

Media Release

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CYBERBULLYING CONFERENCE SEEKS NATIONAL UNIFORM APPROACH TO CYBERSAFETY

The National Centre Against Bullying 4th biennial national conference begins today in Melbourne at the Hilton on the Park.

The two-day conference themed "Navigating the Maze" is seeking a national, uniform approach to cybersafety in schools and the wider community, with more than 40 leading experts from Australia and around the world to present new research and strategies to address the issue.

NCAB Chair, and former Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia, The Hon Alastair Nicholson, AO RFD QC believes cyberbullying has the potential to inflict more severe psychological, social and mental health problems on young people than traditional bullying, which affects approximately one in four students in Australian schools.

"Bullying has taken on a new dimension with the advent of the internet with its social networking sites, email, mobile phones and digital photography, which has led to a widening of the number of children affected by bullying and increased difficulty of control," Nicholson said.

"We must have a national approach that guides and supports schools to respond to and prevent this form of abuse for the wellbeing of students.

"This conference will address those issues squarely and will examine innovative approaches that have been developed to address the problem," he said.

Keynote speakers will include leading bullying experts Professor Shaheen Shariff from McGill University, Canada; Professor Donna Cross from Edith Cowan University in Western Australia; Michel Boivin from Laval University in Canada; and Bill Belsey, founder of www.bullying.org. Other international experts from Singapore, Lithuania and Finland will present their findings, along with local experts from across Australia.

NCAB is an initiative of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation and is the peak body working to advise and inform the Australian community on childhood bullying and cybersafety, and the creation of safe schools and communities.

[For the full program of speakers, go to: www.ncab.org.au/ConferenceInfo/](http://www.ncab.org.au/ConferenceInfo/)

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