

## How to keep your children safe online- Cybermarvel AWS webinar

**Michelle:** I think we might be right, and I think we might be ready to start.

Hello everyone and welcome to our very special webinar today. My name is Michelle Michael and I'm one of the directors in the NSW Department of Education.

I'm going to start today by acknowledging that it doesn't matter where many of our attendees are today, we are all on Indigenous lands and we acknowledge and pay our respects to Aboriginal people both past and present. We welcome any Indigenous people into this meeting today and acknowledge their contribution that they're going to make and the future contributions of our future Indigenous leaders.

It's a wonderful day to be here, is looking at what is a really important piece of work and discussing a really important piece of work. And we've got three fabulous experts in cyber and cyber security and trying to keep our young people safe in what is a really difficult time for young people and parents. We're coming out of what is a COVID lockdown where we've seen an explosion of the use of digital and we're seeing children younger and younger getting mobiles, access to devices. How long on a device is too long? And so, I, that's why it's really important today that we've got parents and we want to hear the voice of parents and our attendees in this, in this conversation.

So today we're, I welcome a couple of our fantastic panellists so we have Clair Orange and Clair is one of the developers and the CEO of \*digi school (Digi Social) and so welcome Claire and I'm looking forward to hearing some of your thoughts on this area.

We've got Colin Anson-Smith and Colin is part of a company called Pixevety, I believe, and again Colin, all of these companies are leading experts in trying to keep our young people safe and in some cases how they're working with us and with schools as well.

And Sidney is another one of those fantastic CEO's and his company Saasyan also keeps young people in schools safe and I'm really interested to hear and how the work of some of your companies is feeding into the cyber security of keeping young people safe.

So, look, I think we might jump straight into it. And again, if you are on the chat, you're welcome to actually pose questions to our panellists and I will be taking those to the panellists. There is someone on the chat you may not see the chat, but there is someone taking those questions and I'll put the questions forward to our panellists. If we don't get to your questions we will be putting them up onto our Cybermarvel area which is the Department of Education's fantastic new resources that they've developed around again, that conversation with young people about how to best keep your data and your privacy safe. So, Google Cybermarvel, so you'll be able to find out exactly where these questions end up. But look, I think if we move into, this area certainly we've made some discussions and some things around responsiveness, restrictions, responsibility and respect and those areas if they are actually unpacked mean different things in this field.

So, Claire, I'm going to actually start with you, if that's OK. So, look you're a respected parent, respected educator. You're a child psychologist. You're the founder and CEO of Digi Social. Your mission statement for Digi Social, I looked it up and it's on your site, is 'every child has the right to learn the skills to enter digital life as well protected and as safe as possible'. So, I imagine that you've had a flood of questions over recent months from parents, teachers, educators on how to respond to this situation when they've found their child not in not being armed with the digital skills that they need. And responsiveness, I think it's kind of proactive and reactive in this type of situation. So, look, can you talk us through a time when you've been approached by a parent, looking at through

Digi Social and what advice and how have you responded to that particular scenario? And what's your advice to any parents or adults that have young people, given that that scenario?

**Claire:** Yes, thanks Michelle, and thanks to all the parents for making time to join this important discussion today because it is an important one. And you know if I was to think about just the last two weeks of what I've been sent, so Squid game has been right at the top of the content. So, parents who have let their children watch and parents who haven't let their children watch, but they've been educated in the playground on some relatively violent adult content. But then I've got situations that pop up daily. Things like being asked to send an image or in nude of yourself having sent that image, being asked for more, having sent a nude, made that impulsive decision, you're gonna do it and I'm talking children between the ages of eight to 14 here, so we're looking at that young people as well. There is, images having been shared, cyber bullying being invited into a group chat only to realize your appeared to be made fun of. You know, these are daily things that are happening to our children and I think even if it hasn't happened to your child, if your child is in the online space, there's a fair likelihood that at some point in time this will be part of their landscape or a friend will ask about.

So as parents, we really have to remember that as our children may be into that online space, then being responsive, even if it's not something we subscribe to ourselves. So, saying things like, "Oh well, I don't believe in social media, it's just a nonsense. I don't have time for it." If your children are there, so are you, you know you meet, you must be in that space because you have to understand it. You don't have to understand the ins and outs. You don't have to be on Instagram and Tik Tok and Facebook and all the places your children are. But you know having a feeling, helps you to be responsive so my first tip to all parents you know on any of those scenarios whether they're yours, the big ones up at the top, the big crunchy ones, or the little ones where your children are facing social angst online which can really demoralize them and change their mental health and wellbeing is to start with love. So, love is at the beginning of all responsiveness. In fact, in terms of protective vectors online, we can put parent controls. We can filter out children's content. We can ban them, but actually we are our children's biggest protective factor. So, when we shoulder our partner, shoulder partner, our children in that space when we understand that what they're going to do and move through is really messy learning, like really messy learning. So, I, at the tender age of nearly 50, I've got to do my messy learning when no one got to record it. Thank goodness!

