INTRODUCTION

Cyber Cats is an interactive program designed to support year 7 students to recognise bullying behavior and respond to it in a positive and respectful way. The program also gives students advice on what to do if being bullied and the law regarding social media use; sexting or sending nudes for example. Victoria Police have been involved in the program for a number of years and provide students with valuable information regarding on-line behavior and the law. During the program students make short films using scenarios that illustrate the messages from the day. These short films are then packaged together and given to the school as a resource and a way of involving parents in the conversation about bullying.

Ultimately the aim of the program is to reduce the levels of anxiety associated with digital communication. The challenge when running programs such as Cyber Cats is that there is a lack of definitive research in the area and the way young people are using social media is evolving very quickly; adults are largely absent from the digital world that young people are using to socialise and communicate.

Telstra have rejoined Cyber Cats as a sponsor and to celebrate a CYBER CATS XP half day event was held at GMHBA Stadium.

This year we have also been provided the opportunity to work with Dr. Bianca Klettke (Deakin School of Psychology) to develop Cyber Cats the first evidence based cyber safety program in Australia.

We have also been successful in securing $48K in funding from the State Government’s Pick My Project funding pilot to review and redevelop Cyber Cats.
Cyber Cats Day program

Cyber Cats is delivered as a full day excursion to the Geelong Cats (GMHBA Stadium) for a maximum class size of 24 students.

Student numbers have increased in 2018; two schools cancelled on the day due to internal issues but 100 students took part in Cyber Cats XP

2017: 436 students across 19 schools
2018: 533 students across 19 schools

Program Content

- What is bullying?
- How can bullying behavior spread
- The importance of intervention
- The importance of telling someone if bullying happens
- Where to find help and support
- Social media use, behavior and the law
- Movie Topics and filming
2018 Player Ambassador

George Horlin-Smith was the AFL player ambassador for 2018. George was able to be present at several Cyber Cats programs, filmed our introduction to the program as well as short inserts used in the student videos.

Presenters for 2018

Sheldan Convery-Oborne (Headspace/BCYF)
Keith Gregory (Headspace/BCYF)
Chloe Allen (Headspace/BCYF)
Rocky Cranston (GFC/AFLW)
Alisha Habib (BCYF/Headspace)
Robbie Noggler (VicPol)
Irena Radicevski (Headspace/BCYF)

Day Program Participating Schools (no. of classes sent)

Newcomb Secondary
Kardinia International College
Sacred Heart College
North Geelong Secondary College
Geelong Lutheran College
St Joseph's College
Avalon College (English Language School)
Western Heights (2)
Surf Coast Secondary (2)
Clonard College
Christian College Bellarine
Christian College Highton
St. Ignatius College
Belmont High
Lara Secondary College
Bellarine Secondary College
NBC- Peacock Campus
NBC- Hendy Campus
Grovedale College

**Cyber Cats XP Participating Schools**
Western Heights College
NBC- Hendy Campus
North Geelong Secondary College
Student Survey Results

Cyber Cats surveys students’ pre and post program, as well as parents, as on their thoughts about social media and young people. This year we have modified the survey in collaboration with Dr. Klettke to ask students about their own behavior, what they see and what concerns them about behavior they are exposed to on social media. This information will assist us in developing the program logic for Cyber Cats in 2019.

What students are concerned about on-line generally

Students were given a list to choose from here, body shaming and cyber bullying are the primary concerns, as well as nudes and location sharing in Apps. Although how to manage Apps and information is of a concern, the behavior of individuals is of greatest concern.

What specifically makes students feel unsafe on-line?

Students were given a list to choose from here, body shaming and cyber bullying are the primary concerns, as well as nudes and location sharing in Apps. Although how to manage Apps and information is of a concern, the behavior of individuals is of greatest concern.
When asked what sorts of things made people feel unsafe online with no prompts, students indicated that threats and abuse rated most highly. Students also indicated that pressure and threats were often associated with the sending of nudes, indicating a growing concern about sexting and the unwanted distribution of what can be essentially pornographic materials.

