



## Online love can be truly everlasting if you play it safe

PLAYING it safe online could be the difference between finding love or heartache.

Experts say providing basic information, meeting in public places and honesty are the keys to internet dating success.

Social media academic Celeste Lawson said the Fraser Coast's lonely residents could connect with people who shared their dreams and aspirations thanks to the internet.

"It provides a wider opportunity for people to link with like-minded people," the central Queensland University communications professor said.

Dr Lawson, who spent 14 years in the Queensland police force, said it was important to stay safe.

"It is so easy to steal someone's identity online," she said.

"I wouldn't be revealing a lot of personal details to someone I didn't know. Credit card numbers, date of birth – things that online trolls

could use to create another identity."

She said the internet was a double-edged sword.

"Social media provides a level of anonymity that you don't get in a face-to-face relationship and that can mean it's easier to lie about yourself or your circumstances," she said.

Lying about your age, job or relationship status could open a world wide web of trouble. Women are the key culprits in one of the latest misleading trends.

Beautyheaven.com.au research shows 57% of Australian women enhance the photos they put online.

Beautyheaven editor Carli Alman said improving the look of thighs, tummies, skin and body shape with photo editing software was common.

"Look to beauty products to enhance things like your skin and fun poses to make you look slimmer before you turn to major editing tools," she said. – APN NEWSDESK