Now our children, that definitely then messy learning goes online. They're messy learning about relationships with friends and you know those early moments of feeling the little heart flutter and being in love with someone and posting that online. We all got to do the messy learning in a different space. Our kids don't get to dodge that bullet so remember- it is messy, leaning with love, expect not accept that, expect that at some point in time things are going to get ghastly. Take a deep breath, send the memo to your face, not to look too horrified, so this - needs to not go, "Huh? You sent a note?" You've really just got to go, "Oh darling, tell me more about that!"

So, first of all, send a memo to your face and you've really got a lean in with love for your children. And the other big area here so, we've got love. The other thing that we need to think about as parents of those limits. So, I know Colin, you're going to be talking about the restrictions we place that protect our children, but I think one of the things that we need to remember with children is that they, if we say no or don't look at that. That means they probably will. We just sealed the death warrant on our ability to control it and ignited their curiosity. So, if we're going to be really responsive in the online space with our children, parents, what we need to remember is that when we set those limits, we set them with our child. So, if you have a child who's in that mid-primary school range upwards into those high school years is - your child is starting to want autonomy. That's how their brain is developing. They want to feel like they're a little bit in control. So you can say, how

about we both decide on the limits we're gonna put on the amount of time, what you can watch, when you can watch it. And who you can? What, what sort of access you can have? You make a list. I'll make a list and then we'll figure out where we meet in the middle. That makes him feel important. In fact, in all things in parenting, you get more compliance when you actually make your child a partner on the journey. Now it is kind of a pretend democracy, so you make it feel to them like they're actually really do have a say and actually do lots of nodding and smiling. And "Yes, darling, I think that's a great idea", but actually just know your limits and squash your child into those. Most important thing, don't tell your child that's what you're doing.

**Michelle:** I love the pretend democracy because it and it is a little bit like what you know if anyone is watching this from work during their lunch break, it is just like bringing any of your work colleagues with you on that journey rather than being stick and a document. Or just don't do it. Well, that's probably not going to work, so I love that. That's saying you said that and Claire, I may have introduced you, I apologize. I think I said digi school but your Digii Social. So just to really reiterate the magic work that you do in this field and you can start to sense some of the conversations you've certainly had with some of the parents through your Digii Social and started to elude there to Colin and unpacking some of the work that he is doing in his area of Pixevety.

So, Colin, I know you've got a background of, I believe, after reading up about your background. You've got a background in media. I think media plays a very big part in what we're talking about here today and it's a combination, I suspect of this knowledge and that experience of working with legislators and your own personal experiences as the parent on why you started up the company that you started up and that online tool that enabled schools and parents to have a greater control over who takes, sees and distributes a child's photo and online image. It's quite interesting, I think this area, because I think with young people - we don't own their digital footprint, yet we seem very apt at putting up those images onto our own social pages and I'm interested in your thoughts on that. And so, the restrictions. It's an interesting area, when so many social media platforms are at play, so look, can you talk us through ways and what your recommendations are to parents in a better understanding of why and how they should be considering sharing online information or images about their own children and other people's children. And what should they be proactively doing?

**Colin:** OK, now bear in mind when we got an hour, so I'll keep it as short as I can. I will probably break this up into two parts, but before we really get into that, I do think that the platforms we use have more to do in protecting our and protecting their users and just simply changing per, you know, the terminology of say something like social media channels like Facebook, as an example. They, in my opinion, are publishers. They are not a platform. That fundamentally changes regulation and restriction around what they should and shouldn't do, so I think they've got a lot to play here, but anyway, you're getting on further so there are two parts. I guess I'll break it up into sharing photos online and I'll break it up into the pros, cons, cons and cons. And the second part of it being the third I would guess one are on our three-hour discussion being restrictions, and I think that then brings into what Claire said before that the regulation.

