI).

The delay in enacting online safety laws underscores the urgency for comprehensive measures to protect individuals, particularly children, from online grooming and abuse.

## FBI TECH TUESDAY: DIGITAL DEFENCE FOR KIDS

- An increasing number of children are getting smartphones, some as early as when they are in middle school and these smart devices are increasingly becoming a common sight in school hallways. While cell phones offer parents a convenient way to stay in touch with their children, parents and kids need to be aware of the risks of these devices. If your child is old enough to have and use a phone, it's time to discuss potential online dangers.
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- Here are ten fundamental tips for phone and computer safety to help protect your child:
- Ensure the phone defaults to a locked setting, with access codes known only to the child and his/her parent.
- Parents should have access to every password for every device and app on their child's phone. While some level of privacy is reasonable, children are still under parental responsibility as long as they are minors.
- Regularly check accounts, instant messaging apps and texts for any concerning or inappropriate content. Both parents and children should agree that this access is required for continued phone use.
- Ensure that your child uses appropriate screen names. While "Babygirl2005" or "sweet16" may seem innocent, they can attract predators.
- Check and regularly update the phone's privacy, security settings and applications.
- Educate yourself about how photos can be geo-tagged. Even if you're cautious about what you post, your images could contain meta-data revealing your child's precise location. You should be able to turn off this feature in the phone's settings.
- Teach your kids to never respond to calls, texts or emails from unknown numbers or people. Scam artists and predators target individuals of all ages.
- Initiate open discussions with your child about the potential dangers that they may encounter, when they are online. If your child is old enough to carry a mobile phone to school, they are old enough for a frank conversation with you.
- Educate your children about the importance of using appropriate language and the consequences of sharing explicit photos. Stress on the fact that once something is shared online, it can spread rapidly and that shared content will be there till posterity.
- Instruct your children to set social media privacy settings to the highest level and to reject "friend requests" from individuals they don't know and trust, in person. Parents should also consider requiring approval for any new "friend requests" their children may receive.

If you or your child becomes a victim of an online crime, don't hesitate to report it to the FBI. You can file an online report on the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Centre website at [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov) or contact your local FBI office.



## STATE LEGISLATORS IN THE US ACT ON SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY

Legislators in various states are becoming increasingly concerned about the impact of social media on the mental health and well-being of children. They are introducing measures using the Internet and social media platforms to address these concerns. These measures include creating study commissions and task forces, requiring age verification or parental consent for opening social media accounts, introducing digital and media literacy courses in K-12 education, and implementing age verification to prevent children from accessing explicit or harmful content online.

As of 2023, 35 states and Puerto Rico have pending legislations related to these issues and 11 states have already enacted bills or adopted resolutions:

**Arkansas:** Created the Social Media Safety Act, which mandates age verification and parental consent for social media use. It also addresses liability for failing to verify age and illegally retaining data. However, a federal judge blocked the implementation of the Arkansas' Social Media Safety Act, citing concerns that the legislation intruded upon individuals' privacy rights by mandating age verification and parental consent for social media use.

**Illinois:** Adopted a resolution urging the Federal Government to create regulations promoting minors' well-being and protecting them from harmful social media algorithms.

**Louisiana:** Enacted the Secure Online Child Interaction and Age Limitation Act, 2023 which addresses online child safety.

**Mississippi:** Regulated pornographic media exposure to children by requiring commercial entities to have age verification systems and clarifying liability for failure to perform age verification.

**Montana:** Banned TikTok in the state, citing concerns over its impact on children.

**Utah:** Enacted the Utah Social Media Regulation Act, 2023, which mandates social media companies to verify the age of residents and obtain parental or guardian consent for underage users. It also limits the access hours for certain users and provides for a private right of action.

These legislative efforts reflect a growing awareness of protecting children from potential harm and exploitation on social media platforms. The debate over the balance between online freedom and child safety continues to evolve as lawmakers seek ways to address these concerns effectively.



## CHILD SAFETY BILLS RESHAPING THE INTERNET

In a sweeping effort to protect children from the dangers of exposure to unrestricted Internet access, lawmakers in multiple U.S. States are implementing a series of child safety bills that are reshaping the digital landscape. These measures target adult content and regulate minors' access to social media platforms without parental consent.

Texas, for instance, recently passed a law requiring individuals to provide official government-issued IDs or use third-party verification services to access adult websites, a move intended to shield kids from explicit content. Though the most prominent, this initiative is part of a more significant movement to age-gate the Internet.

