



7 October 2011

Ms Kate King  
Reporter – Campbell Live  
TV3  
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Greetings Kate,

John Parsons, (Simulate2educate), requested I send you comments from volunteers at Nelson Tasman Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). We recently received 2 hours of eye-opening education from John.

Most of our 50 volunteers are 'retired', (60 plus) and John's session added vastly to their knowledge of 'internet issues'. Because most people in this age-group are very trusting, and don't use technology to conduct their social affairs, the issues John raised greatly expanded their understanding of some of the challenges, and the impact on people's lives. He also shared ways to help our clients who want to know 'what do I do?' with issues like cyber-bulling, inappropriate relationships etc.

While CAB is well known for its ability to provide information and resources so people can make good personal decisions, it's difficult to find help with the specific issues John so passionately understands. This is why we saw the need to prepare our volunteers for these challenging enquiries. We weren't disappointed.

*Following are a selection of comments from our volunteers after John's session:*

"I liked John's approach: enthusiastic, a sense of urgency, ethical but not righteous, with an emphasis on the importance of family involvement to both avoid and solve problems. He obviously works really well with kids at primary and secondary level because he likes them and respects their abilities."

"John's presentation was enthralling. The scope of the problem of internet security was surprising and frightening. Efforts to alert people to the dangers on line must be good for society."

"A very educational and alarming message about the dangers of sharing too much information and the ease with which predators and creeps of all kinds can use the internet. Thank goodness John's developed education programmes for kids because parents/ teachers currently don't know how to protect children – or themselves!"

Citizens Advice Bureau Nelson Tasman

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"The guidelines for what to do for clients with a problem were really useful. I hope more schools can access this programme."

"Although I have been involved with computers for many years and am aware of many internet concerns, I was definitely not aware of the magnitude, or how much information is stored and available for future retrieval. Nor was I aware of mobile phone storage capacity or the ability of the criminal element to make such use of all the technology. The way a family can be threatened through the ill advised actions of one family member is scary stuff. We must teach about the risks of the internet along with the technical aspects." *(from a volunteer who is also Chairperson of Seniornet)*

*And finally, the full version from a very knowledgeable volunteer with international work experience:*

"As a non-Twittering, Facebook-free septuagenarian, I went into last week's training session with John Parsons with very modest expectations, bordering on scepticism.

Two and a half hours later, having been held in thrall by the substance and style of John's presentation, I departed, utterly convinced of the reality and magnitude of the Internet threat he so graphically portrayed. It is frightening to think how adolescent tweets and twitters, spontaneously launched into the electronic ether and maybe soon forgotten, can be resurrected decades on, to potentially devastating and even catastrophic effect. This is a risk that needs urgently to be brought to the attention of all internet users, but especially to the young, for whom the wonder of modern technology is the norm, and who may never have had cause to consider its darker side, even as they unwittingly plant the seeds of future anguish."

If ever there was a person sculpted by Providence for that task, it has to be John Parsons. John is an outstanding communicator with a message of vital importance to anyone with access to a keyboard. We ignore it at our peril.

While the tidings he bears may be bleak, the delivery is anything but.

Kate, we commend John Parson's knowledge and passion for keeping internet usage safe, while commending its scope as a useful tool. He needs all the support we can give him to promote his well-researched programme to us all!



Heather Thomas  
Acting Chairperson

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