So, there might be 4 hours, but sharing photos online. I think with the with the travels and I guess being in media for so long we need to shift the paradigm. I mean sharing photos online is publishing. The term sharing really was pushed initially by the platforms because they wanted to evoke a positive emotion. It's got a much nicer connotation than compared to the real term of publishing. I mean, publishing means making information available to the public, generally at a cost or for some sort of commercial game, and I think social media fits perfectly as publishers would be contained in that space. Replacing that one more descriptive word in a sentence changes, I think, perception on what is acceptable or not. For example, if you know if I came to you and said look, I just published

my daughter's first bath time today. Very, very different feeling than if I shared it. I'm following on from sharing though as you said before us, it's not just us doing it right, it's the community around us and I think an awareness is the number one thing we need to be promoting this time.

So, following from sharing is obviously sharenting. It's done often enough to need a name, and it's done by friends, families or even schools. Sharenting is where parents share materials, photos, videos, blogs etc of their children and others, other children online and we do a lot of it. Recently UK as an example, the average parent shares 1500 images of their child by the time they're 5. I'm sure it's a lot more in the US, but that's in UK and I wanna say recently in the region of the UK is a very recent study and 80% of children by the age of two have a digital footprint. This is, these are big numbers, so why do we do it? Why do we share it? I guess you know it feels good, highly addictive, and we're all living for that like, but that is not unintentional from the platform providers.

So, what I often hear you know recently, I guess without going into much detail, they say you know an image and I see it all the time - it's worth 1000 words. In the online space, though I think it's worth 4000, 10000, much more than 1000. And the reason behind that is because it's not just what's in the photograph. It's AI, which looks at photographs and can explain, you know what's there, who's there, etc. But think about the information behind the photograph - metadata that sits behind it. It's not like when I was a child, the grey hairs real where you had them. Yeah, the original there, a camera roll and you had twelve shots. Or if you're rich, you had 24 shots and they're in colour. The information behind it can be full name, birthday, address with GPS data. What school you attend? Family and friends, you are with and it's the aggregation of this data that really matters and how you can pull it. If you know what you're doing, how to pull it together, then you go into the realms of facial recognition. Now facial recognition is a biometric face print of your face. Now it's not the issue. Face rect to us is just a tool. It's like a shovel. I go and dig a hole. I plant a tree, oh wonderful! I go and get that same shovel and smash a window. Slightly different situation, but it's the same tool, just different objective.

So, what again? What are the big concerns? I guess around all of that identity and financial theft is a big one and real safety concerns, you know, from grooming to far worse. I mean in that same report in the UK there were 8.8 million attempts during one month in 2020 where UK internet users, access content of children suffering sexual abuse. That is a lot in that particular case. It's all reports of child abuse of images online, increased by 50% during lockdown and then then you go on to the next part of it. You know identity theft, and I guess that then leads to financial risk. Barclays believe that within seven years there will be 7 million incidents in the UK alone and that will contribute to \$1.3 million worth of debt for our children. It's just unbelievable, but then you know. Then then you look at, you know, the actual using and the big conglomerate that owns it. Between you know, without worrying too much about it, but the police report showed that 51% of cases of sources of content for these sites were owned by probably the largest US giant and a third of them, of that content was taken from Instagram. So, you know bringing it back home a little bit more. Australia is one of the worst among online sexual harm to children. Two out of three kids are saying that in Australia and New Zealand, the report, they reported some sort of sexual harm before they turn 18 online.

So, it's one thing to say that yeah, look it exists and Claire is a 100% right. We can't block it. We can put that education and awareness is incredibly important. Internet has some absolutely beautiful wonders, but it's got a very dark side and I still believe, and I'm always have been, not a great fan of social media, but it definitely has its place. But I just don't think it should be a record of our entire child's life or even hours for that matter. And Claire was right before- our formative years aren't on permanent display. Whereas if you know how to look online, they certainly are and I think for parents and as a parent you know, please think before you publish, especially today where we're

respecting kindness could do with a shot. And in today's vernacular, maybe even a third booster shot. You consider it, if others wishes really matters.

**Michelle:** Sorry, I mean yes, sorry I'm interested and I'm I'll come back to the panel around this question is that in my previous role in the department I was lucky enough to oversee a policy around the effective use of mobile devices, which included the use of mobile phones in in school if you like. There was a constantly, and Claire I'll be interested in your thinking on this. It's the next platform there was always that sense and I got a lot of very concerned parents from a very good place. Wanting a ban. Can we ban this platform? Michelle, can you please ban this? Can you let ban? Why isn't the government doing, you know, banning certain things? I'm interested to hear the panels views on that because my, my, my feeling always was well if we ban this the next thing will come along. If we ban this the next thing and so to Sidney, I am drawn to you. Is it actually the skills that we need to give our young people and community and parents rather than the platform banning to stop it because it takes something away, something will replace it. So, I'll be, my first thinking Sidney is what are your thoughts on that?

