



# SWINBURNE INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

## **Cyber Safety in Remote Aboriginal Communities and Towns** ◀

**Interim Report—Appendices**

**Ellie Rennie, Eleanor Hogan & Indigo Holcombe-James**

**Swinburne Institute for Social Research,  
Swinburne University of Technology**

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## **Contact details**

A/Prof Ellie Rennie, Swinburne Institute for Social Research,  
[erennie@swin.edu.au](mailto:erennie@swin.edu.au), [@elinorrennie](https://twitter.com/elinorrennie)

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# Appendix 1: Methodology

## Ethics review

'Cyber safety for remote Aboriginal communities', SHR Project 2015/270, is being conducted from 1 September 2015 to 30 August 2017 with full ethical review and clearance from the Swinburne University Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) and in accordance with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies (<http://aiatsis.gov.au/research/research-ethics/guidelines-ethical-research-australian-indigenous-studies>).

At each site, a traditional owner was approached to sign a research agreement for overall consent of the community's participation. Adult participants were invited to sign consent forms, then to participate in the research (workshop groups and individual interviews), de-identified. In Tennant Creek, high school principal Maisie Flood facilitated collection of signed consent forms by parents and guardians of participating students.

## Research approach

### *Tennant Creek*

The Tennant Creek research took place from 21 to 24 March 2016 with the approval of Piliyintinji-ki Stronger Families Board. This organisation was approached because it represents the 16 Aboriginal family groups in the Tennant Creek region and provides culturally appropriate services designed to improve the physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing of men, women and children in Tennant Creek. The Board approved the women's and men's groups' participation in the research workshops as part of its education and training program.

Research workshops with the Piliyintinji-ki Stronger Families women's and men's groups were held for one-and-a-half to two hours in the mornings; a one-hour workshop discussion was held with the school students on two afternoons (21 and 23 March; male students were unavailable on 22 March, because of participation in a Clontarf football competition). Originally, a joint session and social event with all groups at the high school on the last day was planned, but this idea was abandoned because it might have undermined assurance about the confidentiality of information shared in separate groups.

### *Elliott and Canteen Creek*

The senior female traditional owner at Elliott invited researchers to spend two days (30 to 31 May) in the community. The researchers conducted stakeholder interviews with her, and with staff at the school and the Safe House. On 31 May, separate men's and women's groups were held in the morning, followed by individual interviews. No young people's groups were held or children interviewed in either Elliott or Canteen Creek, because the local schools only go up to Year 8, and the researchers did not have ethics approval to conduct research with anyone under 14 years old.

In Canteen Creek, the researchers interviewed the CEO of the Owairtilla Aboriginal Corporation on 1 June and held a women's workshop on 2 June. There was not time to conduct research interviews in Canteen Creek because of recent wet weather and the need

to travel a long distance on an unsealed road before dark so the researchers could return safely to Alice Springs.

## Research workshops

The research design was based on the principle that the research process is of benefit to the participants. To achieve this, we conducted cyber safety information-sharing workshops, intended as a dialogue between the project team (Swinburne and Telstra) and the participants (including the organisations that have facilitated participants' involvement).

At Piliyintinji-ki Stronger Families in Tennant Creek, 30 to 40 women, aged 25–65, and 12 to 16 men, aged 20–60, attended research workshops. At Tennant Creek High School, 12 young women, and nine young men, aged 16–18, participated in workshops.

At Elliott, 12 to 15 women, aged 20–60, and four men, aged 18–35, attended separate research workshops. At Canteen Creek, five to ten women participated in a workshop. Telstra commissioned an external company to develop materials for use in the workshops. Although the materials were of a high quality, the facilitators deemed that they were not suitable for the workshops and instead developed their own approach.

## Interviews

The Tennant Creek and Elliott research involved short structured interviews with members of the women's, men's and young people's groups, as an opportunity for extended and confidential individual reflection. Data was entered directly into iPads and laptops, using Qualtrics software. Using iPads provides a way for people to check that the researcher is recording what they are saying accurately, and to select responses themselves, particularly when there is a negative response that they don't feel like articulating. Participants were offered a gift (Coles, Woolworths, Bunnings and iTunes vouchers, and USB sticks valued at \$20 each). We attempted to engage the Piliyintinji-ki Stronger Families team leaders as research assistants, but this did not eventuate for programming reasons. All quotes in the report were extracted from researchers' notes as entered into Qualtrics or written down during workshops (i.e. not from transcribed recordings). Minor editing of quotes was undertaken.

