Invitation for your child to participate in an evaluation project

Evaluation title: eSmart Schools Evaluation

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child is invited to participate in an important evaluation project. This statement provides information about the project and your child’s proposed involvement. Please read this statement carefully and be sure that you understand its contents before deciding whether to consent to their participation. If you have any questions please contact me; my contact details are at the bottom of this letter.

Who is involved in this evaluation project? Why is it being conducted?
The internet and related communications technologies are now ubiquitous in the lives of young people, their schools, families and communities. The increasingly interactive and social nature of communications technologies means that there are many new possibilities – and risks – for children and young people growing up today. In recognition of this as an area of increasing importance, some Australian schools are using the eSmart Schools Framework as a strategy for promoting eSafety and wellbeing in their school communities.

eSmart Schools is a key initiative of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation. It is designed to build the capacity of schools to enable cyber-safety and deal with cyber-bullying and bullying within their school community. The Alannah and Madeline Foundation has sought an independent evaluation to assess the impact and effectiveness of eSmart Schools and the outcomes for participating schools.

The Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) is leading a consortium to undertake this two year evaluation. Other members of the consortium are the Pitt Group and the University of Western Sydney. This evaluation project has been approved by:

- Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- The following Catholic Education Offices: Melbourne Archdiocese, Ballarat Diocese, Sale Diocese, Sandhurst Diocese

This project has received ethical academic clearance from:

- The University of Western Sydney
- Monash University

Your child’s school has been approached because of its registration in eSmart Schools.

What is the evaluation project about?
This evaluation project aims to assess eSmart Schools against its key objectives within Australian schools. As your child’s school is currently registered with the eSmart Framework, sharing the experiences, critical reflections and any related outcomes is an important method for assessing the
success of the program. Your child’s input to this evaluation will help us to understand important aspects of eSmart Schools and its relationship to young people and cybersafety.

**If I consent to my child’s participation, what will he/she be required to do?**

If you agree to your child participating in this evaluation project, he/she will be asked to participate in the following activities in March/April 2013 and March/April 2014:

- An online survey. The survey is expected to take a maximum of 20 minutes to complete.

As the student survey is to occur during class time, we have asked your school to choose a time that causes the least amount of disruption to your child’s studies.

**What are my child’s rights as a participant?**

As a participant in this evaluation project, your child has:

- The right to withdraw his/her participation or consent at any time, without prejudice or consequence.
- The right to have any unprocessed data withdrawn and destroyed provided it can be reliably identified.
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

**What will happen to the information my child provides?**

The surveys will be conducted using a secure online system. The information and materials collected will only be accessed by researchers named on this project. Schools will not be individually identified and all data will be reported in aggregate.

The findings of this evaluation project may be published in academic journals and presented at conferences. No material will refer to any participant or the school directly. No information that is gathered via the evaluation project will be disclosed unless it is to protect you or others from harm, a court order is produced, or you provide me with written permission to do so.

All documentation associated with the evaluation project will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and on a password protected computer at the office of the Foundation for Young Australians and that of Dr Philippa Collin at the University of Western Sydney. On request, you may have access to any material relating to your child’s involvement in the project. At the end of the evaluation project all data will be stored and then destroyed after five years.

**Whom should I contact if I have any questions?**

If you have any questions about the evaluation project, please contact me on 03 9670 5436 or esmart@fya.org.au.

Yours sincerely

Jon Lawrence
Business Manager, Research & Evaluation
The Foundation for Young Australians
Consent form for parents and/or guardians

Evaluation title: eSmart Schools Evaluation

By signing this form, I indicate that:

1. I agree for my child to participate in the evaluation named above. The details of this evaluation have been explained to me and a written copy of the information has been given to me to keep.

2. I understand that:

   (a) My child is free to withdraw from the study at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed information related to him or her.

   (b) All information my child provides will be confidential, subject to any legal requirements.

3. I agree for my child to be referred to by pseudonym and not identified by name in any publications arising from the research.

Name of student: ___________________________________

Their school: _______________________________________

Your name: _________________________________________

Your signature: _____________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________