THE INTERNET: PROTECTING YOURSELF, YOUR SERVICE USERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

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Cyber Bullying

- The past decade has been witness to the increasing popularity of contemporary communication tools; social networking sites.

- Social networking is becoming increasingly part of everyday life, with the number of users continually growing and spanning a wide age range. Although positively providing a new means of communication the innovative nature of the service creates a number of new challenges, particularly within a social work/child protection setting.

Cyber Bullying

- Cyber bullying is defined as the "wilful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices."

- With 80% of teens on cell phones and the same on social media sites, it's time to understand that technology is connecting teens in ways they can't escape.

- **1 in 6 teenagers are cyber bullied**

Cyber Bullying suicide statistics

- Cyber bullying occurs at a lower rate than traditional off-line bullying

- However cyber bullying victims are more likely to commit suicide

Offline bullying	Cyber Bullying
2 X more likely to commit suicide than those not bullied	3 X more likely to commit suicide than those not bullied
1.5 X more likely to attempt suicide than those who aren't bullied	3.5 X more likely to attempt suicide than those who aren't bullied

Cyber Bullying: Tips to help

Cyber bullying is often more emotionally brutal than traditional bullying.

- Give unconditional support
- Inform the child of options to deal with the bully
- Contact IT providers to block and remove bullies
- Teach that cyber bullying is wrong
- Listen and respond to all forms of bullying
- Have school students work on projects against bullying
- Ensure schools hold a system for complaints of bullying

SURVEY

At David Niven Associates we commissioned a survey which aimed to gain an insight into current attitudes towards the use of social networking sites with relevance to safeguarding issues.

- An on-line survey was constructed using a typical Likert response scale to measure respondents' attitudes by asking the extent to which they agree or disagree with a particular question or statement.

- The survey was distributed via the company's extensive network of contacts in order to attract individuals with an interest or investment in the topic area. This involved various channels including the DNA associate network, newsletter mailing list and Linked-in groups.
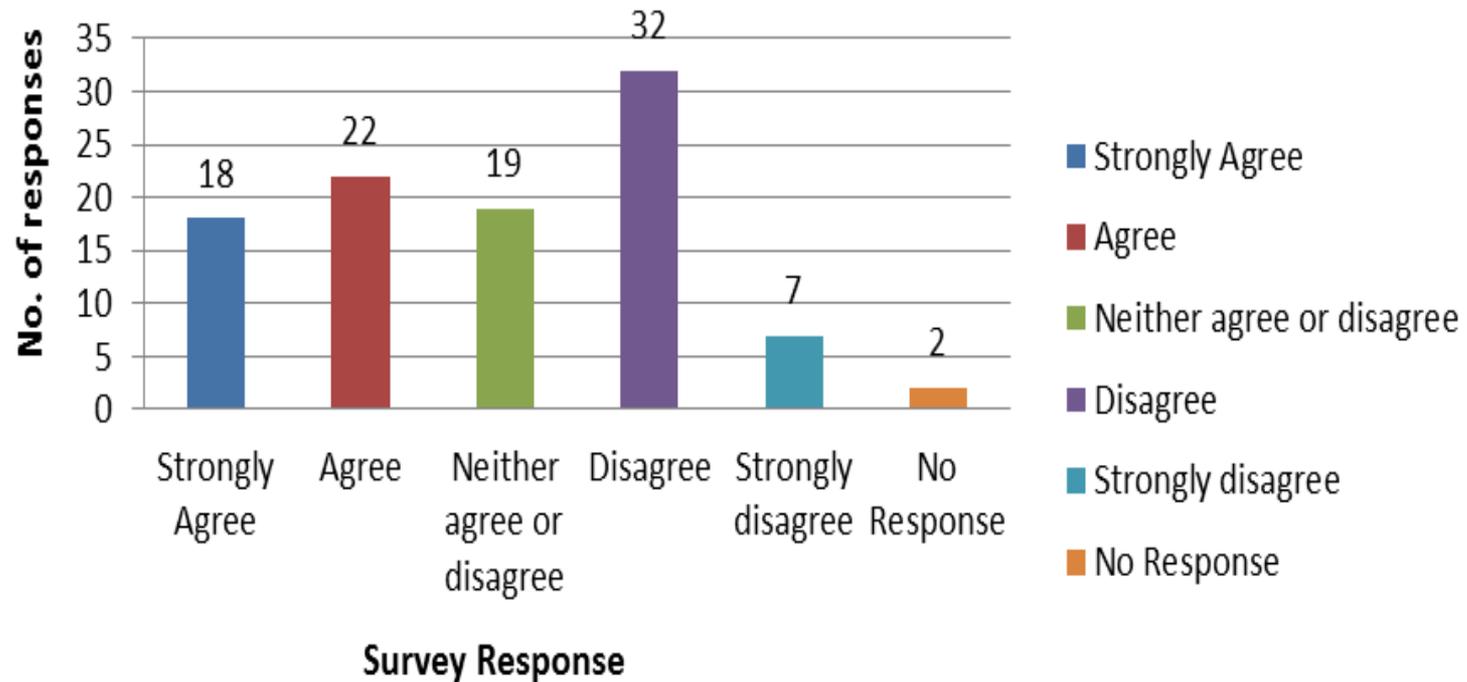
Qu. 1: How much should statutory bodies be allowed to investigate social networking accounts for evidence ?

