

# Relationships Australia

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **TECHNOLOGY CHANGING THE WAY WE LOVE**

The internet, mobile phones and cheaper long distance calls are having a big impact on our relationships. But the impact is largely positive, according to the *2006 Relationships Indicators Survey* released today by Relationships Australia.

The Survey found 88 per cent of Australians used new communications technology to improve important relationships, including mobile phones (61%), cheaper long distance landline calls (60%), internet/email (58%) and SMS text messaging (44%).

According to Anne Hollonds, Vice President, Relationships Australia: "Although it is the young that are making the most use of new technology, the impact cuts across all age groups, with 77 per cent of those over 60 years old saying they have used new technology to improve important relationships."

Mobile phones (SMS and voice) and email were far more commonly used by single people, those with a non live-in boyfriend or girlfriend and younger age groups. In fact, 77 per cent of 18-29 year olds claim to have used SMS to improve important relationships in their life.

### **Social and Romantic Relationships**

New technologies have also changed the way we form relationships. Four in ten (40%) Australians (including 71 per cent of those aged 18-29) have used new technology to form important relationships in their life. Of this number, 64% had used technology to form new social relationships and 23% had used it to form romantic relationships - including 5% whose marriages had resulted from the use of new communications technology.

Those who use technology to form new relationships found it also helped to make stronger family ties (22%) and new work or business networks (13%).

### **Technology at the heart of the problem**

But for a significant minority (29%), new communications technology has caused problems in relationships; with mobile phones the biggest culprit (15%), followed by email/internet (14%) and SMS (12%).

These problems were greater among young people, 45 per cent of whom reported difficulties from the use of new communications technology. In fact, 28 per cent of respondents aged 18-29 reported relationship problems caused specifically by SMS and this was the form of technology most likely to have caused problems in this age group. In contrast, SMS had caused relationship problems for only 3 per cent of those over 60 years.

**ENDS**

A full report of the Indicators Survey 2006 is on the Relationships Australia website: [www.relationships.com.au](http://www.relationships.com.au)  
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**AVAILABLE NOW:** Broadcast quality radio grabs of Anne Hollonds, Vice President, Relationships Australia.  
Go to [www.mediagame.com.au](http://www.mediagame.com.au) It's simple and free to download for broadcast or websites.

*2006 Relationship Indicators Survey*, was conducted by Woolcott Research on behalf of Relationships Australia. It is conducted every two to four years as part of RA's ongoing commitment to understanding the nature of today's relationships and providing effective relationship intervention to Australians. The survey involved telephone interviews with 1,200 persons aged 18 years or older and was conducted in August 2006 in all Australian States and Territories.