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## **New grant funds eight projects to combat online abuse, bullying and harassment in New Zealand**

**360 degree videos, online support tools and school programmes among the successful projects chosen for funding from the Netsafe Online Safety Partnership Grant.**

The first round of the Netsafe Online Safety Partnership Grant has eight successful applicants chosen to provide support and education around harmful digital communications.

Netsafe Chief Executive Martin Cocker says that Netsafe has been asked by the Ministry of Justice to administer the grant to further develop the online safety community, activities and resources in New Zealand. "We know there is a growing demand for online safety education and support, and these grants support new and emerging work in this area. The grant prioritises funding for projects that are innovative and that promote the positive use of technology," says Cocker.

One of the projects taking advantage of technology to deliver education is Staples VR, a New Zealand based Virtual Reality production studio. Founder of Staples VR, Aliesha Staples, says their project uses technology to teach about technology. "We're creating a series of online 360 Video experiences that show the options available for dealing with harmful digital communications. It's a way to put people in the moment and make an impact," says Staples.

Student led anti-bullying charity Sticks 'n Stones is creating an online support tool for youth. Director & Co-Founder of Sticks 'n Stones, Karla Sanders, says the funding will make a real difference to New Zealand youth. "This funding is helping to provide young people with practical steps, ideas and advice in language that resonates. It's advice from young people who understand what it's like to go through the same situation," says Sanders.

The Netsafe Online Safety Partnership Grant provides \$350,000 worth of match funding annually for projects and initiatives that aim to reduce the harm caused by harmful digital communications in New Zealand. Online safety organisation Netsafe administers the grant in two rounds each year. The Ministry of Justice provides funding for the grant.

The Chief Executive and Secretary for Justice, Andrew Bridgman says, "We are grateful to Netsafe and supportive of the work to reduce harm caused through digital communications and help people to better protect themselves. That's what these initiatives are designed to deliver."

The government appointed Netsafe the "Approved Agency" under the Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015. The Approved Agency's role includes advising on steps people can take to resolve a problem, investigating and attempting to resolve complaints where harm has

been caused, and providing education and advice about online safety and conduct.

The next round of the Netsafe Online Safety Partnership Grant will open 17 July 2017.

### **Successful grant applicants – NOSPG Round One 2017**

**Staples VR:** 360 Degree Video Project.

**Sticks ‘n Stones:** ICON (In Case of Online Negativity) online support tool for youth.

**University of Auckland:** A social action model for young men around intimate digital images.

**Girl Guiding New Zealand:** Surf Smart Programme - online safety skills for young women.

**Student Communications and Safe Practices Charitable Trust:** E-resource Portal for schools.

**Violence Free Communities:** The Cyber Savvy Schools Programme.

**University of Waikato:** Digital awareness and capabilities pilot for schools.

**Antworks Studios:** Three documentary style short films about harmful digital communications.

### **More information**

**Grant recipients:** [www.netsafe.org.nz/nospg-round-one-2017/](http://www.netsafe.org.nz/nospg-round-one-2017/)

**Staples VR:** [www.staplesrentals.co.nz/360-vr](http://www.staplesrentals.co.nz/360-vr)

**Sticks ‘n Stones:** [www.sticksnstones.co.nz/](http://www.sticksnstones.co.nz/)

### **Media Contacts**

Kimberly Burgess – Marketing and Communications Advisor

Mobile: +64 221600697

Email: [kimberlyb@netsafe.org.nz](mailto:kimberlyb@netsafe.org.nz)

### **About Netsafe**

Netsafe is an independent not for profit focused on online safety. Netsafe is committed to helping everyone in New Zealand take advantage of digital opportunities by providing support with managing and resolving online safety challenges.