

North Belfast Area Learning Community



Online Safety Newsletter

Autumn 2021

Grand Theft Auto (GTA)



GTA is rated 18+ by PEGI (a couple of versions are rated 16+), this is largely because of bad language, violence, glamourisation of crime and the depiction of drugs. **GTA is not suitable for those under this age.**

What do I need to be aware of?

- Mature content
- In game chat
- In game spending – make sure your bank account details are not linked.

Call of Duty Mobile

There is also a mobile version of Call of Duty for Android and iOS devices. Find out more about this version here: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/call-of-duty-mobile/>

It is important to talk to your child regularly about what they are playing online and make sure that they know that they should always talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any concerns.

What can we play instead?

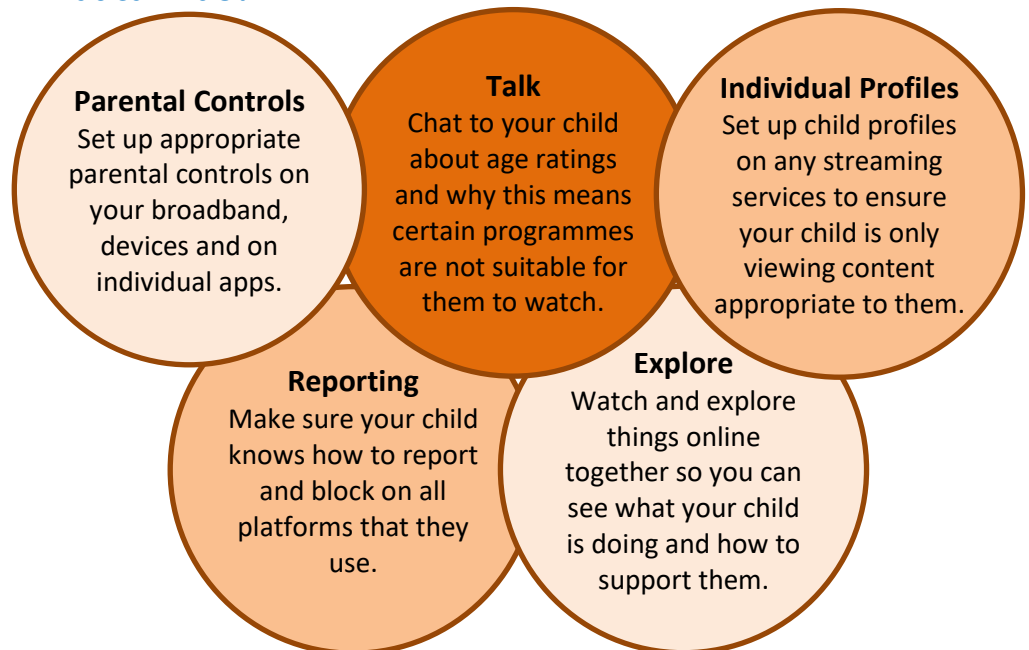
You can use this database to search for games based on your child's age: <https://www.taminggaming.com/cgi-bin/taminggaming.cgi>

Squid Game – rated 15+

Have you heard of Squid Game? It's one of Netflix's latest releases about a group of people participating in a series of children's games in the hope of winning a large cash prize. It has been **rated 15** by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). The BBFC focus on helping you choose what is appropriate for your family to watch. You can find out why Squid Game has been rated 15 by visiting the BBFC: <https://www.bbfc.co.uk/release/squid-game-q29sbgvidglvbipwwc01mzm3ndg>.

Due to its current popularity, content from this show can be found on numerous other platforms such as YouTube, TikTok and Roblox, so your child may come across this show without even viewing it on Netflix. Content may range from trailers of the show or content that other people create such as memes, reenactments and games.

What can I do?



More information:

It is important to talk to your child regularly about what they are watching and ensure that they know they should always tell you or another trusted adult if they do see anything upsetting. You can find out more about the type of inappropriate content your child might come across online, how to deal with it and links to further support here: <https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/inappropriate-content/learn-about-it/>

Your child's online life

There is so much that we can do online nowadays including playing games, chatting with others, watching TV or sharing our videos/photographs. Being online can be great but it's important that we set boundaries for our children to keep them safe whilst they explore being online, develop their digital resilience and understanding of what to do if anything negative happens when online.



So how can we help keep our children safe? We can start by checking age restrictions/ratings. **It's important that we follow these to ensure that what our children are doing or seeing online is appropriate for their age.**

Where can I find age ratings?

- **Films:** The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) rate films. This page includes a link to a 'Parents' Guide to Age Ratings': <https://www.cbbfc.co.uk/resources/viewing-films-safely-online>.
- **Video games:** PEGI provides age classifications for video games. PEGI **considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty**. It is important to note that PEGI do not take into consideration user generated content within games (such as on Roblox) and the chat facilities within games.
- **Apps:** Check the individual age ratings within the relevant app store. We also recommend that you download any apps and play them yourself to check their suitability.
- **Social Media networks:** All social media networks have a minimum age rating; they are all at least 13+.

What else can I do?

- Explain the importance of age ratings to your child.
- Go online together and let your child show you what they are accessing online.
- Set up parental controls on your broadband, devices, consoles and on any individual apps that your child is using. This will reduce the chances of them accessing anything unsuitable as well as viewing inappropriate content for example whilst on YouTube.
- Chat to your child regularly about what they are doing online and as always, remind your child that if anything is worrying them about what they see online then they should tell you or another trusted adult.

What if my child has seen something inappropriate?

