



EDUCATION  
SOLUTIONS

CASE STUDY

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# Sacred Heart College

This is the story of one school's journey to create a comprehensive cyber-safety ecosystem as a Family Zone Partner School.



“As director of learning technologies, I was aware that the digital climate had changed dramatically since we first instituted our 1:1 program. With the internet so widely accessible on students’ personal devices, we could no longer confidently advise parents that we could manage their internet use at school. We needed a mobile solution to keep them protected.”

*Michael Chiera, Director of Learning Technologies and Innovation  
Sacred Heart College*

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## Executive summary

Sacred Heart College is a Catholic co-educational Year 7 -12 College located in Sorrento, Western Australia with approximately 1400 students and 170 staff.

A mandatory 1:1 Macbook Air program is in effect for Years 7-10. However, these laptops are parent-owned. As a result, the school was unable to unilaterally impose a control solution without parental buy-in.

A school survey of student device use carried out in late 2017 underscored significant challenges with respect to managing student device use, both at school and at home. Family Zone's partnership model, delivered via the cloud-based cyber-safety solution, Mobile Zone, was overwhelmingly endorsed by both school leaders and parents.

The college-provided plan for all students in Years 7-10 was rolled out in Term One, 2018, following a parent information hosted by Family Zone that included a live online forum for parents' questions and concerns.

By May 2018, all families were signed up for Mobile Zone protection.

“As a school, we'd enforced this requirement for 1:1 laptops. But when the machines went home, parents were left to their own devices to manage them. I was hearing their cry for help as well. So we were actively looking for a solution that would meet both of these needs.”

# The problem and its context

## The School

Sacred Heart College is a Catholic co-educational Year 7 -12 College in Sorrento, Western Australia, a coastal suburb 20 km north of Perth. The College has approximately 1400 students and 170 staff and has established a reputation for excellence based on outstanding academic, arts and sporting achievement. Enrolment is highly sought after by Catholic families.

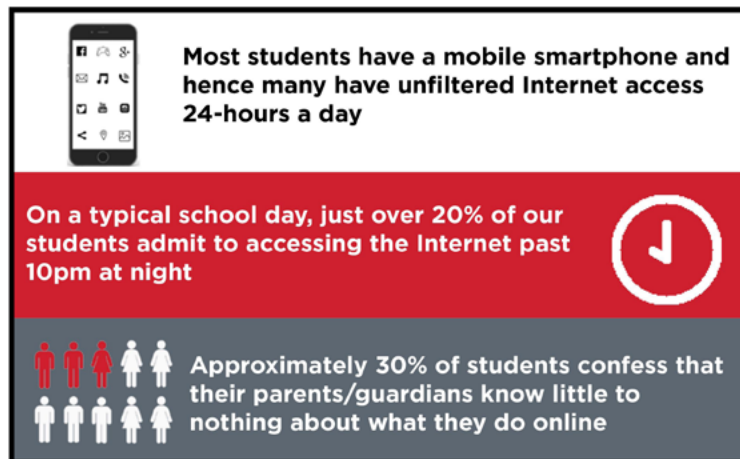
The College prides itself on the quality of its pastoral care, and strives to ensure that each student is well known and cared for. Its core values are encapsulated in its mission statement: "To go beyond ourselves with compassion, courage and respect."



## The Challenges

In the years since the school had instituted a mandatory 1:1 Macbook Air program for Years 7-10, the digital landscape had changed significantly, with students increasingly having 24/7 access to connected devices both at home and at school. By 2017, it device-related distraction and fatigue were becoming evident, and parents and teachers alike were expressing concerns about students accessing inappropriate content and the addictive pull of games and social media.

The College undertook a student survey in 2017, to collect data on Sacred Heart students' device use. The findings, which were consistent with with national and international data, included the following:



Sacred Heart Newsletter, Term 1 2018

In September 2017, parents and guardians were invited to a morning tea to discuss the results and consider potential strategies.

At that meeting, Family Zone presented an overview of its mobile internet management solution, Mobile Zone, receiving enthusiastic support from parents and guardians. In response, the College reached the decision to implement the solution for all devices used in the classroom for students in Years 7 to 10, to provide Mobile Zone to all Sacred Heart families with children in those years.

“There was overwhelming interest and support from parents/guardians for the introduction of the application. In response to this tremendous interest in Mobile Zone, the College now provides this tool to all Sacred Heart families.”

*Sacred Heart Newsletter, Term 1 2018*

“We’ve found Mobile Zone gives parents the ability to keep their children safe while online, by controlling what they can access on the internet. In partnership with parents, students also have the ability to set routines as a way of managing the very addictive nature of the internet.”

*Sacred Heart Newsletter, Term 1 2018*

## The Family Zone Journey

An information evening for parents was held in February, presented by Family Zone’s School Community Engagement Manager, Jess Hill. Throughout the evening, parents had access to an online forum to ask questions and air concerns. Dozens of such questions were posed, including

- Can Mobile Zone be used to do homework on the internet yet switch off all social media? (yes)
- Does Family Zone give parents access to read their child’s text messages? (no)
- Does the app cost money? (no)

These were answered in real time by Family Zone’s VP of Customer Experience Peter Scherp, and the entire, detailed Q&A exchange was later uploaded and made accessible to all parents.

Families were also supplied with links to web pages with step-by-step instructions on setting up an account.

“Please be reminded that from Term 2, all students from Years 7 - 10 will be required to have the Mobile Zone agent installed on any device they use in the classroom. For the majority of students who do the right thing, Mobile Zone will not affect their internet usage.”

*Sacred Heart Newsletter, Term 1 2018*

Ideally, there should be a conversation between parents and students about how best to utilise technology.

## Outcomes

As of Term 2 2018, Mobile Zone is required for all Year 7 to 10s on any device used in the classroom (with older students invited but not obliged to opt in). As of May 2018, all families in the target years had signed up - for a total of nearly 1000 students.

For Director of Learning Technologies Michael Chiera, this was a critical goal. "The way we saw it, it had to be all or none."

"That said," he added, "technology alone is no silver bullet when it comes to cyber safety or negotiating appropriate online activity. I'm a huge advocate for educating students as well.

Ideally, there should be a conversation between parents and students about how best to utilise technology. And parents should be role-modelling the use of Mobile Zone as well.

"I openly say to parents, 'I use it, and my wife uses it. It's not just an issue with teens. Adults get distracted and lose sleep. And we need our down time too.' So it's a great tool for all of us to use as well."

The support and the communication from Family Zone have been excellent.

## About Family Zone Education Solutions

Family Zone Education Solutions is committed to making student Internet management easy, and keeping students safe online on any device, anywhere, any time.

### Learn more

Email [sales@familyzone.com](mailto:sales@familyzone.com)  
Visit us at [familyzone.com](http://familyzone.com)