

media release

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Privacy Awareness Week 2012 launched in NSW

Privacy Awareness Week (PAW) has been officially launched in NSW today by the NSW Privacy Commissioner, Dr Elizabeth Coombs and the NSW Attorney General and Minister for Justice, the Hon. Greg Smith.

Dr. Coombs says that the focus of PAW this year is on children and young adults to get them thinking about protecting their privacy online.

“Today’s technologies are changing the way young people are interacting with others and this exposes them to a number of risks such as cyber-bullying, identity theft and other security risks,” said Dr Coombs.

“They tend to have a relaxed attitude when it comes to privacy but the risks are very real and we need to educate them on the importance of protecting themselves.

“The Information and Privacy Commission have developed a range of resources that can be used by young people, their parents and teachers to help educate and promote safe online behaviour,” added Dr Coombs.

Detective Superintendent Colin Dyson, Commander of the Fraud and Cybercrime Squad was also at the launch speaking about the need for a shift in attitudes when it comes to online behaviour.

“The posting of personal identifying information by children and young people may unwittingly be used against them in later years – this information can be collated and warehoused until the user becomes 18 and used to open accounts in the user’s name,” said Mr Dyson.

“They assume the personal information they post is private but consciously decide to share it with strangers and then think that nothing bad will happen to them.

“The best weapon we have against crimes facilitated through online activity such as social networking sites is user attitudes and behaviour,” Mr Dyson added.

Privacy Awareness Week runs from 29 April to 5 May, 2012.

To download the IPC’s privacy resources, or for more information, visit www.privacy.nsw.gov.au

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