



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FOR QUT RESEARCH PROJECT
– Digital Citizenship Curriculum Project –
Parent/Carer & Child

The Digital Citizenship Curriculum project

QUT Ethics Approval Number 5172

Research team

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Why is the study being conducted?

The purpose of this research project is to trial Common Sense Media's Digital Citizenship curriculum (UK version) in Australian schools. The curriculum involves a series of lessons that teach children how to be safe, responsible and respectful online, including topics such as media balance and wellbeing; privacy and security; digital footprint and identity; relationships and communication; cyberbullying, digital drama and hate speech; and news and media literacy. You can view the curriculum here: <https://www.commonsense.org/education/uk/digital-citizenship>.

The curriculum has been shown to be effective with primary school aged children, in research conducted by Harvard University in the USA.

Fifteen schools across Australia have been invited to implement the curriculum in their classrooms. Your child is invited to participate in this research project because they attend a school that is part of the trial and your child's classroom teacher is implementing the curriculum.

Please read this information sheet with your child and discuss their participation with them. You may also view a short video here: [add hyperlink when available].

What does participation involve?

The Digital Citizenship lessons will be taught by classroom teachers during normal class time in one school term. Classroom teachers will have attended training to prepare them to deliver the lessons: Prep and Year 1 (3 lessons), Year 2 (7 lessons) and Years 3-6 (6 lessons).

After the lessons have been taught, teachers will give all children an assessment quiz to test their knowledge and understanding of the concepts taught. A different quiz will be used for each year level (P-Year 6). It will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. All children will complete the quiz, but the research team will collect quizzes only from children whose parents/carers consent to their participation in the research. If you consent to the researchers collecting your child's quiz, we ask that you tick the 'quiz' box on the Consent Form (attached).

After the quiz, children in Years P-6 will be invited to take part in focus groups. We will aim for one focus group with 4-6 students per year level in each school (that is, 7 focus groups per school). Focus groups will be conducted by a research team member. The research team member will work with the classroom teacher to schedule the focus group at a suitable time and in a quiet room. Focus groups will be audio recorded using a hand-held digital recorder and will take approximately 15 minutes for years P-2 focus groups, and 20-30 minutes for years 3-6 focus groups. Questions will include things like: What did you like most about the lessons? What did you like least about the lessons? How could we improve the lessons? Was there anything important about digital citizenship for young people your age that wasn't covered in the lessons and that you would like to know? If you consent to your child taking part in selection for a focus group, but on the day they do not want to, they will be free to decline by telling their teacher or a member of the research team. If you consent to your child to be selected for a focus group, we ask that you tick the 'focus group' box on the Consent Form (attached).

Your decision for your child to participate or not participate will in no way impact upon your current or future relationship with QUT or their school. If you and your child do agree to participate, you or they can withdraw from the research project before or during data collection and up until the last data collection activity. If you or they choose to withdraw, upon request, any information already obtained that can be linked to your child will be destroyed.

What are the possible benefits for me if I take part?

Participation in this research project may have some modest benefits for your child mostly related to the new learning experiences they will be exposed to in the Digital Citizenship curriculum. They will be learning how to be safe, responsible and respectful online. The outcomes of the research may also benefit schools in the future as they will gain access to an Australian version of this Digital Citizenship curriculum. However it is important for you to know that this is a curriculum trial, and positive outcomes are not guaranteed.

What are the possible risks for me if I take part?

There are some potential risks associated with your child's participation in this research project. One risk is that your child may feel pressure to participate if an adult has asked them to. To minimise this risk, we ask that you read this information sheet with your child and discuss their participation. It is important to emphasise that they can say no to participating.

The Digital Citizenship curriculum teaches lessons in a positive way appropriate for young children. However, it does touch on topics including cyberbullying and this may trigger emotional responses from students who have experienced this. There is a risk for a small proportion of students that they may disclose harm to themselves or others during the course of the lessons or data collection. If so, teachers and researchers have been trained in child protection policies and will know what to do. Please let your classroom teacher know if you think your child may experience particular distress while engaging in topics related to online safety and digital citizenship.

QUT provides for limited free psychology, family therapy or counselling services for research participants of QUT research projects who may experience discomfort or distress as a result of their participation in the research. Should you wish to access this service please call the Clinic Receptionist on **07 3138 0999** (Monday–Friday only 9am–5pm), QUT Psychology and Counselling Clinic, 44 Musk Avenue, Kelvin Grove, and indicate that you are a research participant. Alternatively, Lifeline provides access to online, phone or face-to-face support, call **13 11**

14 for 24-hour telephone crisis support. If you are aged up to 25, you can also call the Kids Helpline on **1800 551 800**.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

Data collected as part of this research project will be stored securely as per QUT's Management of research data policy. Consent forms and data will be stored until 31 December 2028 in line with Queensland State Archives Guidelines and University Sector Retention and Disposal Schedules. Records can be disclosed if it is to protect participants or others from harm, if specifically required by law, or if a regulatory or monitoring body such as the ethics committee requests it.

Although your child will be known to the research team (e.g., via their participation in a focus group), they will not be identified in any publications or presentations arising from the research. The research team will remove identifying details before data analysis, and will use pseudonyms or codes to present the findings in order to respect and protect your child's identity and the identity of the school and teachers.

The research project is funded by the Office of the eSafety Commissioner, and they will not have access to the original data obtained during the project.

How do I give my consent to participate?

We would like to ask both you and your child to sign (or in the case of your child, indicate consent on) a written consent form (attached to email invitation) to confirm your agreement to participate.

What if I have questions about the research project?

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact one of the listed researchers:

Professor Michael Dezuanni m.dezuanni@qut.edu.au +61 7 3138 5978

Dr Kristy Corser kristy.corser@qut.edu.au

What if I have a concern or complaint regarding the conduct of the research project?

QUT is committed to research integrity and the ethical conduct of research projects. If you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, particularly in relation to matters concerning policies, information or complaints about the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, you may contact the QUT Research Ethics Advisory Team on +61 7 3138 5123 or email humanethics@qut.edu.au.

Thank you for helping with this research project. Please keep this sheet for your information.