

BUILDING A SAFER FUTURE

Introducing ChildFund's Swipe Safe



In our increasingly online world, ChildFund Australia recognised an urgent need to help children navigate new, constantly shifting digital landscapes and protect themselves against potential harm.

To do so, we needed to speak their language; we needed to create an online safety program – app included. Enter our Swipe Safe program.



Why us?

ChildFund has a wealth of knowledge and a unique understanding of protecting children's digital rights. In the countries where ChildFund works, we have found that education and knowledge around online safety is still in its infancy. We know, for instance, that some places across the Asia Pacific region are only now accessing high speed internet. But we wanted to ask more questions – and go one step further – to see how we could help respond to and prevent harm to children online.

So, we did our research. ChildFund Australia, along with Plan International Australia and the Young and Resilient Research Centre at Western Sydney University, carried out research on online risk and safety for young people across the Pacific and South-East Asia.

We found that while children are confident in their online abilities and are broadly aware of online risks, they **do not always have the digital skills to protect themselves online**. Meanwhile, their parents and carers reported low levels of confidence in their ability to provide support, as they did not have the digital literacy skills to provide protection in this space. It was clear to us that we needed to mobilise parents, youth, schools, frontline workers and the private sector and help build a more protective environment for children online.

Swipe Safe – at a glance

SwipeSafe is a child protection program that helps young people in developing countries safely navigate their digital lives. Its design balances the benefits of being online with an awareness of the associated risks. Swipe Safe was developed by child protection experts in collaboration with children and young people across the Asia-Pacific region and is a holistic child protection model that supports system strengthening, community strengthening and the self-protective behaviours of children.

Who can use Swipe Safe?

The **Swipe Safe curriculum** supports digital literacy for young people from 10 – 18 years old, as well as their parents, caregivers, teachers and community leaders through a unique hands-on, interactive approach to learning. Child protection frontline workers and law enforcement can also benefit from the program. The curriculum is also suitable for young people with low literacy levels, given its hands-on, interactive approach to learning. We recommend considering that the most benefit will be to those who have the greatest exposure to online risks, which may differ to typical development programs.

The **Swipe Safe app** is designed specifically for young people between 12 and 17 years old (although all ages will benefit from its teachings). Language in the app reflects the real-life tone and language that young people use online, including emojis and text slang. While the initial version of the app has not been tested for young people with disabilities, future iterations will be more inclusive in its design.



Image: Map of current Swipe Safe projects

How Swipe Safe works

Swipe Safe uses a peer-to-peer training model to help young people navigate online interactions. Tech-savvy youth facilitators – trained and supported by our staff – take younger participants through online safety activities over three face-to-face sessions. Training smartphones help participants practice in real time how to implement protective strategies. Activities include learning how to use safety and security features of popular apps as well as interacting with hypothetical stories of online risks. Professionals training has an increased focus on the framework for preventing and responding to online issues impacting the children they support.

In addition to the training of core groups, the model also includes outcomes related to child protection system strengthening (referral pathways and response services for online harm), youth led advocacy and integrating online safety into national systems, making Swipe Safe a holistic protection program.



The Swipe Safe package



Image: Examples of Swipe Safe Curriculum Training Package Materials

Along with the Swipe Safe face-to-face training package is an exciting new learning resource – a custom-made app. The Swipe Safe app combines story, technology and evidence-based curriculum to create an innovative and gamified learning tool accessible worldwide.

The Swipe Safe app suits all teaching styles; it facilitates in-person training and independent learning, and activities can enhance delivery of the broader Swipe Safe curriculum – or act as a stand-alone learning experience. The choice is yours! Plus, the app is accessible offline, meaning you can download and interact with content even if internet connection is poor.



What does the Swipe Safe curriculum cover?

Our curriculum teaches participants about six underlying core concepts of the internet (Public, Permanent, Connections, Anonymity, Sources of Information, and Respect) that dictate online interactions. Swipe Safe encourages participants to think critically about each concept, and to build practical skills through hands-on activities. While the Swipe Safe app and training program are both built around the same six key concepts, there are some differences in how participants move through the content across the face-to-face training, and the app.



Swipe Safe curriculum for young people (face-to-face)

Through the Swipe Safe curriculum, young people participate in role plays and scenarios that encourage critical thinking about online interactions. They also complete activities using training smartphones to build their online safety skills. There are three sessions:

The sacred stones - Internet key concepts:	Includes an introduction to the six “Sacred Stones”, the key concepts of the internet;
	Understanding online risks (including sharing too much information online, unsafe connections online, and online gaming) and;
	How to apply protective strategies (including privacy settings, safe searches, and identifying mis/dis-information).
Being responsible online:	Includes understanding how online interactions can affect your personal reputation, and how to behave responsibly online;
	Learning about scams and hacking and how to protect yourself (including setting a safety plan and learning how to block users and content on different social media platforms).
Preventing and responding to serious online issues:	Includes understanding that there is harmful and offensive content online, and what to do if you encounter this (including safe searching and how to report harmful content);
	Understanding online grooming and abuse, recognising warning signs, and how to protect yourself and leave unsafe situations online;
	Understanding what cyberbullying is, and how you can protect yourself and others.

