



Information and Privacy  
Commissioner/Ontario  
Commissaire à l'information  
et à la protection de la vie privée/Ontario

Media Advisory

October 25, 2012

## Commissioner Cavoukian joins the fight against cyberbullying

### Calls on young Ontarians to spread the word about staying in control on social media

Toronto, ON – CNW – Online social media networks like Facebook and Twitter appear to have become the new schoolyard for bullies. But unlike the tormentors of the playground, cyberbullies are able to lurk in the shadows of anonymity on the Internet, and their cruelty doesn't stop at the end of the school day. The harm they inflict on their victims can have devastating effects, and for some may lead to the most tragic of consequences, said Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian, in a [YouTube video released today](#).

“The unfortunate reality is that people give out far too much information about themselves online, believing that their information is private and they are safe behind the screen. They are not – you are not,” said Commissioner Cavoukian. “I strongly encourage young people to take steps to protect themselves in social media – consider the potential risks when joining, use the strongest privacy settings, only friend people you know in the real world, and post information and photos with your eyes wide open.”

In adding her voice to the chorus of those opposing cyberbullying, the Commissioner hopes victims will feel supported. There is no reason to suffer in silence – people should speak out. She also recommends reporting abusive behaviour to social media networks like Facebook and Twitter, so they can remove offensive profiles and posts.

To help spread the message of staying in control on social media, Commissioner Cavoukian is calling on Ontarians 18 - 30 to produce a short video for her [Make the Right Choices video contest](#). Entrants are being asked to encourage strong privacy and social media habits in one of four categories – Don't be a Cyberbully, Stranger Danger, Stay in Control of Social Media and Don't Get Fired. Complete details are available at [www.makerightchoices.ca](http://www.makerightchoices.ca). A 30 second Public Service Announcement is available for the contest, you can [preview it on YouTube](#).

### About the IPC

The Information and Privacy Commissioner is appointed by, and reports to, the Ontario Legislative Assembly, and is independent of the government of the day. The Commissioner's mandate includes overseeing the access and privacy provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, as well as the *Personal Health*



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*Information Protection Act*, which applies to both public and private sector health information custodians. A vital component of the Commissioner's mandate is to help educate the public about access and privacy issues.

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