Over the past year, several states have enacted similar legislations, with more considering doing so. These Bills, enjoying bipartisan support, represent a multi-faceted approach to address concerns about the influence of Big Tech on youth and are also intertwined with broader cultural battles. Recent changes in public school curriculums and book bans, especially those involving LGBTQ+ and diverse authors, reveal a more significant ideological clash, with online child protection legislation becoming a new battleground.

These developments have given rise to a renewed desire for an Internet that gives parents greater control over what their children can access online, so that minors are shielded from potentially harmful content. However, this endeavour presents challenges regarding free speech, privacy and access to constitutionally protected content for adults and young people.

While Big Tech and the adult entertainment industry have been criticized, lawmakers have primarily found common ground in supporting these bills, even in the face of mounting concerns about privacy and speech.

Louisiana set a precedent by successfully implementing age-gating measures for online content. It utilized a digital ID system called LA Wallet, allowing residents to securely store their IDs on their phones. However, such systems' promises of privacy have not always been fulfilled, as was seen in France in June 2023, where similar age verification proposals raised concerns about such intrusive practices.

In states without such digital ID systems, users may be required to upload photos of their government IDs. Porn websites often rely on third-party verification software that employs various methods, including biometric facial scans and cross-referencing user age claims with available datasets.

Critics of age verification have raised privacy and financial concerns, arguing that these systems can be expensive and may hurt the revenue of adult websites. Some website operators have reported a significant drop in traffic when implementing these measures.

Beyond concerns about the adult entertainment industry, some conservative lawmakers view these bills as a means to limit access to politically sensitive information about gender and identity. Laws like the one in Utah banning minors from social media without parental consent could disproportionately affect LGBTQ+ youth and those in abusive households, potentially cutting them off from vital online resources and communities.

Federal legislation, such as the Kids Online Safety Act (KOSA), 2022 is also making its way through the legislative process. KOSA places responsibilities on social platforms to protect children from harmful content. However, the definition of "harmful" content remains open-ended, leaving room for interpretation and potential legal challenges.

While these child protection Bills are likely to face legal scrutiny, their swift success may inspire more states to follow suit, creating a rapidly evolving landscape of Internet regulation. In this debate, the balance between child safety and free speech remains contentious, with few political leaders taking a stand against these measures.

As these developments continue to unfold, it is clear that the quest for child safety on the Internet is reshaping the digital world and the boundaries of free speech and information access.

## **CALLS FOR FTC INVESTIGATION INTO YOUTUBE**

Several consumer advocacy groups, including Fairplay, the Center for Digital Democracy (CDD) and the Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC), have joined forces to request that the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) investigate Google's video-sharing platform, YouTube. This request comes from recent research conducted by Analytics Research, which raised concerns about YouTube's child-protection policies and compliance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

Analytics Research's study, published in August 2023, alleged that YouTube served ads to minors, potentially violating COPPA requirements. Senators Ed Markey and Marsha Blackburn called on the FTC to investigate YouTube the same day the Adalytics study was published.

The current situation echoes a similar request by Fairplay, in 2018, that eventually led to YouTube's 2019 Consent Decree and a \$170 million penalty from the FTC. Adalytics' recent study suggests that Google may have since then violated the terms of this decree.





In a joint letter, the complainants explained that Fairplay and ad buyers conducted a test on ad campaigns on YouTube, targeting "made for kids" channels and instructing Google to serve ads without personalized targeting. However, Fairplay's test campaign, conducted with Adalytics' input, resulted in over 1,400 personalized ad impressions on "made for kids" content.

Google has consistently defended its child protection policies and reiterated its adherence to the terms of the 2019 consent decree. The company has also criticized the methodology used by Adalytics Research, characterizing the recent studies as flawed.

Media agency executives are awaiting regulatory decisions, refraining from passing a judgment on the allegations. They recognize the potential implications of these claims and are closely monitoring the developments.

## Interventions by states and private sector in India

### STARTUP HAPPY PARENTS LAB LAUNCHES HAPPINETZ

When entrepreneur Richa Singh, based in Pune, India, became a parent in 2021, she became acutely aware of the potential dangers of the Internet on children and adolescents. Singh, the creator of the Blogchatter blogging community, realized that even tech-savvy individuals couldn't guarantee their child's online safety due to the vastness of the Internet.

Driven by a mission to protect children, when they are online, Singh launched Happy Parents Lab, a startup that has developed an innovative technology called Happinetz, which filters out, among other threats, age-inappropriate content and potential phishing attacks.

