

# Netsafe Quarterly Report October – December 2023

## CEO Update

Kia ora,

People are contacting Netsafe in record numbers with stories of online harassment, cyberbullying and racism and scams.

Quarter 2 for Netsafe in the lead up to Christmas is usually a quieter period for our helpline, but not so this quarter. In this, the last quarterly report for 2023, it's been a case of seven months this year having been the highest number of "reporting of incidents months" to Netsafe.


In quarter 1 (July-September) scams comprised of 18.7% of reports to Netsafe, this figure grew to 20.7% in quarter 2.

This quarter we have released a number of benchmark reports which paints a picture of the state of online harm in New Zealand.

During Fraud Awareness week (held on 12-18 November) with the focus on investment scams, we reflected on the Global Anti-Scam Alliance's (GASA) recent research which indicates New Zealanders lost \$2.05 billion to scams in the last 12 months. Here is the link to the full "State of Scams in New Zealand" report.

In December Netsafe released our 2023 state of online harm population research for New Zealand. Our research shows Māori, New Zealanders under the age of 30, those who are neurodiverse, and LGBTQIA+ community members, are at the forefront of digital harm and are being attacked online more than any other group. You can read the Annual Population report [here](#), the Māori Population report [here](#), the Online Hate Speech Report [here](#) or the trended results [here](#).

This quarter saw our team work hard to create detailed briefings to incoming government officials and ministers on pressing online safety issues. See our Briefings to Incoming Ministers (BIMS) [here](#). Each briefing is also linked in the Submissions and Advocacy section at the bottom of this Quarterly Report. By directly engaging with decision-makers, we aim to influence policies that safeguard the digital world for all. Please get behind some of our requests to Ministers and alert policy makers to our policy positions contained in our BIMS.



Finally Netsafe is excited to announce a new international collaboration with Save the Children, Australia ChildFund Australia, Netsafe and Meta. Together we are working to address online safety issues in the Pacific by responding to an awareness gap in the region of what and where to report. Additional funding will build on this work and support the dedicated national helpline function in PNG to receive reports about online safety concerns, including bullying, grooming, child sexual abuse material and other illegal content.

Ngā mihi,

Brent Carey  
CEO, Netsafe

# Quarterly Results

Between October – December 2023, Netsafe received 6,926 reports overall.

Top taxonomy descriptions included:

Phishing • Harassment • Non-existent product • Sextortion

# 6926

TOTAL REPORTS

# 1371

PERSONAL HARM COMPLAINTS

# 1492

SCAM & FRAUD REPORTS

## Reports by age group

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1%	19%	10%	40%	24%	6%
00-12	13-17	18-21	22-40	41-64	65+

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## Reports by Region

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34%	6%	14%	0%	3%	4%
Auckland	Bay of Plenty	Canterbury	Gisborne	Hawke's Bay	Manawatu-Wanganui

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1%	1%	4%	3%	2%	2%
Marlborough:	Nelson	Northland	Otago	Southland	Taranaki

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0%	8%	11%	1%
Tasman	Waikato	Wellington	West Coast

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## Reports by Gender

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57%	1%	42%
FEMALE	GENDER DIVERSE	MALE

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# Personal Harm Reporting

## Reported breaches under the Harmful Digital Communications Act\*

Between October and December 2023, Netsafe received 1,371 personal harm reports. The top personal harm categories under the Harmful Digital Communication Act for the quarter were:

1. Harassment
2. Sextortion
3. Sensitive information released (reputation)

\* Cases often involve breaches of more than one communication principle

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Kora (chatbot) received 3,100 enquiries between October and December.

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## Scam and Fraud Snapshot

Between October – December 2023, Netsafe received 813 reports with losses totalling:

**3579242**

LOSSES (\$)

# Education, Partnership & Impact

## Online harm prevention and public awareness campaign activity:

On 11th October, Paddy Gower Has Issues featured Netsafe on the topic of ‘Sextortion’ and the alarming rise in cases of explicit photo-based blackmail. Netsafe shared how to spot this crime, its impact on victims and explained some of the innovative tools available to help people take back control of intimate images online. Our sextortion education campaign saw us stem the rise in harm reports.

In November 2degrees launched their First Phones campaign which Netsafe supported. It is an unboxing experience taking kids and parents through a 10-step programme of good and bad things about smartphones: “Good Tings” website. Netsafe will be building an online Micro Learn version of these materials in February 2024.

In December our Youth Action Squad launched their next youth-led micro learning resource. Focused on Digital Footprint for Years 12-13, the Prepping for Work online resource is packed with tips from the engagement with Human Resource professionals that YAS conducted. It covers social media red flags, how to set up a professional networking profile, and a six-step digital brand clean-up checklist.

At the end of 2023 Netsafe reviewed a pilot of work by Hōhepa Canterbury which included a literature review and resources designed to help young people with intellectual disabilities to be safer online. We now host their Digi Citizens Framework on our website. With the pilot complete, we’ll work with them to create further easy-to-use tools for families and their support teams in this space. EasyRead versions (created by [makeiteasy.org.nz](http://makeiteasy.org.nz)) of the documents will be available in early 2024.

- 230 schools supported through online safety incidents
- 115,251 visits to our self-help website and resources
- 18 school sessions across 55 locations 289 attendees