**Sidney:** Yeah, well, that nicely leads us into the responsibility area of today, right? The theme and the first thing I'll share is I had a real dad moment this week while I was presenting at another webinar instead of referring it to as the squid games I said the Octopus game, so there you go I, made my first and that's the thing like as parents were trying to keep up with what's going on and we might make these mistakes and so Saasyan, you know we work with the department of Departments of Education and hundreds of schools. Looking up to thousands of kids around their safety at school, so of course we get a perspective on responsibility. And aside from that, I'm a dad of three and my wife and I have to learn to walk the talk of the things that we're talking about, right? Like how to be responsible with your device? What's enough, you know, screen time and you know where they're at. They're sort of teenagers now, so they look at that. So that's interesting.

So, the first thing I will say is all the parents that are joined today. Thank you for joining and the absolute empathy for how difficult this is, right? It's complex, it's challenging and it's ever changing. And the question comes down to who's responsible for the safety of children. Is that the child? And so, Claire was saying, for example, bring them on the journey as a collaborator in that decision, for example, is that the parent? Is it us? Is it the Internet provider? Is that the device manufacturer? Is it the platform who's responsible? So, you know Colin was saying platforms need to step up and agreed. Is that the school? Is it the government and the policies? And I know eSafety Commissioner has been doing amazing work in this space, around this and I think the answer is everyone, right?

And let me give you a quick analogy. So, let's say let's not talk about technology which is complex, but it's harder to maybe get our heads around. But let's talk about the you know, tried old finger allowing your kid to ride their bike to school. If your child is going to ride their bike to school, who is responsible for your child's safety? Is it the child? Is it you as a parent? Is it government and their road rules? Is that other drivers that we want to be more aware? Is it the bike manufacturer? Is that the helmet provider? So, you can see the answer becomes everyone, which is tricky because often when everyone is responsible, no one is responsible.

So, we don't really know who to hold to account and where to step in and. You know and going back to and we're going to come back on a panel chat on this in terms of can you block and is that the right answer? Well, blocking could be one approach, but accountability and responsibility. So, I don't think I'm an expert to give advice on what you should do with your children. What I could do, perhaps is maybe share my perspective and the way we're looking at -and maybe use that as a marker which is firstly both as a parent and as my role as CEO of Saasyan, I'm trying to help raise awareness and I'm glad we're having these conversations. And secondly, think about this community approach like yes, we need to find someone who's responsible. But what if we could all chip in? And

that's why I absolutely love the lessons I'm learning from my colleagues here today. So, Claire starting with empathy and love as being the starting point, right? And that that that's that really hits a nerve with me, a good nerve.

And so, as a parent, what are we doing with our kids? Well firstly, we're saying - it has to start with the child. If you're old enough to have a device. I mean like whatever age you are. You need to understand something- like you're not gonna understand the complexities and you're not going to be a real expert on this, like let's say Colin and Claire, but you're gonna know something for as an 8-year-old, you need to learn something and have a sense of accountability.

As parents we need to also, you know quit with the - it's too hard, it wasn't like this in my days. OK we can have those chats, but as Claire said, get, you know, we need to, if your children are there, we need to be there too. And so, what we're doing is like we've got some, firstly, there's accountability, but we've got some simple rules, so my like 11-year-old only accesses his computer in the kitchen area where you know, my wife and I are present and so that already says like there's a sense of responsibility. Like 7:30 PM, they know they're off playing Minecraft, the two boys. My daughter is not as much into it, but they've got some accountability, and we've agreed on that, and there's trade-offs, and if they want to do something more extended, well, I ask something in return will you do something productive. Create something, you know. So, there are trade-offs, so as a parent again, think about like from my perspective, showing what we're thinking about communicating with your child about this, and I just love Claire's point about, you know, send a memo to your face because one of the biggest things we see as well is, things will go wrong. Be certain, it's just that they're not telling you the question is, have you opened a safe channel for them to come and tell you that I've screwed up. And so, as a parent, I'm also trying to, you know, I didn't, I wasn't calling it send a memo to my face, but I'll be saying that from now on- send a memo to my face so that I'm approachable and I'm not, I'm responding not overreacting.