**Interview participant profiles:** We conducted 23 structured interviews with members of the men's, women's and young people's groups. Some participants chose not to answer every question. A local Aboriginal woman, Karen Ward, assisted by trialling the interview questions and providing feedback. All interviewees gave the location where they were interviewed as their place of residence, except for two identified as visitors rather than traditional owners or residents. Sixty per cent of participants spoke one or more Aboriginal languages (Warumungu; Warlpiri; Alyawarr; Kaytej; Wambeya; Jingili); all spoke English.

Approximately three-quarters of the interviewees were female and a quarter were male. Ages ranged from 14 to 59: just under half were aged 30 to 44 (48 per cent), with the others spread evenly across the 14–17, 18–29 and 45–59 age groups.

## Appendix 2: Sample of internet and device use in Tennant Creek and Elliott

The material below should not be treated as representative. We derived the following information on internet and device use in Tennant Creek and Elliott from one-on-one interviews (as described in Appendix 1, interviews were offered to those who wished to speak privately in addition to group discussion).

### Internet access

Most interviewees said that they used mobile phones to access the internet (90 per cent,  $n = 19$ ), followed by tablets (33 per cent,  $n = 7$ ), followed by laptops (24 per cent,  $n = 5$ ) then desktops (14 per cent,  $n = 3$ ). The majority (85 per cent,  $n = 17$ ) of interviewees said they had Next G/mobile broadband, reflecting the high rate of mobile phone and tablet ownership; only one person said they had satellite connection, one said they were not sure and two said 'other' (including use of a Centrelink computer).

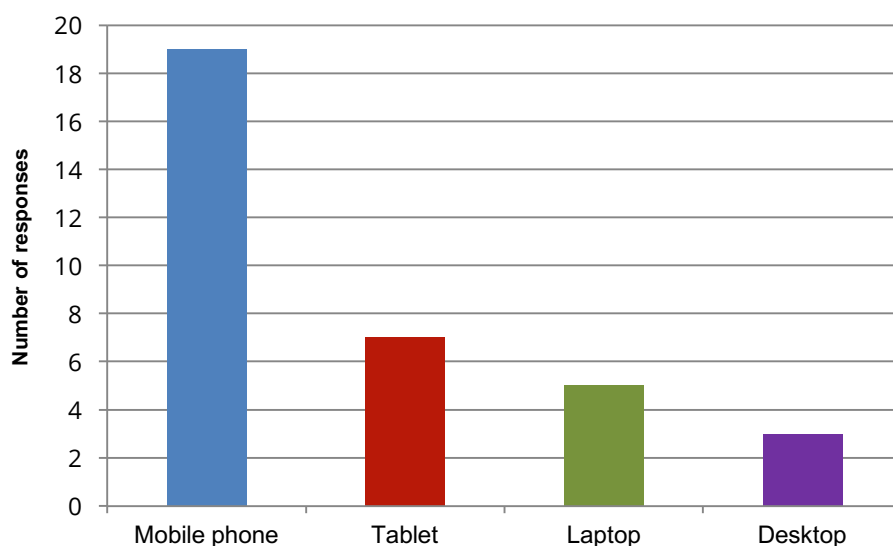
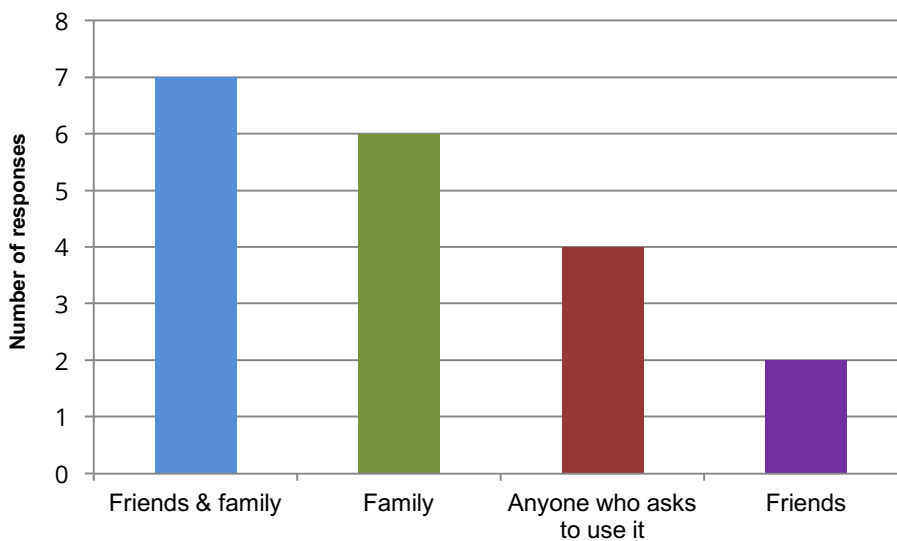


