BETTER INTERNET FOR RURAL REGIONAL & REMOTE AUSTRALIA

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SHINING A LIGHT ACROSS THE ONLINE LANDSCAPE FOR OUR KIDS

A new resource launched today aims to produce a community response to cyber-bulling, especially throughout rural, regional and remote Australia.

The 'Better Internet for Rural, Regional and Remote Australia' (BIRRR) team believe that knowledge is power, and have sifted through a wealth of information to compile a series of special resource pages on their website, aimed at keeping students safe online.

The launch coincides with Safer Internet Day (February 6), and as a response to a suspected increase in cyber bullying over recent years.

"For children and teenagers growing up in a cyber-centric world, the internet, and especially social media, are natural tools. The educational and social landscape is vastly different than for previous generations, meaning parents and schools are often playing 'catch up' when it comes to understanding and handling the latest apps," said BIRRR spokesperson Amanda Salisbury.

"The internet offers incredible opportunities and information for people of all ages, and it connects us in a way that we have never been connected before – especially in rural, regional and remote areas.

"It means we can more easily stay in touch with our children when they are away from home (and, for many, at boarding school) like never before. But there is a darker side to this new access - and like a 'real world' highway, certain rules need to be adhered to so that everyone can have a safe experience. "

The BIRRR team have gathered some tips and tools to help keep online experiences as positive as possible, with pages aimed specifically at parents, students and schools.

"We are keen to emphasise that it is an all-of-community responsibility, to guide our next generations through the ever-changing online world. We are not advocating that families or schools hide their heads in the sand, or ban devices, rather that they inform and familiarise themselves with social media especially, and to tackle the issues alongside students."

Families and schools are urged to check out the tips and tools listed in the BIRRR resource pages, and to keep working together to monitor issues around (and seek solutions to) cyber-bullying.

Visit www.birrraus.com and click on CYBER SAFETY from the top menu.

Online safety is a community responsibilty - let's work together!
BIRRRAUS.COM