Michelle: And it's an interesting scenario, isn't it? Sidney and Sassy and, and you've been the CEO, you've got around 600 schools that help detect and you help them detect and intervene against cyber bullying and self-harm and threats of violence and so on. And so, you know what you've said there, it's you have nearly started to, you know hit the nail on the head. It's fine when it's going well, but it's a problem when it becomes a problem. And so, for many people, it's going well until something terrible happens or not even terrible, just something happens and it's about having almost the building blocks in place to be able to then navigate kind of the what next. So, Claire I'm going to jump back to you because I'm going to ask you a question around some research that came out from Joanne Alando from the University of Western Sydney and found that using technology as a means of behavioural control may impact the trust that you build with your child and how to use that technology. And I had a quote from a 15-year-old girl and also some research then and surveys that we've done in the department and it said that I don't tell my parents much about what goes on and happens to me because I don't want my phone taken off me. So as a parent though, I'm gonna ask you does it matter? Something terrible has happened. I'm going to take the phone off you and now that problem has gone. So, tell me why that isn't and that work from Joanne and those comments there mean so much around trust.

**Claire:** Well, I think you know that, that whole situation there Michelle and I think we've all been parents have been reactive in the moment something terrible has happened and we've gone, "Right, you're not going to that sleepover on Friday night." In that moment you have just lost contact with your sanity because you're not coping and we can do that with our children and their devices. But what it is, is we're really short cutting that building of trust, and that's where some of the stuff that you know, Sid and both Colin have referenced in there - is this is the long game with our children. So, when one of the best things we can do as parents is know what our contingency plan is should the

worst most awful possible thing happened that we can imagine. So, think to yourself as a parent. What's a worse most possible awful thing that could happen to my child online? What would I do if? Because if you haven't thought about that in the moment you will feel under-resourced to cope and then the best thing you can come up with is taking that device away. The moment you do that, you have really cut the trust with your child, cause that means the next time the most terrible next thing that's gonna happen, they won't tell you. So, pre-think these things. Come up with a plan in all ways of managing children. We should do a bit of disaster planning. What would I do if this happened and talk about that with your child. So, should this happen, the first thing I want to do is talk to you about it. Listen to your perspective on it. It might mean that I take your device away. If you do have a plan to take the device right away, tell your child.

My 16-year-old quite recently decided that he charges his phone on the kitchen bench at night time. He thought it be super clever and just charge up his phone case as they put the end into the phone case and took the phone into his bedroom. And yes, he did lose his device, but we agreed on that beforehand. I said mate, "If you take your device into your bedroom, what do you reckon is a fair consequence for that behaviour?" And he was, you know, we went through the pretend democracy and I said, "Well, I think it's fair that you'd lose it, say for a week. What do you reckon about that?" And you know, that's a lot. I was really planning for three days and he said, how about half-way Mum? I was already there in my head. I said, I reckon it's that that's fair enough and that's what we did. Lost the device. I said "Your choice, your consequence, off you go, I'm done". But I'm pretty full with that. So, there was no reacting in the moment and that's what I encourage every parent. So, two big disaster planning. Have your consequences in place with your kids? Don't make them up on the spot because none of us are particularly good at that. We take away a really big thing and then we wish we hadn't.

Michelle: And look thanks and I think again, there's some wise, wise words there from Claire, and again, her background would put you in such good stead from you know you Digii Social work on how that would actually translate like in in common language that you've always had with your customers. But I'm gonna jump to Colin because we've had a question that's come through from Sharon. Now Sharon's asking, and again your background in media, which is why I'm jumping to you first and again, the panellists can jump in if you feel you've got something to add here, but Sharon has asked - I don't know how I should explain to my children around things like squid game. That become massive amongst teams at the moment. Now for anyone that's not familiar with, it could be, again, this comes back to it, could be anything but at the moment it's this particular thing. So how do you grapple with this thing? Then the next thing? What's that conversation look like, Colin?

Colin: Well, you know, getting back to octopus games. That's it, right? Sin, right? Thank you. The trend, yeah. That will stick. So that's gone through my house and I had no clue about what it was. I mean, I've seen it promoted, but it just wasn't of interest to me and look that fad will also, and I've always seen it coming through my 16-year-old daughter. It does not come through my channels, as you'd expect, and they are going to come through and I don't know how to change it, especially when they're broadcast freely, not freely really as a part of your Netflix subscription. So now you're talking about where those channels? Where are the kids getting the content from and the platforms in that particular case do have terms that explain what you can, should and shouldn't do, and those terms really aren't there to protect you. They're there to protect the platform, and I think understanding what those terms are is important.