Figure 1: What do you use to access the internet? Source: 21 interviews.

### Sharing of devices

Eighty per cent of interviewees ( $n = 17$ ) said they used their own device, and 57 per cent ( $n = 12$ ) said they used someone else's. People who reported using their own device most often cited mobile phones.

Most respondents (72 per cent,  $n = 13$ ) to a question about sharing ICT devices (18 total responses) said they sometimes let other people use it; only five reported being the sole user. People described sharing devices most often with family and friends, with a slight bias towards family.



**Figure 2: Who do you let use your device?** Source: 14 interviews.

The sharing of devices is important in terms of cyber safety problems such as identity theft and ‘credit bullying’.

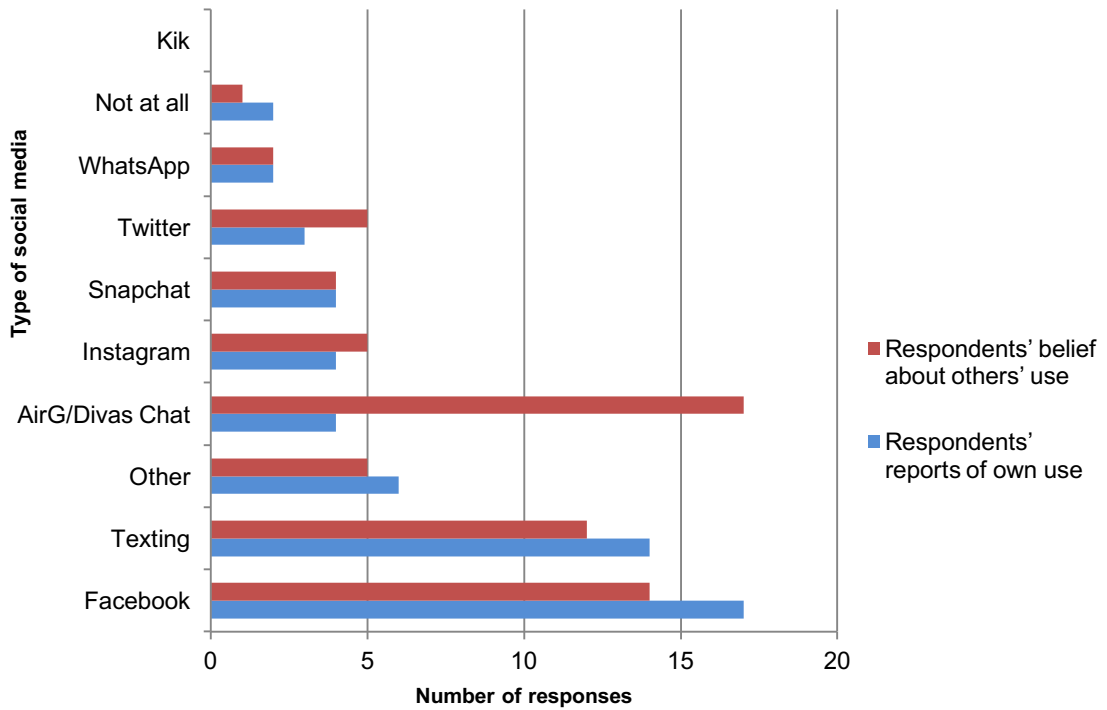
### Billing arrangements

Of the 19 people who answered a question about payment methods, all except one person said they used prepaid. The other used postpaid bills. Many people we spoke to were not aware that AirG VIP debits a subscription from their account (see ‘5. Privacy and financial security’ in main report).

### Social media platforms

Facebook was the platform most participants used. Interviewees confirmed that people are also using AirG/Divas Chat, but believed it to be in much greater use among people from remote communities.

