



Australian Government's National AI Plan marks a critical step forward for child safety

ICMEC Australia welcomes today's announcement by the Australian Government outlining the new National AI Plan, marking a significant step forward in protecting children in a rapidly evolving digital environment.

Over the past two years, ICMEC Australia has played a central role in shaping national thinking on the safe use of artificial intelligence to prevent child sexual exploitation and abuse. As leader of the [SaferAI for Children Coalition](#), ICMEC Australia has brought together experts from technology, law enforcement, academia and other not-for-profits to develop practical, evidence-based measures that prioritise children's rights and safety.

Figures from the US National Center for Missing & Exploited Children show a 1,325% surge in AI-related child sexual exploitation reports, rising from 4,700 in 2023 to more than 67,000 in 2024.

Reflecting on today's announcement, Dannielle Kelly, Head of Government Affairs and Law Enforcement Outreach at ICMEC Australia, said the task ahead is to ensure innovation progresses safely.

"Children are already growing up in an AI-enabled world. Our job is to make sure they can do that safely – not by shutting down innovation, but by putting strong regulations in place, and ensuring the right tools are in the hands of those who protect them. Today's actions are a positive step towards that future," Ms Kelly said.

ICMEC Australia's work has helped build the national momentum behind today's decision. Through its parliamentary roundtables in recent months, ICMEC Australia has convened national leaders across government, industry and child protection, including key discussions that contributed to the Government's ban on nudify apps.

Today's announcement represents meaningful progress and a welcome response to this collective effort.

In parallel, ICMEC Australia is working with police across the country to ensure frontline officers have the tools, training and specialist expertise needed to respond to AI-enabled offending. Ms Kelly said this work is becoming increasingly urgent as generative technologies reshape criminal behaviour.

"AI has become a core tool for offenders, and it now must be part of the response for police. We are focused on making sure officers have practical, current training and access to AI-enabled tools that help them identify harm faster, support victims better and hold offenders to account."

ICMEC Australia believes that the implementation of the national AI Plan will provide the coordinated direction needed to adopt and develop new technologies with confidence while placing children's rights and safety at the centre of an AI-informed future.

The organisation looks forward to continuing its collaboration with the Australian Government to ensure that AI is used for children's safety, not against it.

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More information: <https://icmec.org.au/saferai-for-children-coalition-home-page/>

Interview opportunities:

Colm Gannon, CEO, ICMEC Australia

Dannielle Kelly, Head of Government Affairs and Law Enforcement Outreach, ICMEC Australia

About ICMEC Australia

ICMEC Australia works to create a world where technology cannot be used to harm children, by strengthening the professionals who detect, disrupt and prevent child sexual exploitation and abuse.

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