



**10 MAY 2021**

## **Netsafe LIVE bound for Northland to support whānau and educators**

### **Expert team to run free workshops in Kerikeri to keep the region's tamariki safe online**

Netsafe will offer multiple free seminars for parents, teachers, and school leaders in the Kerikeri area next week.

The Netsafe LIVE on 18 and 19 May will tackle online bullying, unwanted contact, privacy, inappropriate content, and social media.

Netsafe's Online Safety Parent Toolkit, a valuable and practical seven-step framework to enable whānau to support young people, will be explained and made available to attendees in different languages, including te reo Māori.

The Toolkit allows parents to:

- Understand potential risks, challenges and sometimes illegal behaviour
- Learn about their tamariki's activities
- Explore for themselves the technology their child uses
- Agree and set expectations as a family on what to do online
- Teach basic online safety concepts
- Model behaviours parents want their children to demonstrate
- Plan what to do if things go wrong

This Netsafe LIVE announcement – a first since COVID-19 Lockdown restrictions were eased – lands as new data specific to the Northland region reveals the types of online harm reported to Netsafe's free incident advice service.

Between April 2020 and March 2021, 34 percent of reports under the Harmful Digital Communications Act were for harassment, and 17 percent related to a false allegation. Fifty-six percent of the reports came from females, 34 percent from males and five percent from people who identify as gender diverse.

The most common age of those reporting was between 41 and 65.

Andrew Cowie, Netsafe's Education and Schools Team manager, says his team are excited to head north to meet with families and educators.

"We know Northland parents are invested in helping their tamariki, and with online safety having become so important, we look forward to sharing new ways that young people can enjoy a more positive experience," Cowie says.

"Netsafe appreciates that close relationships with schools and kura is key to sharing important internet safety messages, as is listening and understanding the realities in Northland."

The region experienced the same issues as anywhere else in New Zealand, but each community had specific needs that would be addressed during the interactive sessions.

"We continue to receive reports of incidents involving students and social media which is why it's heartening that school leaders in Northland are wanting to be more proactive in their approach," Cowie says.

"The amount of time we spend talking about online safety should be in proportion to the challenges that come with being on the internet. Lockdown and home learning has increased the time many of us spend using it, and we need to respond accordingly."

The sessions are being hosted at Kerikeri Primary School and are open to whānau and teachers from neighbouring schools and kura.

The list of other schools participating in the event includes Bay of Islands International Academy, Riverview School, Kerikeri High School, Oromahoe School and Springbank School.

"Young people are growing up with greater access to digital technology than any other generation. They understand and adapt quickly to the opportunities, but we need to teach kids how to access them safely and explain how they can avoid or minimise possible harm."

Netsafe will also visit a string of other Northland schools, including some in Whangarei.

**-Ends-**

## **Media contact**

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## **About Netsafe**

Netsafe is an independent non-profit organisation with an unrelenting focus on online safety. We keep people of all ages safe online by providing free support, advice, and education. Visit [netsafe.org.nz](https://netsafe.org.nz) for valuable resources or call 0508 638 723 seven days a week for help with an online incident.

## **How to register for Netsafe LIVE**

Attendance at Netsafe LIVE is free. Parents can register to attend the 18 May session being held between 6:00 pm and 7:00 pm visiting: [netsafe.org.nz/the-kit/netsafe-live-northland](https://netsafe.org.nz/the-kit/netsafe-live-northland)

## **The Harmful Digital Communications Act**

The Harmful Digital Communications Act (HDCA) was passed in 2015 to help people dealing with serious or repeated harmful digital communications. It lays out 10 communication principles that guide how to communicate online.

The Act covers any harmful digital communications (like text, emails, or social media content), including racist, sexist and religiously intolerant comments – plus those about disabilities or sexual orientation.

The 10 Communication Principles mean a digital communication should not:

- disclose sensitive personal facts about an individual
- be threatening, intimidating, or menacing
- be grossly offensive to a reasonable person in the position of the affected individual
- be indecent or obscene
- be used to harass an individual
- make a false allegation
- contain a matter that is published in breach of confidence
- incite or encourage anyone to send a message to an individual to cause harm to the individual

- incite or encourage an individual to commit suicide
- denigrate an individual because of colour, race, ethnic or national origins, religion,
- gender, sexual orientation, or disability

Schools can report on behalf of their students. For more information about the Act or to access support with an online incident, visit [netsafe.org.nz](https://www.netsafe.org.nz)