So, in that particular case, when there is, you are getting content. Whether it's squid games or whether it's you know social media, there are terms based on who should and shouldn't be accessing that platform. Now, I understand where you're right, kids are going to do it anyway, but being prepared for it and staying on top of it is, is almost impossible to be able to deal with it. And I

like what Claire was saying before and Sid was reinforcing is, you've got to have that face. You're gonna have that that look I'm not shocked I'll go and research it and deal with it but I don't think in some cases where especially we are dealing with adults- specifically designed platforms or services and we're putting in many cases, letting our children just go straight into it. I don't think you can be overly just, just, let them have to it. I think there is a little bit more that we need to maybe be more aware of and as parents I guess it's getting harder and harder. And just like schools, I mean how many times does a school or a teacher- right, you only say this app is great, everyone download it. Let's start using it. There's a there's a lot of terms that really needs to be considered. Staying on top of it. For me, it's a game face- "Great, thanks very much. I'll have a look at that". I understand what it is. Go back and have some sort of discussions- "Hey, in the future I'd like this". Whether or not that happens by the time they're 16, I'm hoping.

Michelle: Yeah, yeah, and again, if you've got questions, put them into the chat. We can actually, some of the questions are starting to come through, so by all means put things into the chat and so yes.

Claire: Can I just lean into that squid games as, well. You know, I think I think what Colin is referencing there is just so right, but I think even if you do put the restrictions around your child watching that content and they stick to them, one of the biggest issues that we would have us as parents, his playground education, so, playground education is a very dangerous thing. Playground education on sex education, on violence. So, I mean a child telling another child about something that they've been allowed to watch that your child hasn't been allowed to watch. And now your child knows this concept that you have protected them from and in fact that it's been given to them by another child. So, I would say to all parents out there -these things are alive and well, you know there are, there are challenges that come through on Tik Tok, there's the squid game content - is have that discussion early with your child about why you don't allow that content. Other people do in their family, so I might say my family we don't put our feet on our chairs. You go to Molly's house and you're allowed to jump on her couch. Not just put your feet. Actually, jump on the couch. That's fine. Jump on the couch when you go to Molly's house in my house- my house, my rules, and I'm gonna tell you why. We've just got to get in there as parents and make sure we're out first educators on these complex concepts. So, some of them are bit yup, no one wants to talk to their child about pornographic content, about graphic, violent content being child's first educator because that little kid in the playground who's gonna tell them like that, as a whisper. It's awful. It's damaging so as ghastly as it is. Just yeah, you know - have a cup of coffee. Steel yourself. Have the hard conversation.

Michelle: Yeah, look on Claire's point there. So, Sidney, another question, and this leads into from what Claire has said, from Allison. The question is parents will never be able to keep up. What about more guidelines or recommendations? My, so my question from Claire's comment then, is will the parents ever be able to keep up and what should they do?

Sidney: So, I think the obvious answer is no, and it's just exponentially no. So, before it was not in our days, it was no, and now it's exponentially no. This is no different, it's just another version. It's just a more scaled up version of the things we went through as teenagers. We, in our days we had the kids that were allowed to go to parties and the kids that weren't, right? That was our version of that you allowed to be on Tik Tok who are not allowed to be on Tik Tok and like from some of my observations the kids that were not allowed and they were under such strict control, they came out doing worse things later on, because of that, you know, you try to bottle it in and just be in the no, right rather than having a conversation, a demonstration of trust, demonstration of love, demonstration of empathy with limits, responsibility and accountability. Yes, I know it's tough.



