



Media Release

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CYBERBULLYING IS ABOUT PEOPLE NOT TECHNOLOGY

“Technology should be not be banned or blocked in an effort to prevent cyberbullying, according to Bill Belsey, Canadian anti-bullying educator and creator of award-winning website www.bullying.org.

A teacher from Alberta, Canada and founder of Canada’s annual Bullying Awareness Week, Mr Belsey will address the 4th Biennial National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB) Conference held in Melbourne on April 9-10.

He will outline the growing incidence of cyberbullying, which he describes as a community health and wellness issue, and discuss methods to combat the problem.

“Government laws or school suspensions will have only limited effects,” Mr Belsey, a former consultant to the Dr Phil program, said.

“Cyberbullying is about human behaviour and these behaviours are complex and require thoughtful, sophisticated responses and support. Most of our best efforts need to be focused on prevention through education and awareness.”

Research in a number of countries is reporting that one third of young people between the ages of 10-18 have been cyberbullied, which can be as extreme as receiving death threats, according to Mr Belsey.

Parents must step up and become more engaged with their children’s online activities as most cyberbullying happens outside of school,” he warned.

“We adults need to establish and work hard at maintaining relationships of trust with our kids.”

The NCAB “Navigating the Maze” themed conference will give schools evidence-based information and strategies about cybersafety, how to use new technologies to enhance learning, and ways to improve student wellbeing. The 2010 Conference at the Hilton on the Park in Melbourne will seek a national, uniform approach to cybersafety in schools and the wider community.

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Information on the NCAB Conference see website www.amf.org.au/NCABConference