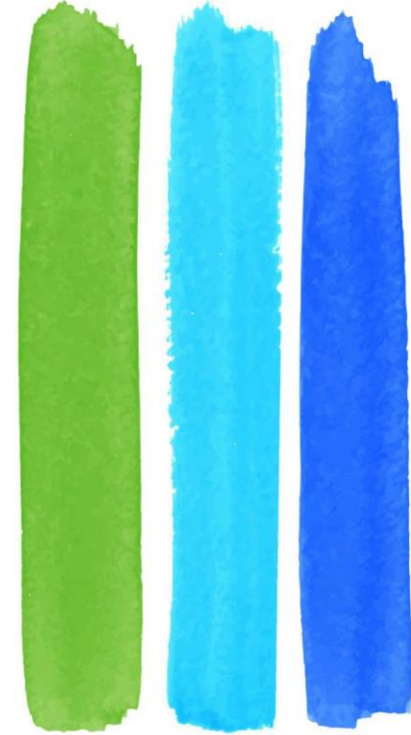




**Think U Know?
Online safety information for
parents**

20th October 2022



Are Your Kids Safe Online?



How much do you know about your child's online activity? Awareness is everything!



Talking To Your Child



When opening the conversation with your child start with positives, finding out as much as you can about what your child does online and what it means to them.

- Things you could try:
- Ask your child to show you their favourite websites, apps and social media services and what they do on them. Listen and show interest. You could also encourage them to teach you the basics of the site or app.
- Ask your child if anything ever bothers or worries them about going online. You could use examples of events from the films and ask if they've ever heard of something similar happening. Talk in general about what children can do to stay safe online.

Gaming: What's Appropriate For Your Child?



- **What is PEGI (Pan European Game Information)?**
- The PEGI system is designed to inform the public of what's suitable and what's not for different ages. It can be a helpful tool in helping you to decide what games are appropriate for your child.
- PEGI's professional analysts look at hundreds of video games every year and determine what is suitable for different age groups using a set of criteria.
- This criteria has been established by experts in the field of child protection, psychology, the law and media. It helps analysts to decide what game content is appropriate in each of the five rating groups.

Gaming: What's Appropriate For Your Child?



How are games rated under PEGI?

All games released in the UK will have one of the following PEGI age ratings on the packaging: 3, 7, 12, 16 or 18. The rating means that the game shouldn't be played by a young person under that age.

Why? Because there may be content within the game which could potentially be harmful, frightening or worrying to children. As well as an age rating, PEGI also uses icons showing content descriptors, letting you know if a game contains: violence, drugs, bad language, discrimination, fear, gambling, sex, or in-app purchases.

How Risky is in-game chat?



Gaming is often a social activity for children and talking with friends is part of their enjoyment. However, in-game chat can pose risks such as:

- **chatting with people they don't know.** This can include adults that are seeking to make contact with children with the intention of [sexual grooming](#).
- **inappropriate or unmoderated chat.** Whilst a lot of chat is moderated, chat is live and there is a risk of exposure to sexual language, swearing or bullying.
- **requests to make chat private.** Once chat is moved off a monitored platform, no one is moderating it. This can be used to pressurise children into sharing personal information, photos, video or chat that they don't want to.
- **offering gifts or trades.** This may be used by offenders to build trust and a relationship with a child, as part of grooming.

Should I Be Worried About Gifts and Trades in Gaming?



- Items such as game currency, [skins](#), [loot boxes](#), tools and weapons are often used in games to help a player progress through the game or give increased status amongst other gamers. Often these require in-app purchases, which many children won't have access to, or require your permission for, so accepting trades or gifts may be tempting.
- Whilst not always the case, trades or gifts within gaming can be used by child sex offenders to gain contact with a child. They may offer gifts asking nothing in return, this can be part of [the grooming process](#) and can help to build a close relationship with a young person. They may also try to use gifts as a way to persuade a child to do something such as going on a webcam, taking photos or videos of themselves, moving conversation to a different online platform or to an offline platform such as messaging over phone.



- Watching videos is one of the most popular ways children and young people consume content online. 91% of 5-15 year olds watch video-on-demand content online and 97% use video sharing platforms, with YouTube being the most used platform ([Ofcom Children and Parents: Media use and attitudes report 2020/21](#)).
- There are many reasons why children might enjoy this online activity. Videos can be entertaining, funny, creative or educational. From silly animal videos to slime-making or video-game tutorials, the internet has it all. But the amount and availability of content children of all ages can enjoy does increase the risk that they may see something inappropriate.