ONLY LAW ENFORCEMENT SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO INVESTIGATE SOCIAL NETWORKING ACCOUNTS FOR EVIDENCE ?

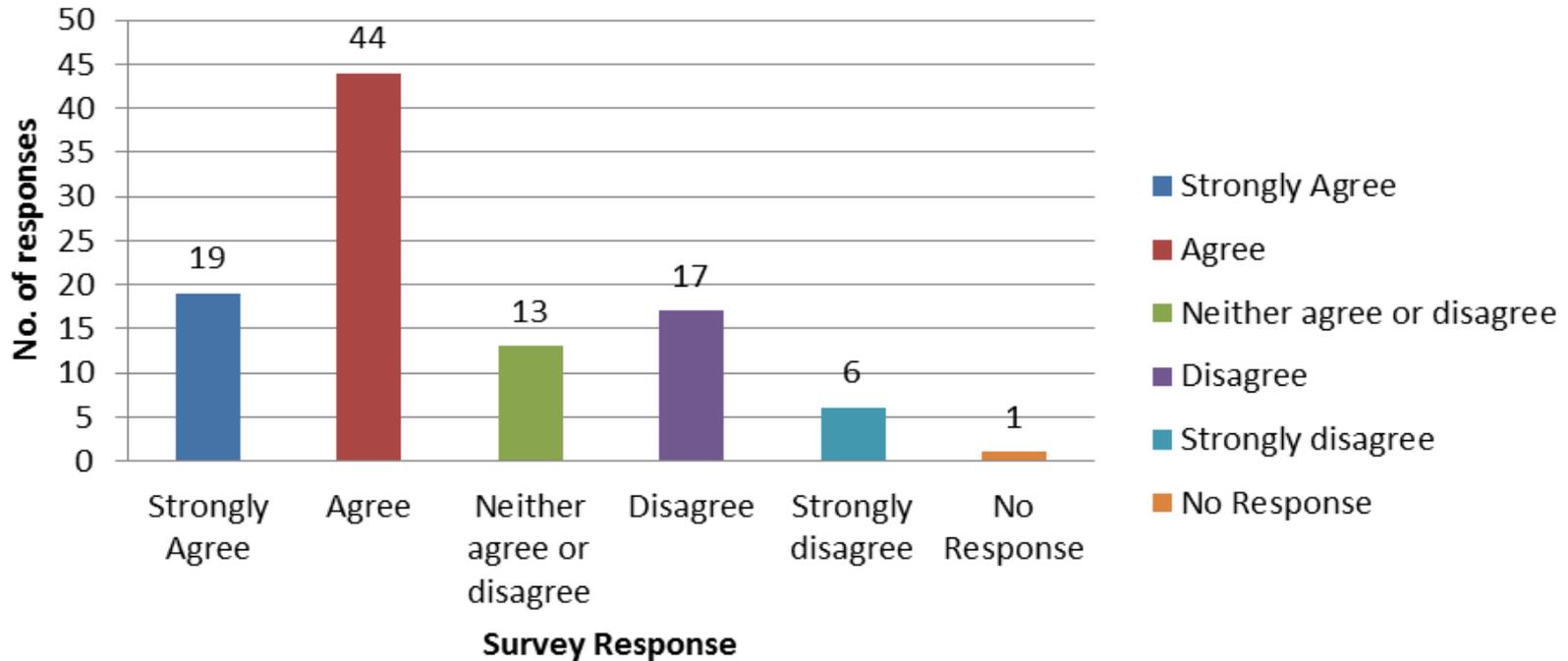Only law enforcement should be allowed to investigate social networking accounts for evidence.

Agreed or strongly agreed = 40%
Disagreed or strongly disagreed = 39%

Agreed or strongly agreed = 63%
Disagreed or strongly disagreed = 23%

Lessons to Learn

- An interesting point was the behaviour of Peter Connelly's mother, Tracey, who according to a Guardian Newspaper report regularly shared on social networking posts that, instead of nurturing Peter she spent her days drinking vodka, watching pornographic films and having sex" with her new boyfriend, Steven Barker.