Happinetz is a device that can be connected to a home's router. Through a mobile app, the parents can use Happinetz to filter out age-inappropriate content, monitor their children's Internet screen time, and track their browsing activity.

One of the startup's challenges was ensuring that Happinetz would work seamlessly with various devices, browsers, routers and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) without significantly changing a household's ecosystem. The device is compatible with smart TVs, phones, laptops, desktops and tablets.



Happinetz, launched on 31 July, has received positive feedback from consumers and the industry. The device employs artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) to distinguish between safe and harmful websites. It monitors and blocks access to inappropriate content from a database of 100 million websites, with 22 million already blocked.

In the context of online gaming, Kid Mode on Happinetz blocks all games except for 50 specially curated ones.

Happy Parents Lab's Happinetz has garnered significant consumer interest, indicating the importance of addressing online safety for children while allowing them to access age-appropriate content.

## **JHARKHAND CHIEF JUSTICE ON CHILD OFFENDERS**

The Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court, Hon'ble Mr Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra, emphasized that every child in conflict with the law (CICL) is, in essence, a child in need of care and protection (CNCP), and conversely, every CNCP has the potential to become a CICL. CNCPs often lack homes, are vulnerable to exploitation and lack guidance, which can push them towards criminal activities.

On 13 August 2023, Chief Justice Mishra made these remarks during a state-level consultation on 'Children in Conflict with Law (Prevention, Restorative Justice, Diversions, and Alternatives to Detentions)' at Ranchi. He expressed concern over the lack of awareness about the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, among stakeholders in the realm of child protection. He stressed on the importance of stakeholders being well-informed about these laws so that they can participate in child protection effectively.

Chief Justice Mishra also pointed out that Section 12 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 recommends that bail be granted as a rule and jail as an exception, but this provision has not been adequately implemented. He called for Section 15 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 to be appropriately interpreted and not in a restrictive manner.

Additionally, Chief Justice Mishra highlighted issues of coordination and competition among the four branches of juvenile protection, including juvenile police, child welfare committees, juvenile justice boards and child protection officers. He emphasized that each unit has a unique role in ensuring child protection.

Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad, Chairperson of the Juvenile Justice-cum-POCSO Committee, stressed on the importance of treating CICL with sensitivity and optimism rather than stigmatizing them. He encouraged all stakeholders to contribute towards creating a brighter future for these children.

The consultation also featured technical sessions on preventing child offending, diversion, alternatives to detention, non-custodial alternatives, the right to a fair trial, child-friendly procedures, rehabilitation and restorative practices.

## META'S COMMITMENT TO A SAFER INTERNET

Meta's dedication to ensuring the safety of young people and women online took centre stage at the recent Digital Suraksha Summit held on 10 August 2023 in New Delhi. The summit brought together policymakers, civil society organizations, parenting communities, content creators and educators to address the concerns of online safety and discuss Meta's ongoing efforts to safeguard its users.

One significant announcement during the summit was launching the Meta-supported platform "Take It Down." Developed in collaboration with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), United States, this platform aims to prevent the non-consensual sharing of intimate images of young people online. Notably, "Take It Down" will soon be available in Hindi and other Indian languages.

The platform empowers young individuals who have fallen victim to the distribution of their non-consensual intimate images. When faced with this distressing situation, they can visit [TakeitDown.NCMEC.org](https://TakeitDown.NCMEC.org) to submit a case. The platform then proactively searches for their ids across participating apps. Importantly, individuals only offer a hash of the image or video, not the content itself. Hashing converts the photos or videos into a secure, coded form that can no longer be viewed, effectively creating specific digital fingerprints. These hashes are then used to identify and remove copies of the images or videos, preventing their future dissemination on Meta's apps.

Smriti Z Irani, Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Government of India joined the summit and emphasized on the importance of companies like Meta aligning with the government's vision to ensure online safety, particularly for women and youth. She encouraged expanding these critical discussions to smaller cities across India to create a safe digital space for everyone to benefit from the digital revolution.

Meta's Vice President Global Head of Safety, Antigone Davis, highlighted the company's commitment towards safety of women and teens online. Meta has implemented various policies and technologies to protect them, offering tools like blocking, comment filters and reporting. Meta collaborates with experts and supports programmes such as [StopNCII.org](https://StopNCII.org) and NCMEC's Take It Down, that focus on preventing the non-consensual sharing of intimate images across multiple platforms.