This is a useful article from Thinkuknow explaining what to do and who to contact if you have any concerns:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/what-to-do-if-your-child-has-seen-something-inappropriate-online/>

#AskTheAwkward

Do you need help talking to your secondary aged child about online relationships? #AskTheAwkward has been set up by Thinkuknow and features films and resources to help you start a conversation:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/ask-the-awkward/>

How to spot scams

Do you know how to spot a scam email/text/phone call? This article details what you should do if you receive a scam email and provides guidance on how to spot a scam email:

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/scam-emails>

It's important to remember that your bank (or any other official source) should never ask you to supply personal information in an email. If you need to check, call them directly.

Further information

The National Cyber Security Centre provide guidance on how to deal with suspicious emails and text messages: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/suspicious-email-actions>

Anti-Bullying week: 15th – 19th Nov 2021

This year, the theme is One Kind Word. The Anti-Bullying Alliance have worked with Kidscape to develop a tool for parents and carers to help them support their children and bring Anti-Bullying Week to life. You can find out more here:

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week/parents-and-carers>

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Roblox

What is Roblox?

You can either use Roblox to create games or play games that other users have created. **Roblox has a PEGI rating of 7+ BUT as a lot of the content is user generated, which PEGI does not rate, these games may not be suitable for your child to view/play.**

What should I be aware of?

Chat Facility - Players can chat to each other on Roblox. You can add parental controls to turn this feature off completely or add restrictions.

Virtual Currency - Players can buy Robux (their virtual currency) to buy in-game upgrades or accessories. If you do not want your child to purchase them, then ensure your card details are not saved.

What should I do?

- Play the game with your child.
- Explore the parental controls within Roblox and set appropriately for your child (for example restrict access to age-appropriate games).
- Show your child how to use the Report Abuse system within Roblox to report inappropriate content and how to block other users.

Further information:

- <https://corp.roblox.com/parents/>
- <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/roblox-parents%E2%80%99-guide-%E2%80%93-what-it-and-it-safe-your-child>

YouTube

YouTube is intended for users over the age of 13, however the App store rates YouTube as 17+ due to the content that can be found on there.

How can I make YouTube safer?

- **Turn on Restricted mode** as this restricts the availability of mature content. You will need to set up a Google account to do this.
- **Explore YouTube together** and see what they like to watch. Make sure your child understands that they can **talk to you** if they see anything that makes them feel uncomfortable online.
- Ensure your child knows how to **report inappropriate content**.

YouTube Kids



YouTube recommends that **YouTube Kids** is used for children under the age of 13 as it provides a safer environment and offers greater controls (you can select the shows that you would prefer them to watch). Find out how to set up the parental controls here:

<https://support.google.com/youtubekids/answer/6172308?hl=en-GB>

Supervised experience (Beta version)

Managed by you by creating a supervised Google Account. It allows you to choose from three content settings:

- **Explore:** generally suitable for ages 9+.
- **Explore More:** generally suitable for viewers ages 13+.
- **Most of YouTube:** contains almost all YouTube content (except age-restricted content) so it *will* include sensitive topics that may only be appropriate for older teens. <https://www.youtube.com/myfamily/>



Posting videos

You should be over 13 years of age to post videos. Talk to your child about posting videos, do they understand what information they should keep private and what to do if they receive negative comments? YouTube have produced these tips:

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802244?hl=en-GB>

Should I let my child set up a YouTube account?

This article features the benefits and risks of using YouTube and their top tips: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/should-i-let-my-child-set-up-a-youtube-account/>



Parental Controls

Mobiles

Have you set up appropriate parental controls on your child's phone? Controls can easily be set up and allow you to do the following (and more!):

iPhone

Set Content & Privacy controls	Prevent iTunes purchases
Restrict the use of built-in apps or features	Prevent explicit content and content ratings
Prevent web content	Restrict Game Center
Restrict Siri web search	Prevent App Store purchases

How do I do this?

To change the above settings on your child's device, go into 'Settings' on their phone and select the feature you wish to change. You will need to set up a screen time passcode for some of the features.

Learn more: <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT201304>

Android phone

On Android devices, you will need a Google Account and you will set up Parental controls within the Play store. You will need to go to 'Settings' and 'Parental controls.'

Restrict content downloaded/purchased from Google Play	Manage purchases
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What about Family Link?

You could set up Family Link (more information available here: <https://families.google.com/familylink/>) to offer more control:

Manage screen time	See where they are
View their activity	Manage their apps

Learn more:

<https://support.google.com/googleplay/answer/1075738?hl=en-GB>

Is your child playing Gacha Life?

Gacha Life is rated 9+ on the App Store and Google Play Store. This article provides further information about this app as well as potential concerns:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/news-blogs/what-is-gacha-life-what-parents-need-to-know/>

WhatsApp: View once

WhatsApp have introduced a new view once feature when sending photos and videos. This means that once the photo/video has been viewed, the recipient can't see it again and they won't have the ability to forward or save it.

You need to be aware that if your child is using WhatsApp, that they understand that even if they use this feature, the recipient could still take a screenshot or screen recording of the photo/video before it disappears without you knowing. They could then share this with other people.

More information available here: <https://faq.whatsapp.com/general/chats/about-view-once/>

Ian Wright shares tips on gaming responsibly

Ian Wright shares his tips on gaming responsibly including playing games with your kids:

<https://youtu.be/pnWionq9C4c>

You can also visit Internet Matter's Online Gaming hub which provides advice on how to keep your family safe:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/online-gaming-advice/>