When asked: “If you were bullied using social media/gaming platform, how likely would you be to do the following”, the Pre and Post ‘most likely’ results were:

![Bar chart showing Pre and Post results]

We can establish that the likelihood of students telling someone if they are being bullied has increased after completing the program. The increase in students indicating that they would tell a school staff member is encouraging.
What would you do if you were aware that someone was being bullied when using social media, messaging or gaming?

There has been an increase in the number of students who have indicated they would act if witnessing bullying and a decrease in the number who are not sure what they would do. Interestingly the number of students indicating they would confront the bully has decreased, suggesting that students are considering the realities of how difficult confrontation would be. Telling an adult seems to be the preferred option.
Have you been aware of someone else being bullied whilst using social media/gaming?

34% of students are unsure if they have witnessed bullying online. This suggests that bullying is not always easy for adolescents to recognise and can be potentially normalised.

Have you ever engaged in behaviour that could be considered bullying?

Again results indicate that bullying itself can be difficult to recognise.
Finally we asked students about their personal experience, with 79.85% of students indicating that they have had experiences that were negative and/or upsetting with body shaming the most common negative experience. This percentage could be higher given the 20% no response rate.

**Student Comments about Cyber Cats**

"The most important thing that I have taken from the day is to be careful and cautious on what you share or post on social media"

"I found out that you should do things when someone is getting bullied or cyber bullied and don't be a bystander that just stands there."

"I learnt a lot more about cyber bullying and bullying in general. Today helped me out a lot and will be a big impact in the future."

"Learning that someone will always be there to help you whether it is a kids helpline or friends and family"

"Do not give your personal information to people you don't know"
Parent’s Survey

Has your child been hurt or upset from any online activity?

This is a very interesting result - 83.84% of parents respond that their young person has not been upset by online activity whilst nearly 80% of those young people surveyed indicated that they had potentially upsetting experiences.

Survey Summary

The Cyber Cats survey this year has provided useful information about the student’s experiences online. Cyber Bullying can be difficult to define for students but most can attest to online experiences that are concerning. We may surmise that identifying bullying can become difficult when normalised and a student may “like” certain comments, which may, at the times seem relatively harmless but can cause someone distress.

Students seem to be more comfortable with telling someone if they witness bullying or are being bullied, however, being an active bystander is clearly very challenging.

The online environment that the young people surveyed cohabit is not moderated by adults. With most parents unaware of the experiences young people are having, the impact on wellbeing in the short and long term are concerning.

Information gleaned from this survey will contribute to the Cyber Cats review in collaboration with Deakin University.
Cyber Cats XP

2018 saw Telstra return as a sponsor of Cyber Cats and to celebrate Cyber Cats XP was held at GMHBA Stadium on 22nd October. Students from Western Heights College, North Geelong Secondary College and Northern Bay College - Hendy Campus were invited to participate in a half day of activities and barbeque. SEDA, GPAC and headspace ran activities for the students and provided a varied and engaging experience for the young people involved.

Activities:

- Cyber Cats online safety quiz (Geelong Cats)
- Mindfulness, yoga and relaxation (headspace)
- Bullying workshop (GPAC)
- Football Clinic (SEDA)
Cyber Cats Redevelopment 2019

As a result of our Community Department connections to the Deakin School of Psychology, Prof John Toumbourou put us in contact with Dr.Bianca Klettke whose field of interest includes sexting and online behavior. Dr. Klettke expressed interest in working with the Geelong Cats and headspace to develop Australia’s first evidence based Cyber Safety program.

Dr Bianca Klettke

The Cyber Cats students have been surveyed and a literature review is being conducted in order to inform the Cyber Cats program logic.

We have also been successful in obtaining a Pick My Project grant for $48K in order to complete the review and develop an expanded program for 2019. The grant will enable the engagement of the Geelong Performing Arts Centre (GPAC) in the redevelopment process. GPAC currently works with headspace and also delivers some community education focused on supporting student’s capacity to respond to cyber bullying.

An advisory group will be established to then look at how the program logic will inform the content and delivery of the program, as well as looking for synergies with other programs and events.

We are excited to have the opportunity to build upon the success of Cyber Cats and maximize its effectiveness and relevance in a constantly evolving digital landscape.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved with the Cyber Cats program and to all those people who voted for Cyber Cats in the Pick My Project funding round.

Keith Gregory, Community Education Coordinator, BCYF/GFC