- She also stated that she was "madly in love with the most amazing guy ever" and that "her fella is nuts."

- Given that many professionals were unaware of Steven Barker's presence in the house, or the nature of their lifestyle, accessing posts on social media sites might just have tipped the balance and provided clearer, important information.
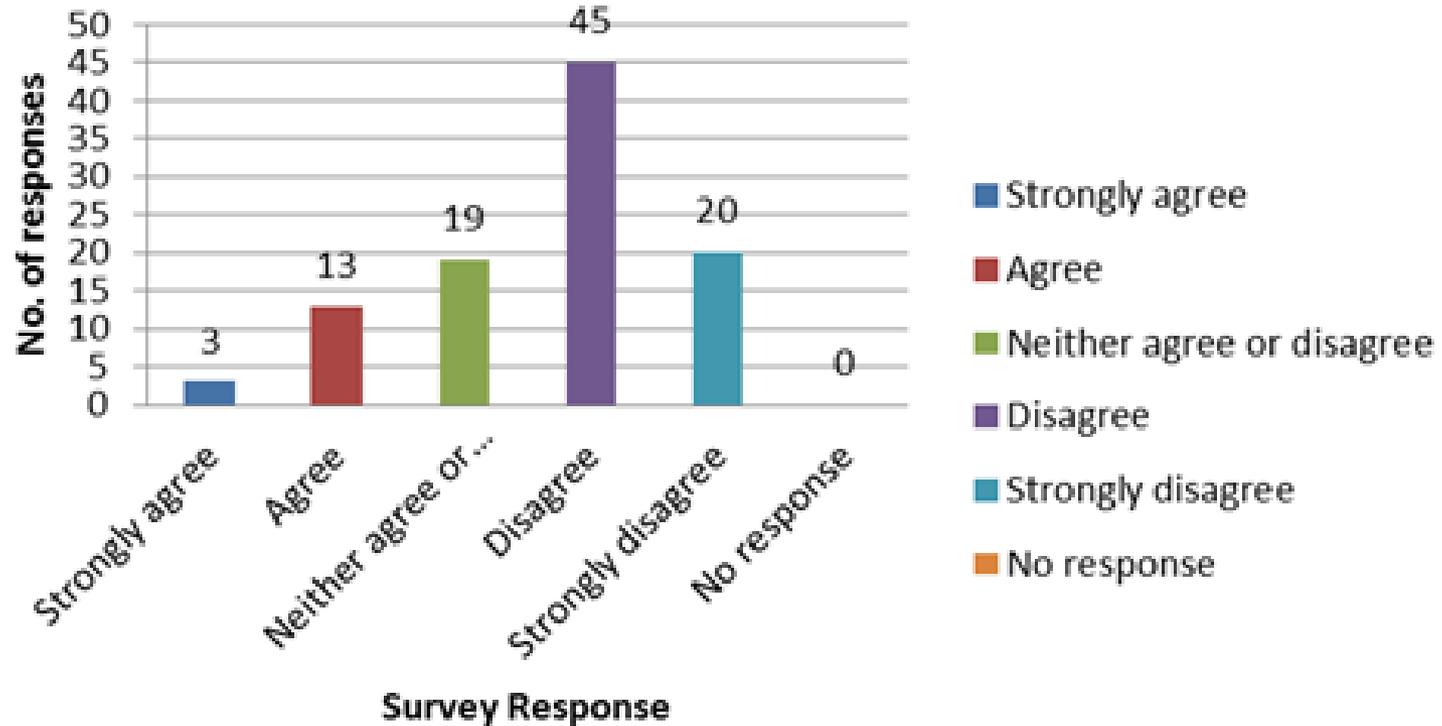
[The Guardian Newspaper, Tuesday 11 August 2009, 'Tracey Connelly: the story of a woman defined by abuse']

Qu. 5: On-line safety should be entirely down to parents ?

On-line safety should be entirely down to parents

Agreed or strongly agreed = 16%
Disagreed or strongly disagreed = 65%

THERE IS SO MUCH MORE TO DISCUSS

Online Protection

www.pacific.edu/Campus-Life/Safety

www.getsafeonline.org

www.netnanny.com

Anti bullying

www.kidscape.org.uk

WWW.SOCIALWORLDPOCAST.COM

I discuss many issues surrounding the safety of children and adults in general including: social media, online safety, child protection and much more on twitter @DaveNiven and in my blogs and podcasts now available on iTunes – Thoughts On the Social World : David Niven – and at www.socialworldpodcast.com.