would always be dangers for children on the Internet, it was important to be realistic about these dangers and take responsible steps to educate and supervise children's use of the web.

'Parents have legitimate concerns about the types of material that their children may access on the Internet, and they have told us that there is a role for government in providing information to help ensure their children can safely enjoy the many benefits of the Internet,' said Professor Flint.

'Simple, practical steps that parents could take included setting rules for using the Internet, locating the computer in the family room to facilitate supervision, using a filter, and talking about the types of material that are acceptable in the household.'

Helping to launch the site, NSW Commissioner for Children and Young People, Gillian Calvert, praised the advice being provided by the ABA and encouraged parents and teachers to use the practical advice it offers.

'Education and awareness are an essential part of protecting children when they are online. The information on *Cybersmart Kids Online* will be a valuable resource - for both parents and children - in developing this education and awareness,' said Ms Calvert.

Cybersmart Kids Online doesn't only contain advice for parents. It has tips for children of all ages – they can also test how cyber smart they are with the interactive quiz. The site also provides lesson ideas for teachers, and links to sites recommended for children and teenagers.

Printed information material for those not already connected to the Internet is available from the ABA, and the ABA plans to tour shopping centres with a display and information centre to provide assistance and answer parents' queries about Internet safety.

Background

Internet@home

The ABA commissioned Ms Kate Aisbett of Entertainment Insights to undertake the *Internet@home* research project in 2000.

The research was conducted in three stages:
- qualitative focus groups with adults, teenagers and children;
- a national quantitative survey of 1203 adults (stratified by State, gender and home-connection status); and
- a panel of 310 Internet-using households at 284 locations across Australia with children under 18 years of age.

The research focused on:
- impact on the use of other media;
- impact on family dynamics;
- any rules and routines around the use of the Internet;
- perceptions of benefits and risks;
- the location within the household of Internet connection(s); and
- users' information needs (particularly those of new users).

Cybersmart Kids Online

The ABA's family web site was established as part of the first 'Online Australia Day ' on 27 November 1998. It was a joint initiative of the ABA and the National Office of the Information Economy (NOIE).

The site was a 'starter kit' for parents and responsible adults, providing them with tools to guide their children to productive and safe use of the Internet.

> The *Internet@home* research report is available from the ABA ($20) or may be accessed from www.aba.gov.au. *Cybersmart Kids Online* can be found at www.cybersmartkids.com.au.

ABA welcomes auditor's report

The ABA welcomes a report tabled in Parliament in early December 2001 by the Australian National Auditors' Office into the performance of its planning and licensing functions. In particular, the ABA welcomes the acknowledgement the report gives to the work the ABA has already undertaken towards improving its processes and systems.

'In addition to the processes and systems referred to in the audit report as they relate to Planning and Licensing, it is opportune to reflect also on the interaction of those processes with a number of other wider business improvement and management initiatives introduced by the ABA as part of its broad management improvement program,' said Professor David Flint, ABA Chairman.

'An important contribution to the overall system and quality improvement processes is the ABA's commitment to an integrated approach to business planning, performance management and monitoring systems and the development of audit compliance throughout the organisation.'

The ABA was happy to accept all seven of the auditor's recommendations.