

ACT Non-government Schools Symposium

eSafety Commissioner – 25 June 2026

What's changed, What matters and What works in online safety

Who is eSafety?

The following resources are hyperlinked (hover over the text with your cursor).

eSafety's purpose is to help safeguard all Australians from online harms and to promote safer, more positive online experiences. We use research, evidence and experience to lead and advise on online safety issues.

[eSafety website](#)

[What eSafety does](#)

[Subscribe to the eSafety newsletter](#)

Newsletter content

[eSafety Advisories and blogs](#)

[Key topics](#)

eSafety training for schools, professionals and community

eSafety offers a range of online safety training programs free of charge. We promote online safety and help build relevant online safety skills for primary school aged children, educators and parents and carers.

[Virtual classrooms](#) for Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6

[Training for educators](#) and youth-serving professionals

[Webinars for parents and carers](#)

Reporting

eSafety has substantial powers to protect all Australians across most online platforms and forums where people experience abuse or harm.

[Report online harm](#)

[What you can report to eSafety](#)

[Dealing with fight videos](#)

[Report image-based abuse](#)

[Report forms](#)

AI-driven environments

Children and young people are now growing up in a digital environment that is fundamentally different from even 5 years ago. The shift isn't just 'more technology', it's AI-driven and more immersive, personalised and persuasive. We're not just teaching students how to behave online; we're helping them understand the systems shaping their behaviour.

The difference between human and artificial intelligence

Even though it's called 'artificial intelligence', Gen AI doesn't think or understand like a human.

- Gen AI is a technology that learns patterns from vast amounts of data and uses this information to create new text, images, audio, or video.
- It appears intelligent but has no understanding or self-awareness. It makes statistically informed guesses and predictions to create content.
- In contrast, human intelligence is shaped by experience, emotion, context, and ethical judgement.
- Prioritise what AI cannot replicate — empathy, ethics, creativity, and human connection. These are the qualities your students need to develop, and the qualities staff need modelled.

The evolution of harm

As platforms have evolved and new features and tools have been introduced, the opportunities for connection have increased but so has the opportunities for harm. Some of the key changes include:

- Harms are occurring on unexpected platforms.
- Children are accessing devices earlier, often before they're emotionally ready.
- The coded language of emojis.
- Sexualised online abuse.
- The use of AI for fake images, impersonation, and viral harmful content.

Random video chat platforms

Omoggle

A [web platform](#) that combines random video chat with strangers with real time AI-driven face rating, framed in a competition. The platform ranks attractiveness using AI and reinforces 'appearance-based validation and comparison culture which can damage self-esteem and promote unhealthy body standards.

Open Talk

Open Talk | Buddy Talk is a random video chat service that pairs users one-to-one with strangers and openly markets itself as a successor to Omegle. It has no or limited moderation.

AI companion chatbots

[AI companion apps](#) create immersive experiences that mimic human relationships, including intimate or emotionally dependent interactions. They can disrupt social and emotional development and may provide misleading or harmful health and relationship advice. Popular apps include Character AI (c.ai), Talkie, Replica and Linky.

- AI Companions/chatbot support resource for educators [AI companions: information sheet | eSafety Commissioner](#)
- Advisory: [AI chatbots and companions – risks to children and young people | eSafety Commissioner](#).
- eSafety Commissioner's [transparency notices](#) on AI companion apps
- A resource by headspace [how to help young people who feel lonely](#)

Smart glasses

Smart glasses from Meta, Google, Apple and others look like ordinary eyewear but can record video, make calls, send messages and run AI assistants and can be activated by a simple voice command. These smart glasses are lowering the barrier between thought and action. Policy considerations include: live streaming, recording in private spaces and sharing without consent.

Practical prevention strategies

eSafety's Toolkit for Schools - [Education Action Plan NSW Anti-bullying Framework](#) including [Practice examples](#)

eSafety resources

Best Practice Framework for online safety education

eSafety's [Best Practice Framework for Online Safety Education](#) establishes a consistent national approach that supports education sectors across Australia to deliver high quality online safety education.

Toolkit for Schools

The [Toolkit for Schools](#) – 40+ resources categorised into four elements: Prepare, Engage, Educate and Respond. Resources in the [RESPOND Element](#) include:

- Respond 3 – Responding to critical online safety incidents
- Respond 3A – Responding to image-based abuse including sexual extortion
- Respond 3B – Responding to image-based abuse involving deepfakes

- Respond 4 – Responding to online abuse that targets staff
- Respond 5 – Tips for supporting students involved in an online safety incident.

Digital signage

These [digital messages](#) for both primary and secondary students are designed to be used in the classroom, on school devices and electronic message boards around the school.

AI action plans

Next week

- Audit your current AI-related policies
- Brief your leadership team on incorporating scenario planning

Next term

- Establish clear roles of responsibility as to which staff handle AI incidents
- Schedule mandatory staff PL on AI safety
- Create parent communication strategy

Next 12 months

- Embed AI safety in curriculum review process
- Update relevant policies e.g. Student Code of Conduct, Acceptable use
- Build capacity in your wellbeing team, for AI matters

Other eSafety resources

[The eSafety Guide](#) - provides information about the latest games, apps and social media, including how to protect your information and report harmful content.

[Parents](#)

[Kids](#) – Primary school resources. Might Heroes games – [Robo Raven and the Ancient Relics](#)

[Young People](#) – Secondary school resources.

[Social Media Age Restrictions Hub](#) - Find information to help you understand and prepare for the change.

[The eSafety Schools Hub](#) - key online safety resources for Australian schools. The resources in this hub can be used to help develop a whole-of-community approach to online safety, support classroom learning, access professional development and respond to online incidents.

Online safety information [for families in other languages](#).

[Easy English](#) resources for people with low literacy, or with intellectual or cognitive disabilities.

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