



29th November 2024

SUPPORTING THE CYBER SAFETY OF YOUNG PEOPLE

The School Cyber Awareness Program that has been delivered to over 10,000 students, teachers and interested groups has imparted vital online safety information to those who receive it.

The program is a result of collaboration between the National Crime Prevention Department (NCPD) of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), the Cyber Emergency Response Team (CERT) of the Ministry of Communication and Aviation (MCA) and the RSIPF-AFP Policing Partnership Program (RAPPP).

The NCPD, CERT and RAPPP has a shared goal of enhancing online safety for children.

This online awareness program has been taken to 21 targeted schools in Honiara and surrounding areas. It was also delivered to interested groups that request it.

The program is a response to the growing risks online. It aims to enhance safety among all online users, especially students.

The program involved presentations by stakeholders about the risks and responsibilities of one has to take while navigating online.

Given the rapid increase in internet use and social media interactions among youths, the awareness program comes at a crucial time. It covers topics such as cyberbullying, privacy protection, responsible social media use and recognising potential online threats such as scams, hacking and misinformation.

Speaking about the importance of awareness, Andrew Junior Aratara, a staff member from CERT, said youths are increasingly connected online and exposed to a growing range of digital risks.

Aratara said that raising awareness will equip students with the knowledge and tools to navigate online safely.

The overwhelmingly positive feedback from students and teachers in schools that have received the program shows its effectiveness and impact, providing reassurance to the audience about its success.

RAPPP, a key partner in the program, conducted a survey in schools that received the program and noted an overwhelmed praise from students and teachers. They reported to have increased confidence in identifying online dangers and what amounts to cyberbullying.

Beyond schools, the program was also extended to other community groups that have shown interest in enhancing their knowledge about cyber safety. Churches, sports groups and other community organisations have requested the awareness team.

Partners in this program are proposing to focus on these groups to ensure all areas feel equally included and valued in the face of this emerging crime type.

RAPPP advisor, Kevin Shaw, said education is critical to protecting communities, especially children and youths, from online risks.

“Threats of blackmail, bullying and targeting of vulnerable members of our community are serious threats and is a growing issue for Solomon Islanders,” Advisor Kevin said.

With their combined expertise in law enforcement and cyber security, he said RAPPP, NCPD and CERT provide essential information and strategies to counter these threats and unlawful activities.

NCPD Director, Inspector Steve Sunaone, said online risks or threats are a serious concern.

Inspector Sunaone said it is fitting that cyber safety awareness is taken to schools because almost every child and youth can be found there.

He said children and youths are the most vulnerable group in terms of cyber safety issues such as cyberbullying.

Inspector Sunaone said our children and youth account for about 70% of the Solomon Islands’ population saying they are the country’s future leaders therefore they must be protected.

He said cyber safety awareness is an emerging issue that forms part of their crime prevention strategy.

Inspector Sunaone said the RSIPF’s commitment to cyber safety is ongoing and it actively seeks opportunities to extend the program to other provinces.

He added their department has received positive feedbacks from the public and schools regarding this cyber awareness.

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<p>Media inquiries</p> <p>RSIPF Media Unit: 24016 or 23800 Ext 239</p> <p>Email: rsipf.media@rsipf.gov.sb</p>	<p>The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) was established in 1954. Its mission is 'To provide a safe and peaceful Solomon Islands by strengthening relationships with the community'. The RSIPF strive to provide efficient and effective policing services for the Solomon Islands and expect RSIPF officers to adhere to the RSIPF values.</p> <p>For ongoing news and information, please go to www.rsipf.gov.sb</p>
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