Over three-quarters of interviewees said that they used Facebook (n = 17 of 22 responses) and 64 per cent (n = 14) said they texted; two said they didn’t use social media at all. Only four (18 per cent) respondents to this question said they used AirG; Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp and Twitter all received low levels of response. One self-described ‘football crazy’ older woman said she used Twitter to follow Liverpool (UK soccer) and the NTFL. Adult participants reported, similarly to mainstream populations, that the ‘younger generation’ used Snapchat and Instagram: the Elliott women said, ‘Instagram? The younger ones do. We’re all Facebook age, or not on anything.’ In the Tennant Creek young women’s discussion, five out of seven students said they were on Facebook, and that other platforms they used included Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, Messenger and AirG/Divas Chat.



**Figure 3: Who uses what type of social media?** Source: 22 interviews on self-reporting, 20 on reporting others' use.

Interestingly, in contrast to the few people who reported using AirG, 85 per cent of interviewees (n = 17 of 20 responses) said they knew people who used AirG/Divas Chat. They reported similarly high levels of Facebook use (70 per cent; n = 14) for other people (see above). Feedback from Tennant Creek participants indicated that AirG was associated with community people.



## Appendix 3: Additional quotes by topic

The following quotes were gathered from all fieldwork sites during workshops and one-on-one interviews.

### The benefits of mobile phones

A man in Elliott commented on the benefits of mobile phones:

*Ways the internet and phone can make friendships and family strong is by calling and text messaging each other to stay connected and keep in touch, passing on other people's numbers so we can keep in touch with each other, sending photos to each other like newborn babies and family photos, and sending money easily with internet banking or phone banking to people who need money.*

Women at Tennant Creek emphasised the safety aspects of mobile phones, including their use in calling for help and emergency services, and their use in dealing with family problems, as well as receiving reminders of appointments:

*Yes. If lady or male that can't move, and want to go somewhere, then I would tell someone to lend them a phone so that they can get in contact with someone. Try to help each other by using each other's phones.*

*Good for family, friends, catch up and emergencies, knowing where people are—find where family have gone to more easily.*

Nevertheless, the fact that coverage may only extend a few kilometres out of a community or up to 20 kilometres from a town meant that mobile phones had limitations as safety devices. In Canteen Creek, a participant commented:

*Someone was coming here and their car broke down, but they couldn't contact anyone and they had to walk all that way back home. It can be really hard to call someone and if they are sick it's too hard to get them safe.*

*Some people have walked all night!*

One woman described how people often resorted to the 'old way' of being safe when they went out bush:

*If someone is going to go hunting they tell someone which way they're going and if they're not back, people will go look for them—this is the old way but they still do this, because there is still no reception out bush.*

### The benefits of social media

Participants commented on the positive aspects of social media use:

*Keeping up with kids, because no car.*

*Checking in with friends, life emergency, talking to family, people—meeting and arranging.*

*The good about using Facebook is that it's easier to speak with families and friends when they are living far away in other states. And also it's easier to share photos about what's going on in another side, and to share stories with each other.*

*Keep in contact with family out of town, also ones in town. Seeing what people are writing/commenting. Looking at other people's photos (such as nephew who won the football in Darwin—he posted a trophy picture).*

### **Unwelcome posts**

Some participants complained about being exposed to unwelcome content online:

*Status updates that you don't want to know about. Just things they are saying. Fighting in particular.*

*People, they use social media like a diary. Too public with things that should be personal ... This person argues with that person, and they say things online that they wouldn't say in real life.*

*Sometimes get tired of Facebook. Too many messages.*

### **The consequences of gossip**

The Elliott men's group described how gossip, true or false, could lead to offline fighting:

*We think that the introduction of mobile phones has led to a lot more arguing among people in community. It's like using the phone makes them feel stronger, but in real life they would be hiding. When people use technology in community there is more gossip, more made-up stories, the story gets bigger and bigger, then people say, 'I did not say that' ... People believe the stories sometimes even though they are not true, and it leads to family violence, both between and within families.*

Tennant Creek women's group participants observed that fights can start at school but escalate to bigger community problems:

*How to stop teenagers arguing because it then carries on to rest of family and becomes a family fight and community fight not a Facebook fight. Started by two but escalates.*

*Cyberbullying shit starts at school, parents called in every week.*

*Not going to stop—there are spikes where it gets worse ... Teenagers can pick on younger kids rather than their own.*

