

# ThinkUKnow program to keep children safe online



**ThinkUKnow, a joint initiative between the AFP, the Australian Communications and Media Authority and Microsoft, is an internet safety program designed to help teachers, carers and parents educate children about safety and encourage them to think before they act online.**

Trained volunteers from the AFP, Australian Communications and Media Authority and Microsoft will run ThinkUKnow education programs for parents, carers and teachers at more than 100 schools across NSW, Victoria and the ACT.

ThinkUKnow will educate adults on how to ensure today's children have a positive online experience and give them tools to manage their online safety. Participants will learn about what young people are doing online, and be given guidance on how to minimise risks and address issues as they arise.

Commissioner Mick Keelty said the internet was a fun place where young people could interact with the world, but it also had many hidden threats.

"Every time an Australian child logs onto the internet to use instant messaging or social networking sites, they and their parents and teachers need to be aware of some of the negative aspects," Commissioner Keelty said.

It is important to educate young people on the ways in which to recognise inappropriate or suspicious behaviour online. They need to be careful who they communicate with and should never agree to meet in person someone that they have only met online.

The deliberate actions taken by an adult to form a trusting relationship with a child with the intent of later facilitating sexual contact is known as online grooming. This can take place in chat rooms, instant messaging, social networking sites and email. Once contact has been made, child sex offenders then move towards more traditional means of communication such as over the phone.

It needs to be reinforced that personal information should not be posted or shared over the internet. Young people need to be aware of what messages they are sending about themselves which may appeal to online child sex offenders. These offenders usually pose as young persons

and are aware of the latest trends in music, hobbies and interests.

"They need to understand that the people they are chatting to may not be who they say they are," Commissioner Keelty said.

If you believe a child is in immediate danger or risk, call 000 or contact your local police.

**More information is available on the ThinkUKnow website:**  
[www.thinkuknow.org.au](http://www.thinkuknow.org.au)