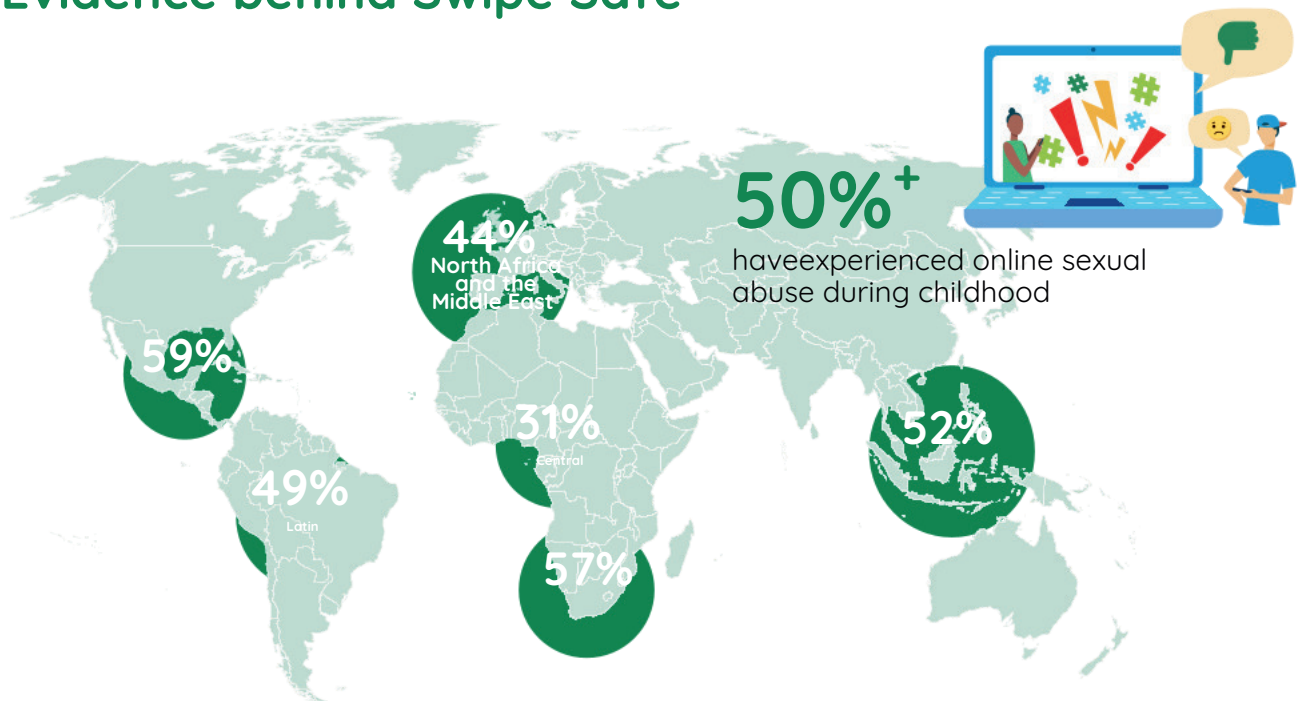
Swipe Safe app

The Swipe Safe app takes out the six key concepts of the internet into 12 learning modules.

Young people navigate choose-your-own-adventure scenarios, where they give advice to a friend who has encountered a risky situation online. They also practice their online safety skills through multiple choice activities, and technical step-by-step guides. The learning modules are:

Set-Up	Introduction to the app and creation of a personalised Safety Plan
My online reputation	Understand that the way you act online impacts how people see you and learn how to protect your reputation.
Being responsible online	Understand why it's important to act responsibly online and how to safely post, upload, and download content.
Sources of information	Understand that not all information online can be trusted and learn how to identify trustworthy sources of information.
Oversharing	Understand the dangers of sharing too much personal information online, and how to prevent this risk.
Cyberbullying	Understand what cyberbullying is, and what you can do if someone you know is being bullied online.
Online grooming	Understand what online grooming is and know how to recognise and leave unsafe situations online.
Who am I talking to online?	Understand that not everyone online is who they say they are, and learn how to recognise signs of deception.
Scams and hacking	Understand the motives of scams and hacks and learn how to keep yourself safe.
Offensive content online	Understand that there are offensive things online and know how to report offensive/harmful content.
Too much time online	Understand that it is possible to spend too much time online and know how to recognise the signs and what to do.
Opportunities online	Understand the potential benefits and opportunities of the online world, and how you can take advantage of them.
Online gaming	Understand the risks of playing games online and know strategies to stay safe when gaming.

Evidence behind Swipe Safe



Children with disabilities, LGBTIQAP+ and minority group are targeted online



Children rarely report to police or helplines - they tell people they know and trust



Awareness of the problem is Low



Frontline workers, law enforcement and justice professionals often lack capacity, knowledge and resources to provide comprehensive and child-centered support to children subjected to online sexual exploitation and abuse

References

1. UNICEF (2021) Ending online child sexual exploitation and abuse
2. ECPAT International (2022) Disrupting Harm
3. We Protect Global Alliance (2021) Estimates of Childhood Exposure to Online Sexual Harms and their Risk Factors

Worldwide accessibility

TheSwipe Safe app and training program are agile in design. Our package is easily replicable and can be adapted to suit the needs of participants and stakeholders around the world; we've adapted app content to different languages (including local slang used by young people) and cultures to enhance reach and usability.