In partnership with the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, Meta has launched the [#AmritGeneration](https://AmritGeneration.org) campaign. This initiative encourages young people, particularly aspiring content creators on social media e.g., influencers, to freely express their visions for the future on Meta's platforms.

Over the years, Meta has introduced various age-appropriate measures and tools to ensure online safety. Teens under 18 are automatically placed into private accounts when joining Facebook and Instagram. The Family Centre provides access to supervision tools and educational resources for parents and guardians, curated by youth safety, privacy, and well-being experts. Teens can also restrict unwanted interactions on their accounts, allowing them to hide comments on their posts from specified individuals.

Furthermore, Meta has partnered with third-party experts to promote online safety. Some of them are mentioned below.

**G20 Stay Safe Online Campaign with MeitY:** Resources on online safety have been created in over five Indian languages, reaching out to more than 11 million people across India.

**Delhi Police:** Digital literacy programmes across schools and colleges have been conducted for 10,000 students and youth.

**UnGap:** In collaboration with Yuvaa, a youth media, data insights & community engagement organisation, UnGap encourages meaningful conversations between parents and teens about online safety and well-being. The campaign has already reached more than 44 million people.

**Digital Nagrik Pledge:** Building on the partnership with the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Meta provides a digital citizenship course to 10 million students and 1 million teachers. Over 15,000 individuals in India have pledged to become responsible digital citizens (Nagriks).

Meta remains dedicated to creating a safer and more inclusive Internet experience for its users, especially women and young people, as it continues to innovate and collaborate to address the evolving challenges of online safety.



## UP ESTABLISHES WOMEN AND CHILD SAFETY ORGANISATION

To ensure the effective handling and control of crimes against women and children, Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh, announced the formation of a dedicated Women and Child Safety Organization. He has designated an Additional Director General of Police (ADG) rank officer to oversee women and child development and safety, in the state.

This decision comes in light of recent incidents of rape and murder involving women and children in the state. While the Chief Minister has already implemented changes in the police setup in districts affected by these crimes, establishing a separate unit is aimed at expediting the apprehension of suspects in crimes against women and children. It will also focus on swift investigations and court follow-ups to ensure speedy justice.

According to the current plan, the particular unit will assume responsibility for all existing helplines and organizations related to control of crime against women and children. This includes monitoring of Anti-Romeo squads and women helplines. The unit will consolidate services like the 1090 helpline, Mahila Samman Prakosht and Mahila Suraksha Prakosht for more effective oversight and policy implementation.

Regarding appointing an ADG rank officer to head the organization, sources indicate no new position will be created. Instead, the officer entrusted with this role will closely monitor all units and issue necessary orders for prompt action in cases related to crimes against women and children, in the state.



# Steps taken by different stakeholders

## AFP INTENSIFIES CHILD SAFETY MEASURES

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) has unveiled a series of measures to enhance child safety in the Northern Territory, including increased resources for child protection operations and a revitalized focus on online safety initiatives for children, parents and educators.

Many of these forthcoming initiatives are aligned with the AFP's commitment to strengthening child protection investigations as part of the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse. This commitment includes a budget allocation of \$3.9 million to bolster child protection investigations within the Northern Territory.

To achieve this goal the AFP plans to enhance its investigative, prevention, and intelligence capabilities within the Northern Territory. There will also be an increased AFP presence within the Northern Territory, Joint Anti-Child Exploitation Team, a collaboration between the AFP and the Northern Territory Police.

Furthermore, the AFP intends to expand its community outreach and engagement efforts throughout the Northern Territory. In line with these efforts

ThinkUKnow is a law enforcement-led national programme to educate the community about preventing online child sexual exploitation. This programme is executed in partnership with state and territory police and organizations such as Datacom, Microsoft, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, and Neighbourhood Watch Australasia.

Over the past financial year, the AFP, in collaboration with state and territory police and programme partner volunteers, conducted 257 presentations, reaching an estimated 17,756 parents, caregivers, and teachers across Australia. These presentations encompassed both in-person and virtual sessions. The AFP and state and territory police delivered 2,515 presentations to approximately 209,544 students nationwide.

The surge in demand for the ThinkUKnow programme, evidenced by the increased number of presentations and trained police members and volunteers, underscores the necessity for targeted education programmes addressing online child sexual exploitation. ThinkUKnow covers various topics, including online grooming, preventing inappropriate contact, addressing sexting and self-generated content, combating sexual extortion, and providing guidance on reporting and seeking assistance.

ThinkUKnow stands out as a unique initiative, grounded in real case studies derived from reports to the AFP-led Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) and AFP investigations.



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