The Hon. Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister

The Hon. Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

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KEEPING AUSTRALIANS SAFE ONLINE

A new guide for parents of under 5s from the Morrison Government's eSafety Commissioner will help keep children safe online as more than 1,000 schools and groups around Australia mark Safer Internet Day.

According to research from the eSafety Commissioner, Australian children are regularly exposed to harmful online experiences with 28 per cent of parents aware their child has had a negative experience online.

Australia's eSafety Commissioner is today launching the next phase of its 'start the chat' initiative which promotes safer online experiences for children and equips parents, carers and teachers with practical resources for having conversations about safe and responsible internet use.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the new *Online Safety for under 5s* booklet developed by the eSafety Commissioner would help keep more children safe.

"It's critical we give parents the tools and knowledge they need to have these discussions because the online world isn't an optional extra in people's lives," the Prime Minister said.

"We want to keep young people safe at every age and at every stage. This underscores the importance of the work our eSafety Commissioner does to equip parents and carers with the tools they need to keep pre-school kids safe from the first time they reach for an internet enabled device.

"That's why we've invested more than $100 million to arm parents and children with the tools they need to navigate safely through the digital world and to help people who fall victim to online harm.

"Whether it's combating cyberbullying, guarding privacy, preventing the publication of violent terror content, or protecting against online predators, our government is pursuing a comprehensive agenda to keep Australians safe online. Safer Internet Day is another example of how we're making online safety a priority and I encourage all Australians to 'start the chat' today."

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts Paul Fletcher said Safer Internet Day reflected evolving community expectations for online safety and highlighted practical steps people can take for protect themselves and their families.

"We're leading the way in modernising online safety policy for Australians, including through a new Online Safety Act for which consultation is currently underway," Minister Fletcher said.

"We know that digital technologies play a pivotal role in our day-to-day lives but what many people may not realise is that four out of five parents have children aged between two and five who are using online devices.

"94 per cent of Australian parents and carers say their child's online safety is important so it's critical they start talking with their children about the skills and knowledge they need to stay safe online.

"Australia's world-first eSafety Commissioner that our Government introduced provides essential resources and practical advice for children, teenagers, carers, parents and older Australians at eSafety.gov.au. This new resource for parents of under 5s will go out to more than 11,000 pre-schools and child care and early learning centres.

"I commend all the organisations involved in Safer Internet Day. In particular, I acknowledge the influential role the eSafety Commissioner is playing in keeping the pressure on technology companies to integrate user safety into the design, development and deployment of their products and services."

Safer Internet Day is celebrated in 150 countries, including Australia, where the celebrations are coordinated by the eSafety Commissioner. Thousands of Australian students will take part in virtual eSafety classroom lessons to learn about safer online gaming.

In 2015, the Government established the world's first Children's eSafety Commissioner to support Australian children experiencing cyberbullying harm. In 2017, the Government expanded the eSafety Commissioner's remit to include all Australians.

To find out more about Safer Internet Day visit: www.esafety.gov.au/SID

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