### **Fake profiles**

Participants across the three communities observed that fake profiles can be a problem:

*Bad texting, hacking, making a false profile that causes community fights and no-one wants to listen.*

*People should not use other people's accounts. Not sure how they do it. Heard about 'running other people down' (saying bad things) about someone else's baby (heard through other people—people were talking about it).*

*Sometimes boys who are looking for a boyfriend do this too—they set up a fake profile pretending to be a girl and chat with the boys and set up a meeting with the boys, but they*

*are really a boy themselves. It would be much harder for boys who are looking for boyfriends to do this sort of thing in real life without fake profiles through technology.*

## **Young people on social media**

In the school groups, students named bullying and fighting between boyfriends and girlfriends on social media as problems. They also said that people were ‘texting rudeways—asking for things that aren’t nice’, and that these requests usually came from fellow students. Students ‘got texts late at night ... nasty stuff. Sexual stuff and videos.’ They commented that people were sending ‘pornography and sex’:

*The boys and girls who are sending it should be shamed. Girls posting stuff showing half their boobs—it’s shameful. They wait around town—Snapchat, they meet up. Sell each other for money and drugs. Lots of pages on Instagram.*

Some participants saw being underage and online as problematic and thought there should be age restrictions on access to mobile phones and social media. Adult women sometimes proposed an age limit of 18 years: ‘We need to make sure that they are 18 years and over using the different programs.’ One woman observed that Facebook’s age restrictions were easy to get round: ‘I think it’s too easy, anyone can get on.’

*Girls and boys exposing their sexuality on Facebook and AirG, both are exposing themselves, thinking they are older than they are.*

*Underage kids on Facebook think they are old enough to do it but they are not. They are hooking up through Facebook from a young age. Kids as young as 12 or 13.*

*People also use phones and the internet to access websites that are no good, including young kids. The kids are too immature to be doing this.*

*Children teach other children how to set up a profile for themselves. They access bad websites, including hardcore pornography. They also watch violent videos ... and watch videos with lots of swearing in them and also nudity. Then the kids think, ‘we can do it, too,’ so they end up rebelling against their parents and swearing, telling their parents, ‘I’m old enough now. I can stay up late and do what I want.’*

## **Passcodes and passwords**

The issue of knowing how to set secure passcodes and passwords was a recurring theme in the workshops:

*Sometimes other people use my phone to access AirG—they have their own passwords and accounts.*

*Even that memory card will be taken when you’re busy. They swap the cards and delete them—whatever you have that’s important. (Your photos and your games—you can save in AirG and Facebook.)*

*Messenger—all these people from your family get in there and use it.*

In the women's group, the facilitator described the different privacy settings on Facebook then asked participants why it might be good to use them. Their responses included fear about exposure to paedophiles and the implications for future employment (i.e. digital reputation):

*Paedophiles looking at photos of children. People need to be aware that they are using Facebook and change settings. Parents need to do it for children.*

*Someone in the street or at the dam or the pool could photograph your naked baby or child.*

*Sharing naughty pictures if you're a teen could affect you getting a job—they could check police records, you won't get an Ochre [working with children] card.*

## **Helping others**

Responses from workshops and interviews included:

*Sometimes. I help my partner who is not very digital literate. She mostly uses [the internet] for music and games. [Name removed] has the internet skills. She had problems with an ex-partner who abused access to banking details, when away travelling.*

*I help family and friends to access content, switching between machines. [I am] tech support for a lot of people. People are not willing to ask.*

*I help people all the time. Family at home and work colleagues, whenever needed. I tell kids to look up things on the internet, for games and to help with schoolwork. Doing a poster and pamphlets on the internet for training for a project at the moment, to produce evidence about what we learnt about.*

Others indicated what they would teach if they had the knowledge:

*I want to be able to tell people how much AirG costs! More information to give—short simple information—to other Indigenous people like parents and grandparents for them to be aware—about costs, danger and conflicts.*

*AirG—to inform all of the parents, and even I don't know about it. The kids or the parents need to be made aware of it so they've got information.*

*Parental guidance and controls for parents to stop kids accessing bad sites. I want to teach other parents how to make their phones safe for their kids and for themselves.*

*Sometimes when something comes from someone else, I'd like to learn how to share it. Sharing some of the stuff with the families around here about here and other places.*

