

NEWS RELEASE



The Hon. Graham West MP
Minister for Juvenile Justice
Minister for Youth
Minister for Volunteering
Member for Campbelltown

Monday 6 October 2008

MINISTER LAUNCHES CYBERBULLYING ON-LINE FORUM

Minister for Youth, Graham West, has encouraged young people to join a special on-line forum to share their experiences of cyberbullying - in an attempt to address and understand the problem.

Recent research conducted by the Child Health Promotion Research Centre in WA has suggested that 10 – 15 per cent of 10 – 14 year olds have experienced cyberbullying.

Mr West launched the cyberbullying on-line forum today, which is an initiative of the NSW Youth Advisory Council.

“Cyberbullying is the use of information or digital technology such as email, instant messaging, chat rooms or mobile phones to deliberately harass, humiliate, embarrass, target or threaten someone,” he said.

“It involves teasing, harassment, ‘flaming’, spreading rumours, or sending unwanted messages, and like all forms of bullying, can harm a young person’s self esteem.

“Cyberbullying, like all bullying, is a serious problem,” he said.

“We need to work out the best ways to prevent and address cyberbullying in order to ensure all children and young people can enjoy the many benefits of new technology without harrasment.

“This forum provides young people with an opportunity to relay their experiences and suggestions to the community through the Youth Advisory Council.”

The forum is being hosted on the Youth NSW site and will run from 6 October to 7 November. Young people who register at www.youth.nsw.gov.au go into the running to win an iPod nano.

Mohammed Zaoud, Deputy Chair of the NSW Youth Advisory Council, said the forum is one of several projects being undertaken by the Council in 2008.

“The council consults with young people in different areas in rural and urban NSW, and cyber bullying has been identified as an issue for young people,” Mr Zaoud said.

The online forum is an opportunity for young people across NSW to conveniently have their voice heard. We encourage everyone to log on.”

Mr West said the Cyberbullying forum is an example of the Youth Advisory Council's work to inform debate in NSW.

"The Youth Advisory Council plays an important role in improving Government policies and programs concerning young people, and I urge people between the age of 12 – 25 to apply to become members in 2009," said Mr West.

"The Council monitors and evaluates government legislation, and consults with young people, community groups and government authorities in NSW."

Application forms and information on the Youth Advisory Council are available at www.youth.nsw.gov.au, by emailing yac@community.nsw.gov.au or by calling 02 9716 2844. Applications close on 10 October 2008.

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