

PRACTICE BASED TEMPLATE

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Digital Health Check: Empowering Teens to Reflect, Change, and Thrive Online

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Background/Purpose:

Digital Health Check (DHC) is a free, innovative, evidence-based and curriculum-aligned online safety program for Year 7-10 students ([Digital Health Check](#)), developed to address gaps in secondary school resources to build digital citizenship skills. It encourages reflection about online behaviour, ways to connect better with others, and presents opportunities for young people to advocate for their online safety.

Approach:

DHC comprises four modules, each targeting one of four online risk areas (i.e. content, contact, conduct and compulsion). Students respond anonymously to survey questions about their online experiences in the chosen risk area. Educators use aggregate class responses to deliver a classroom activity, facilitating reflection about technology, its effects, and ways to elicit positive change.

Co-design sessions with 129 students defined the scope, co-creation of questions, informed overall design, UX testing and the parental engagement approach. Educators informed the classroom resources.

Outcomes/Impact:

The trial (3 schools) showed that DHC was engaging for adolescents, facilitated meaningful discussion about online experiences and trends. It promoted support mechanisms, prosocial strategies and strengthened online safety skills. Educator feedback was positive: use continued beyond the trial and survey results engaged leadership and informed broader school strategies. Areas of improvement included content, educator resources, and UX. An evaluation of the program is currently underway.

Innovation and Significance:

Engaging secondary students in online safety education is challenging, particularly when key messages are not reflective of their lived experience. DHC facilitates meaningful dialogue by reflecting students' own online experiences and guides them to relevant prosocial strategies. It provides a sound starting point for discussing risks, highlights areas for further engagement, and embeds student voice in online safety education. The program is engaging, uses language determined by students, is easy to deliver, and includes a parental support mechanism as a holistic approach to online safety.

Disclosure of Interest Statement (example):

The Digital Health Check was funded by the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation and developed in partnership with the Behavioural Insights Team.