

MEDIA RELEASE

Talk money, talk scams – Let's talk more openly about scams and how to prevent them

25 August 2026

With this week being Scams Awareness Week, it's a timely opportunity for all of us to talk more openly about scams, how to recognise them, how to stay safe, and importantly for younger Australians what to do if they are scammed.

According to Scamwatch, Australians lost \$2.18 billion to Scams in 2025¹, with people under 18 years reporting losses totally nearly \$930,000 through online shopping and classified scams, including digital marketplaces.

In response, Talk Money with Ecstra Foundation launched a new 'Becoming scam savvy' module as part of its free Talk Money financial literacy workshops to help high school students recognise scam red flags and stay safe online.

Caroline Stewart, Ecstra Foundation CEO shared "Since launch, we've reached over 13,000 students across Australia with our workshops and scams resources. These are specifically developed to help high school students understand that a scam is deliberately designed to deceive people, including by using fear or excitement, and guides them through Scamwatch's 'Stop. Check. Protect.' framework for keeping safe from scams.

Areas covered by the workshops include:

- Common scam tactics
- Detecting red flags in scam scenarios
- How to report a scam and get help

"The anecdotal feedback received from students attending our Becoming scam savvy workshops shows that many have already been the victims of scams and often feel ashamed which can prevent them from seeking help," Stewart says.

"A student told the workshop facilitator that they had been convinced to pay an upfront deposit for a purchase from an online marketplace to prevent the item being sold to someone else. When he realised he had been scammed, he was too embarrassed to contact his bank and see if there was anything they or he could do to prevent the transaction going through or to trace the other party.

"Another student talked about a scam on TikTok which led to her account being taken over, and the scammers then contacting her family to ask for money, which understandably caused a lot of distress for her and for her extended family.

"These are not isolated incidents – many students said that they recognised or have experienced similar scam attempts.

"Ecstra's research shows that only 20 per cent of high school students say they have learnt about scams at school. Education is an important part of the response, but it

¹ <https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/system/files/targeting-scams-report-2025.pdf>

cannot carry the burden alone. Young people also need trusted ways to report scams and seek help, and safer digital and financial systems that make it harder for scammers to succeed,” Stewart says.

“It is essential that young Australians are given the skills and knowledge to recognise scams and to protect themselves online.”

“Young people are transacting, shopping and communicating online, and are very confident in the digital environment. But that comfort doesn't necessarily protect them from increasingly sophisticated scams with Scamwatch data shows that shopping scams were the biggest source of reported scam losses for Australians under 18 last year.

Students who have participated in the workshops say that they have learned to be more cautious and aware of the ways they can be scammed.

More information:

- Talk Money [workshops](#)
- [Scams factsheet](#)
- [Identity theft factsheet](#)
- Becoming scam savvy [lesson plan](#) for teachers

About Talk Money

Talk Money was launched in 2022 to provide financial education in schools across Australia. The interactive workshops teach foundational money lessons for life and encourage students to talk and ask questions about money. Since its inception, the program has delivered over 14,500 workshops to more than 600,000 students across 1,700 schools*.

The program is free to all Australian schools for years 5-10, and the workshops and resources are evidence-based and aligned to the Australian Curriculum. Factsheets and teacher resources are available to the public on the website.

* As at 31 July 2026

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More information is available at: www.talkmoney.org.au and www.ecstra.org.au
Read the 2025 Talk Money Impact report [here](#).

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