Cyber attacks against companies and governments have become a disturbingly common theme in the news and the demand for qualified professionals to combat those threats is outstripping the supply. The expected demand for cybersecurity professionals is expected to rise to 6 million globally by 2019, with a projected shortfall of 1.5 million.\(^1\)

In support of closing this cyber talent gap, Raytheon and the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) commissioned a 12-country global survey, *Securing Our Future: Closing the Cyber Talent Gap*, on the career interests and educational preparedness of millennials ages 18–26. Raised in a digital environment and preparing to make career choices, millennials could help close the cyber talent gap if engaged and properly trained.

Findings from the study fall under the following themes:

1. **Australian schools are building early cybersecurity awareness.**
   Australian schools are contributing to a culture of healthy cyber habits among millennials, with early exposure to computers above the global average.

2. **Australia’s millennials have a growing interest in the cyber profession.**
   The country’s respondents said they feel more drawn now than a year ago to the cyber field because it’s a challenging career they could do well in and they already have interest or training in that area.

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A majority of young adults in Australia say feeling a personal connection to their employer’s goals or mission and salary are very important to them, and cybersecurity careers offer both higher than average pay and the opportunity to ensure national and economic security.

3. Australian millennials need more cyber career information and connections.
About half of millennials said they didn’t know the typical job tasks cyber professionals carry out.

Youth adults also offered glimpses into potentially effective approaches to steer them toward the profession.

4. Networking with cyber professionals increases young Australian adults’ interest.
A major influencing factor to engage young adults in pursuing a career in cyber is exposure to practicing professionals.

While only 13% of the ones who had discussed cybersecurity as a career option.

Summary
Cyber professionals and employers need to engage with students early on, mentoring and sponsoring cyber clubs and other programmes to open students’ eyes to cyber career options.

Whilst Australia is doing a great job of introducing computers and cyber to students at a young age, it could do more to guide students into a cyber profession. Therefore, it is important to encourage students to explore cyber careers at various stages of their education. A lack of understanding of the wide variety of skills required may be an obstacle keeping potential candidates from enquiring about a cyber career.

Our daily lives, the Australian economy, and our national security depend on a stable and safe Internet. It is therefore critical that the private sector, the government and educational institutions collaborate to build adequate human resource supply to secure our cyberspace.

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