What is inappropriate Video Content?



- What you might consider inappropriate video content for your child might differ from the views of other parents and probably your child's! It also depends on your child's age, social and emotional skills, resilience and maturity level.
- Inappropriate video content for your child includes any video material that worries, scares or upsets them, that is directed at older children and adults, or encourages your child to engage in dangerous or risky behaviours. This could include: sexual images or video content, graphic videos or games which show violent behaviour or images and videos that encourage crime, terrorism, eating disorders or suicide and self-harm.

How Could My Child See Inappropriate Content?



- Most children and young people don't go looking for this type of material online. The internet is a public and open space, where anyone can post and share content. If your child is watching videos online, whether it's on a streaming service, YouTube or through another platform, they may, accidentally, see something not intended for them.
- Sometimes, children can also be exposed to unsuitable videos through a link they've found or been sent, or an app they've downloaded.
- This means it can be challenging to monitor what your child is viewing but there are some things you can do to help them have a safe and positive experience whilst watching videos.

What To Do if Your Child Sees Something Inappropriate



Most children will have a safe and positive experience watching videos online. But occasionally, children do see videos or other content that is not suitable for them.

1. Stay calm

2. Think about how your child is feeling

3. Find the right moment to talk and listen to what they say

- **If it was an accident**, reassure them that is not their fault and show understanding.
- **If they went looking for it or created it**, have an honest conversation about why they felt the need to.
- **If they were sent it**, explain that this is not OK, the person who has sent it has done something wrong and there are some actions you can take together to report it. Read [Get Help](#) for more information

What To Do if Your Child Sees Something Inappropriate



4. Agree together what actions to take

- Together, you should agree what actions to take. These actions should be positive, supporting them to be safer, rather than punishing them for what has happened. You may want to remove your child's online access, but consider the impact this may have. The most likely consequence of such an action would be that your child will not discuss future problems with you for fear of being cut-off from their online lives.
- Talk about what they can do to be safer and reduce the possibility of it happening again. For example, making sure [parental controls](#) in place to filter out inappropriate content.
- If you need to report content, try to do this together. This will help your child to feel in control of what has happened. Most inappropriate content can be [reported to the platforms and sites](#). Sexual or violent content that appears in adverts, films, television programmes or video games can be reported to [Ofcom](#).
- If the content is a nude or semi-nude image of a child they can be reported to the [Internet Watch Foundation](#). Reporting to the IWF is confidential and can be done anonymously.
- If your child has been inappropriately contacted by an adult online (for example, sent a sexual message or picture or being asked to do something that makes them feel worried, uncomfortable or afraid) report it to us at www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre

Four Things You can Do To Keep Your Child Safe Online?



- 1. Talk to your child about what videos they like to watch online (and watch some together)**
- 2. Look up the age ratings and the minimum age of use for the apps, sites and games your child uses**
- 3. Set up parental controls and filters**
- 4. Use resources from CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) website to help you help your child stay safer online**



Has someone acted inappropriately towards your child online?

- If your child has experienced sexual or offensive contact online that has made them feel uncomfortable or someone is trying to meet up with them, you can **[report this directly to CEOP.](#)**
- This may have happened in a chat room, app, message board, instant messenger or on a social networking site. It could be on a mobile phone, games console or computer and be in the form of messages, images or conversation over webcam. The important thing is that if an adult is making sexual advances to your child on the internet you should report it to the CEOP and the police.

When Should I Report?



If you're worried that your child is being [groomed](#) online or [sexually exploited](#) you should report your concerns to CEOP.

- It is not always easy to spot the signs of online grooming and sexual exploitation so if you have any concern at all about someone your child is in contact with, you should get in touch.
- You should always report if your child is or has been in contact with someone who is:
 - Chatting online to your child about sex
 - Asking them to do sexual things on webcam
 - Asking to meet up if they've only met them online
 - Requesting sexual pictures
 - Forcing them into sexual activity
 - Making them feel unsafe
- CEOP is a command of the National Crime Agency and can investigate what is happening – with the assurance that the safety and wellbeing of your child is paramount at all times.
- **If you are concerned that your child is in immediate danger, call 999**