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MEDIA RELEASE

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ONLINE LESSONS HELP YOUTH GET TO GRIPS WITH LAW

A new online legal education program will be rolled out to students across NSW to increase legal literacy and reduce crimes experienced or committed by young people, including intimate image-based abuse and cyber bullying.

Attorney General Mark Speakman today announced that Youth Law Australia (formerly National Children's and Youth Law Centre) has been awarded \$60,000 to develop and deliver crime prevention-focused lesson plans and resources to secondary teachers and students via online platforms and social media.

"The courses will help increase young people's understanding of criminal law, the harm suffered by victims of crime and the consequences of obtaining a criminal record," Mr Speakman said.

"For example, young people may view sexting as harmless fun, but it's important they understand sharing an intimate image of another person without their consent carries a sentence of up to three years in jail," Mr Speakman said.

This new online education program, which will be available later this year, is another way the NSW Government is investing in the legal literacy of young people.

Education Minister Rob Stokes said this complements the NSW Government *Life Ready Program* announced last month, which is helping students understand issues of independence beyond the schooling years, including financial responsibility.

"Young people face many challenges after school, like looking after their own finances or moving out of home. I'm delighted to add my support to programs like those run by Youth Law which help teenagers as they transition into adulthood," Mr Stokes said.

The NSW Department of Justice will also work with the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People on a broader range of actions to promote legal and financial literacy in schools and the community. These actions form part of the NSW Government's upcoming Civil Justice Strategy.

It is estimated the online educational resources which will be housed on new TeachLaw and Youth Law Australia websites will be visited by 20,000 secondary teachers and students over the next 12 months. Youth Law Australia will develop 12 individual lesson plans for secondary teachers to use in the classroom, as well as resources and information available directly to students.