"Social media is a problem because someone can send a bad picture to you, and hack and upload a bad picture in your account."

Solomon Islands Child
- Pacific Research

We can easily be blackmailed and abused... and exploited."

Cambodia Child
- South-East Asia Research

"I feel a bit unsafe when someone sends me a message online asking where I am, what's my name, and that they like me."

Timor-Leste Child
- South-East Asia Research

The Swipe Safe effect

Since its 2017 debut, Swipe Safe has reached more than 60,000 young people, parents and carers, and child protection actors across Southeast Asia and the Pacific and counting. Swipe Safe training has helped local communities around the world manage online safety. Participants have reported an increased awareness and understanding of online safety, including a newfound confidence to identify risk and report abuse. Young people are changing passwords to two-factor authentication, denying or deleting unknown friend requests, and reducing risky information and image sharing.

The Swipe Safe program is also helping to build future leaders. With ChildFund support and training, our youth facilitators are becoming online safety advocates and champions working with and supporting governments to integrate online safety content in national education curriculum and legislation. Talk about powerful agents of change!

“ Testimonials



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“My involvement in the Swipe Safe project has opened numerous opportunities for me, including attending and participating in the ITUGC Youth Summit in Rwanda. My participation in the summit enabled me to learn from a diverse group of experts and youth leaders from different parts of the world, and I was able to share my experiences and knowledge on online safety.”

Youth Facilitator - Swipe Safe Solomon Islands Evaluation

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“It’s a useful training course for our teachers. This is the first time we’ve conducted a training course on online safety for children with disability.”

Manager of Special Education Centre - Vietnam Swipe Safe Training

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“The contextualised training content for communities is very useful – it gives a new understanding of online safety and its benefits and risks.”

Community Entities Representative - Swipe Safe Solomon Islands Evaluation

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“I now have a greater awareness of online safety and have acquired new digital skills that help me stay safe on the internet. The training and workshop have given me the confidence to navigate the online world and social media platforms with ease. I’ve learned how to protect my personal information and avoid falling victim to online scams. This newfound knowledge has empowered me to make better and informed decisions online, using social media in a more responsible and secure manner.”

Beyond the technical skills and knowledge, the Swipe Safe project has also helped me develop a sense of agency and responsibility concerning online safety. I am more aware of the risks and challenges associated with using the internet and social media, but I am now better equipped to handle those challenges. Overall, the Swipe-Safe training and workshop have been a transformative experience for me. I am thankful for the opportunity to participate in the program and look forward to applying my new digital skills and knowledge in my everyday life.”

Swipe Safe Young People participant reported through a youth facilitator

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“Through the online safety training course, I learned more about the risks that my child may encounter online. I now realise that I need to be involved in my child’s online activities.”

Parent - Vietnam Swipe Safe Training

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What options are there for licensing?

Swipe Safe app, training and program model can be licensed in a number of ways including

- free access options to support reach for public good
- premium access with enhanced features
- donor-subsidised arrangements

Subsidised or negotiated arrangements may be considered where aligned with ChildFund Australia's equitable access objectives.

What's included	Option 1: Curriculum Only (face-to-face)	Option 2: App Only	Option 3: Curriculum + App
Training Package* for Facilitators	✓		✓
Training Package for Young People	✓		✓
Training Package for Parents and Carers	✓		✓
Training Package for Professionals	✓		✓
Swipe Safe MEL Framework	✓	✓	✓
Swipe Safe App		✓	✓
Swipe Safe App Facilitator Guide		✓	✓
Admin App for Swipe Safe App		✓	✓
Quarterly Data Reports on Swipe Safe App use		✓	✓
App Infrastructure Support services including incident management**		✓	✓
Induction to Swipe Safe programming session	✓	✓	✓
A reasonable number of meetings to discuss programming, troubleshooting and lessons learnt		✓	✓
Annual partner reflection meeting/opportunities to feed into Swipe Safe reviews and updates	✓	✓	✓
Launch/media pack including media and AV collateral		✓	✓

*All Training Packages include training manuals, handouts/resources, videos, training slides (please note Young People's Training Package does not include slides), and pre/post tests.

**Standard Australian business support hours with resolution time commitment based on severity of issue.

To discuss this further, contact SwipeSafe@childfund.org.au



Get in touch

If you would like to learn more, become a partner or join the program please visit SwipeSafe.org for more information.

You can always email us at SwipeSafe@childfund.org.au or call us on **1800 023 600**

**BECAUSE
EVERY CHILD
NEEDS A
CHILDHOOD**

ChildFund Australia

Address: 162 Goulburn St, Surry Hills NSW 2010

Phone: 1800 023 600

Email: info@childfund.org.au

Website: www.childfund.org.au

ABN: 79 002 885 761

