

Responding to digital incidents:

A guide for clubs and community organisations

1. UNDERSTAND

GATHER THE FACTS

Determine nature of behaviour and begin to record incident.

Severity:

- What has happened (e.g. bullying, sexual content etc) and how (e.g. messages, videos)?
- What is the nature of the content? (see notes below)
- Where is this happening (e.g. online/offline, social media)? Is this part of a wider situation?
- Who else is involved or impacted? Target/s, perpetrator/s, bystander/s?
- What actions, if any, have been taken so far?
- Does it involve sending, creating and/or accessing information online? If so, where is it?

Impact:

- How do those involved feel? Do they have support?
- Who else already knows and has been informed? (e.g. parents, staff, Police) (if it involves a young person) How and when will we involve whānau/family? Consider consent and confidentiality of young people

Frequency:

- When did it start?
- How often has it happened? Is it ongoing?
- Is there a likelihood that content is/will be copied or shared by others?

DETERMINE NATURE OF CONTENT

- **Is it potentially unlawful conduct?** E.g. Threatening, harassing, intimidating behaviour, intimate photos or video, aiding or abetting suicide, online grooming, unauthorised access to an online account. **If yes, seek advice from Police.**
- **Is it objectionable material?** E.g. Objectionable material is material which is illegal to view, possess or share. For example, images of child exploitation, acts of torture, or sexual violence. **Contact NZ Police if the incident involves objectionable material.**
- Is it intended to harm or offend?

2. ASSESS

MUST DO

- Engage** nominated staff and family/whānau as appropriate.
- Clarify** roles and processes – where appropriate, assign two staff members in interview roles
- Provide** pastoral care for all those involved
- Record** all information, decisions, and actions
- Follow** organisation processes regarding consent and confidentiality
- Assure** those involved that you will work with them to address the issue and explain what the next steps will be
- Suggest** others may need to be involved (e.g. Police, parents/whānau, senior, Netsafe).
- Gather evidence:** Only that which is compliant with legislation. URLs, emails and some screenshots (Not objectionable content).
- Report or block** online content if this would help the immediate situation – consider if evidence will be needed to on-share with e.g. Police, staff, parents/whānau

SEEK ADVICE

- Netsafe** – if support or advice is needed at any stage or if help is needed to report content.
- POLICE** – if any aspects of the incident includes unlawful conduct

DON'T

- Don't access personal accounts, or search devices of those involved in the incident.
- Don't store evidence of objectionable material. Ask for URLs/account names that can then be passed on to the Police or Netsafe.

3. RESOLVE

ENGAGE

Who may need to be informed or involved?

- All Senior staff
- Chairperson
- Governing body
- Parents/whānau
- Third party agencies – e.g. Netsafe; Police

COMMUNICATE

- **Determine** how and when to release information to:
 - o Staff
 - o Family / whānau
 - o Members
 - o Media (if media attention is likely)
- **Schedule** meetings to inform relevant people if necessary:
 - o Relay only necessary facts, procedures, and key messages appropriate to each group
 - o Provide opportunity for students/members to express concerns/needs in appropriate settings - Outline services/key people that they can go to e.g. helplines, designated staff
 - o Outline services/key people that they can go to, e.g. Guidance Counselor (note: high schools' counselors can support primary/intermediate schools if needed)
- **Prepare** responses/scripts for frontline (e.g. office staff) and other staff should the organisation need to inform the wider community/ media. Communications should:
 - o Acknowledge an incident has occurred -Assure all that the safety and wellbeing of those involved are priorities
 - o Inform that the organisation is dealing with the situation
 - o Indicate that support and advice is being sought

Example of an initial response:

"At this stage we understand there has been an incident. We are working to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all involved and have contacted appropriate support agencies.

FINALISE

- Make sure the incident details and all follow-up actions have been recorded as appropriate.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Minimise harm
- Maintain safety
- Focus on the behaviour – not the technology
- Follow your processes regarding consent and confidentiality
- Usual disciplinary practices always apply
- Organisations have the responsibility to act

4. LOOKING AHEAD

TAKE A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO PREVENTING SIMILAR INCIDENTS

Follow up by:

- checking on members' and whānau wellbeing
- reviewing how the incident was managed
- reviewing how the organisation actively promotes online safety, citizenship and wellbeing

For free advice at any point, call Netsafe 0508 638 723

Contact Netsafe for advice at any time. We can:

- Advise on first steps including how to gather evidence
- Potentially help to have content removed
- Provide information about the Harmful Digital Communications Act and advise in relation to the incident

FOR FURTHER RESOURCES, SEE OVERLEAF

Please note that this document is intended as a guide and the prioritisation of these actions will depend on your professional judgement and the nature and severity of the incident.

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FROM NETSAFE:

- [How to stop online bullying](#)
- [How to keep records of digital content](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA - HOW TO REPORT CONTENT

Social media sites provide information about appropriate use of their site in their Terms and Conditions. They also provide ways to report harmful content/comments.

Note: You can report content/comments on many social media sites without being required to have your own account on the platform/site.

How to report on a particular site/platform

If you are unfamiliar with a platform/site - use a search engine and insert key words into an online search, E.g: “how to report comments/content on **[insert platform/site name]**”

- Follow the steps outlined in the instructions
- Contact Netsafe 0508 638 7233 for assistance.

Quick links for reporting to Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Youtube:

- [Facebook Help Centre](#)
- [Instagram Help Centre](#)
- [Twitter Help Centre](#)
- [Youtube Reporting and Enforcement Centre](#)