And so, like last year we saw this whole Momo challenge. I don't know if any of you know some of the parents might be nodding their heads now and we saw a lot of that happening at the schools where the kids were recording themselves, video recording themselves choking themselves out until someone passed out and that was meant to be funny. Now that literally is a life and death situation, right? So, what do you do in these situations? So, if you know if the minute you say don't talk about it or don't do it, it becomes taboo and everyone wants to understand. As Claire said, it becomes the schoolyard education rather than you being able to talk to them. So, no, we're not gonna be able to keep up. No, we're not gonna, like we cannot control those things. These things are not in our control. What's in my control is firstly me and how where I am. And secondly, the memo to my face, right? How aware I am, or keeping that channel open. As a mate, I can have a chat to my kids and all that doesn't sound really like smart. And thirdly, you know having the simple controls and blocks in place that that do make sense or the alerts like a lot of these tools now platforms are waking up and so talking to other parents about some of those things as well. So, instead of just talking about the things that I want to talk about business and start-ups and tech and investment, maybe when I'm meeting some of other parents that also have kids we should be asking the question-so, what's top of mind with kids right now? What's, what have you learned? What do I need to know? You know, so that I can implement. What have I learned that I can share with you? Back to that theme of the community that I was talking about before because of that whole, you know, saying it takes a village, right? And we can all get you know legal here and sort of say who owns it and who's responsible? Not my problem, or it's everyone's problem. If some other kid in the playground is hurting themselves and my sons watching or my daughter seen it and that they're not talking to them or talking to me or talking to a \*\*\*\*\* teacher. That's a problem for society, so I think raising the bar and opening up the channel is everyone's responsibility here.

Michelle: Yeah, it's hard to be a 21st century parent, isn't it? And so, I guess this comes back to and we're getting a lot of really high-end questions here. So, one of them has come in and I will ask Claire this one, from Jensen- my son is in year seven and this is my house as well by the way. He has his own laptop, delete laptop and just put iPad in for my case. How can I control the games installed and the content downloaded from the web when he has his own password and currently I have no control, he's not happy to let me share his, and check his laptop and sees it as an invasion of his privacy as a young man? How do we manage that do you think Claire, what would be your advice?

Claire: Look it, it's tough. I've been raising four young men of my own, so I get the pain of the whole world of gaming. They also understand that you know there are, there are ways that, especially our boys, when they are gaming, so they will use an app called Discord to do their chat on. It is a fully unmoderated app, and in fact it is the highest transmission of pornographic content outside of pornhub. So, we know that these are spaces that kids are engaging in. I have had that rule in my family and it's just a rule. You either - until 14 when my kids have wanted to game off an app, they bring the device to me and I put the password in. If you change that password, you no longer have the game and I delete the app and I just feel like this is a really tough space as a parent, right? But this is our calling. Our calling is not to be the friend.

There are points that your children are not going to love you very much for what you've done, but you know what, we have to protect them in terms of human neurology, very quick lesson- the longest maturing system in the being is the system of regulation. It takes 25 years on average to come to full maturation, 21 to 23 for a girl, 29 to 31 for a boy. That's a long time. So, we've put a device in the hands of a 13-year-old or year seven and he said, "I don't want you to check it. You're invading my privacy." This is this is a 13-year-old numpty who's gonna do the first thing that crosses his mind because he's only halfway on the journey to becoming a fully regulated thing. It is my job to protect him from himself until he can do it. That is my job as a parent.

I don't let my two-year-old cross the road because they say I can do it. I do it myself. I sound like when you cross the road by yourself, let's see what happens next time. I don't do it and I shouldn't do it with technology. We have to step up to the plate as parents. Be prepared not to be light in those moments. Make the tough call. You get to call what your children play on or they have access to and when they have access to it. It won't make you popular. This is not a popularity contest, so probably not what you wanted to hear. It's tough. It's really tough, but if we're going to keep them safe on that 25-year journey until they can do it for themselves, we just have to be tough.

Michelle: Yeah, and that was there, you're not their friend in that moment, you're there, you're overseeing their safety and so, Colin, I'm going to jump to you. I've got a question here through and so unfortunately, it's turned bad. This is the question- So, as a parent, what can I do if my child has seen things on a social media platform? They've named them. I won't go through them and really has had now suffering from some really significant mental health issues. Is also now suffering from fear of missing out and it's really impacting on my child. Where do I go? What should I be doing to help my child's mental health now?

Colin: Yeah, I think the eSafety Commissioner has a fair amount of content that's available that you can, and I'm sure that I know the Department of Education does as well that we can get access to that content. I think once you've seen it, you can't put it back in the box. It's, it's for us to bring it back to our home. We were very anti-social media in our house and it's only been once you got to 15, 16 when we enabled it and there was a whole lot of content in there that she saw that she, we certainly didn't encourage, and she found it and putting it back in, we couldn't do and what she was more what I found was more interesting is that because and bear in mind though if you think about the people that create these platforms also don't allow their kids on social media.

