

## **ICDL's latest survey reveals children are more exposed to cyber threats due to the widespread of smart devices**

### ***Education and law enforcement authority officials to review the ICDL study findings***

**UAE, October, 2015** – A recent study released by ICDL Arabia, the governing body and certification authority for the ICDL certification program in Egypt, GCC States and Iraq, has revealed that the unprecedented widespread of ‘smart’ devices in the hands of the youth facilitates unsupervised Internet access, raising serious concerns about their online safety. The Cyber Safety Report 2014, provided an insight on the dangers and threats facing our children today, particularly from issues such as cyber addiction, cyber bullying and cyber exploitation.

The report provided analysis using compiled data from a cross-sectional survey commissioned during ICDL Summer Camp 2014 where 404 anonymous students from across the region, aged between 14 and 18. The survey posed 20 multiple-choice questions with an effort to learn more about the youths’ personal experiences in using the Internet. The questionnaire asked respondents about how, when and from where they access the Internet; the time they spend online and the risks of cyber addiction; their awareness of cyber bullying and its frequency; their experiences in cyber bullying; how they communicate with parents, teachers or government authorities on cyber safety; and how they take responsibility for their safety on the Internet.

The numbers in the report showed a staggering 81 per cent of the young respondents have admitted to receiving complaints about the amount of time they spend online. The study also brought light on the growing cyber bullying problem among children where nearly 60 per cent of surveyed youths acknowledged the presence of cyber bullying among their peers, while an alarming 64 per cent did not know or were unsure what cyber bullying actually means. Almost 12 per cent of the surveyed children believe that cyber bullying happens ‘all the time’ while 23 per cent believe that

it ‘never happens.’ But the most worrisome finding in the survey was the fact that 26 per cent of the children felt that neither their parents nor their teachers are qualified to assist them if they were ever confronted with a cyber-threat related problem.

The Cyber Safety Report 2014 has been distributed to decision-makers across the GCC region, particularly within the educational and law enforcement sectors, in hopes to raise awareness on the significance of the cyber risks facing our children. The study report is available for free in Arabic and English on ICDL Arabia’s website, [www.icdlarabia.org](http://www.icdlarabia.org).

Jamil Ezzo, Director General, ICDL Arabia, said: “The findings of the Cyber Safety Report 2015 are alarming and correlate with the results of the international studies. It is the responsibility of every adult in a child’s life to become aware and spread awareness on the potential threats looming in the Internet so they become vigilant to avoid becoming a likely victim of cybercrimes. We are very concerned about the numbers in our study and call on all concerned authorities for more education and awareness campaigns among the adults, parents and teachers, in order for them to identify with the problems and ensure the safe and responsible use of technology by our future generations”.

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