## **One woman's story of dealing with cyberbullying**

A woman in her mid-40s reflected at length on the impact of cyberbullying on her family and possible strategies for dealing with it. She described a series of conflicts that had affected her children and their cousins:

*An older girl started making accusations on AirG that [the woman's 14-year-old daughter] was swearing at another young bloke. [I think] he was talking yarns. We need to learn how to block this guy on AirG.*

The woman and her daughter didn't know how to block him and she took another course of action:

*I didn't approach him to talk in a good way because I didn't think he and his sister/cousin would listen, so I went straight to the lawyers to get legal advice. Because they won't listen to [my daughter] and they keep making accusations, [I felt I couldn't] do anything except go to the lawyers. The lawyer said I must go to the police and show them the screenshots of the bullying and accusations. Or if not, they need to apologise.*

The woman decided not to show screenshots to the police. She described another related conflict involving AirG and her nephew, then the course of action she'd decided to take in response to cyberbullying:

*Having a community conflict now—someone made something up about [my] nephew on AirG. Someone made a [false] profile of [him] and there's been a big fight happening. [The nephew bumped into this other young fella who was accusing him [on AirG] and they had a lovely talk—and the young fella said, 'Other people were forcing me to fight with you', and he thought it was odd that the nephew would have been saying [the things online under the false profile]. The young fella who reconciled with the nephew had also had a fight a month earlier where he king hit him coming out of a pub.*

*Both the fight with the daughter and the nephew is part of a larger fight. This young fella is the only one who can go and talk to his family. They're fighting over nothing that's actually happened—it's just false accusations. No-one knows who set up the profile. Big family fight that's come out of nothing ... and there's now a big community fight. We believe he's the only one who should stop the fight.*

The woman thought it was better to attempt mediation between family members rather than go to the police straightaway, or to community mediators or lawyers:

*My sister can talk to him [the nephew] in a mediation between family. But we don't want a lot of people there—me, my sister, their fathers and their nanna and the two young men are the only ones who should be there to sort it out. They're the ones who can go back to families and say it's sorted and all good now. We would rather do this than go to mediators or lawyers, but if they can't, they'll have to go further to court.*

As a result of these experiences, she reflected:

*I don't like to stay on Facebook too long because I'll see comments that are offensive. I'm careful not to relay [offensive] messages to family because I don't want to cause community conflicts.*

She also thought it was important to involve the school if cyberbullying was affecting the students:

*Let the school know—principal and teachers—what to expect from kids, why they're not at school and when they're playing up—it's because of the community conflicts caused by the internet.*

## **Appendix 4: List of stakeholders consulted**

### **Tennant Creek and Alice Springs, November 2015 – May 2016**

Stewart Willey, Papulu Apparr-Kari Language Centre

Kathy Burns and Alan Murn, Barkly Regional Arts

Micheil Paton, Central Australian Aboriginal Family Legal Unit

Bryn Overend and Hugo Moodie, Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service

Jennifer McFarland and Leyla Iten, Central Australian Youth Link Up Service

Tiger (Darryl) Fitz, Central Land Council, Tennant Creek

Daniel Featherstone and Liam Campbell, Indigenous Remote Communications Association

Sonja Peter, Northern Territory Community Justice Centre

Kevin Banbury and Joshua Scotland, Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission

Marie Murfet, Leisha Booth and George Butler, Piliyintinji-ki Stronger Families

Emma Newman, Stella Whippy and Corey MacDowell, Red Cross Youth Leadership Group

Melanie Usher and Marlene Plummer, Sexual Assault Response Centre

Maisie Flood, Pauline Davenport and Adrienne MacKenzie, Tennant Creek High School

Tennant Creek Police Station

### **Elliott and Canteen Creek, May–June 2016**

Gayle Marsden, Community Co-ordinator, Elliott

Heather Wilson, Jennifer Kite, Lourina Ulamari, Josiah Nuggett, Elliott School

Judith Edwards and Cecilia Cutta, Elliott Safe House

Margaret Cowie, CEO, Canteen Creek Owairtilla Aboriginal Corporation

Estelle Mick, Canteen Creek Artists

### **Reference Group members, 2016 (if not already listed)**

Jeremy Riddle, Australian Communications Consumer Action Network

Dennis Braun, Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service

Ippei Okazaki, Northern Territory Community Justice Centre

Sarah Hayton, Office of the Children's e-Safety Commissioner