Now I agree you can't stop it. It is going to happen but as Claire said before we are the parent. We do have to be cognizant of their behaviour and also, we can lead by own example. If we're sitting at the table all the time, looking at that content. We're looking at it, strange man hiding it from our own families and that's obviously teaching them that it's OK to do it. Once it's happened and how you deal with it, I think it goes back to being that parent. It does come back to having your, keep calling game face, but it's not, I do like players better, where you do have those conversations and you try to get the bottom of it. And right now, there is such a big talk about mental health and how social media channels have directly affected, especially young girls. Now that's no miracle. Maybe that's because of my media background, but that's clear as day and maybe understanding and trying to put that in perspective. I mean, I remember as a child that you at 5:00 o'clock you have to come home. If it was daylight, you get out. We went all sorts of things in all sorts of crazy things, but I still think there's more risk online. And what do you do after it's happened? I think you do seek some advice yourself and whether it is going to speak to the school or go on and find those resources which have been tirelessly put together by the eSafety Commission, Department of Education. They are a great source of information.

There is (are) also all the mental health helplines out there. A lot of it does come back to and it's not instantaneous, I think as a parent you just sit down and you try and deal with it internally. I think for us it's been trouble for me, particularly with my daughter, it's been trying to communicate that she's every bit as important with it as without it, and it has its place. It's not the centre of the universe.

Michelle: Yeah, and gee that's again, that's a great saying there - you are as important with it as you are without it, and I think it's no indictment on you as a parent to reach out to some of the professionals that that Colin has indicated there. Whether it's a medical professional, whether it's the school, whether it's someone else, reaching out to say, I don't think this is OK here and getting the help that your child might need. And there are a lot of programs and work that the Department of Education has up around mental health and well-being. And some of those external places can be

reached as right through the esafety Commissioner (not part of in NSW Health). So, look our final, we are, it's unbelievable, but we are at time. So, I'm going to quickly do a one-minute run around and the question to the panellists is why does this matter? So, we're going to start with Sidney.

Sidney: Well, uhm, it's just as I said before, it's just an exponential way of looking- what already is the you know the challenge of being a parent and a child in this day and age, and so there's no escaping from this, so this is why it matters. This is not a fad. This is not gonna go away, it's just gonna get more intense. And as a community, we need to lift our own efforts and our own standard. So, and we need to, you know, do our bit as we said, like do our bit at home throughout. And it's challenging one minute you're a parent, one minute you're an authoritarian and all that good stuff. But also, we should be lifting our expectations of what we do expect from the media platforms. What we do expect from schools and government and the support lines. And by the way, I can see the moderators have put up some links for what's available out there, so the why it matters is because this is it. There's not, there's no escaping from this, right? And so, there's not, there's no escaping, so we just gotta tackle it on and we will.

Michelle: Yeah, yeah, and Claire. What do you think? Why does this cyber security work and keeping children? Why does it matter?

Michelle: Because our children are our most important asset, they are the most important thing. They are the jewels around our neck. They are the house, the boat and the car personified they are everything, not just our children but everyone's child. They are our future. Our future leaders or future parents our future teachers and we have to get it right. We have to protect them because these little people on this journey to adulthood, they think they're better, they know more than they do and it puts them at great risk, enormous risk and the risk is profound. While we still have suicide is the leading cause of death of young people here in Australia and one quarter of those deaths related to their online lives, we need to do more. It is that important it is, it is our children link to life and their mental health over their lifetime. We can do nothing more important than protect our children in their online lives.

Michelle: Colin, that's going to be hard to add to, but Colin anything else you'd like to add there?

Colin: It's always is, going last. I will actually say that there is no separation between your physical life and a digital life. They are intrinsically entwined and as children of the age of two have a digital footprint, everything that happens around that child, whether you do it or share parents do it or a school etc it stays with that child. So, what happens today can really affect tomorrow. So, we really have to stay on top of it. And it's it is going to be difficult, but I think we really have to push the platforms. You have to really, sometimes read those terms and understand what you are signing up for, and I think they've got a lot that they can do to help us as parents.

Michelle: Fabulous! Look, we are at time so Clair from Digii Social, Colin from Pixevety and Sidney from Saasyan, each of these companies have a very strong social feeling around the work that they are doing and it's publicly acknowledged on your, your sites. I thank you for your time. I would encourage anyone to go onto the Cybermarvel work to have a look at how NSW and other schools are actually addressing this and encourage you to look at those resources and ask your teachers to look at these resources. But again, to the panellists, I thank you so much for your time and your input in the work that you're doing to make everything almost a better place if that makes better, makes sense. So, again, I hope you have a lovely afternoon to the attendees that were here thank you for your time and we look forward to making it another time, for another webinar soon.

Thanks again. Thanks.