Welcome to the February 2022 Scomis Online Safety Newsletter for Parents

Online Gaming

There is a great deal of advice and guidance available for parents about Online Gaming. Knowing where to start looking can be a challenge! The following websites have lots of information, summarised as follows:

Childnet—Online Gaming; an introduction for parents and carers includes advice on:

- How and where to play safely
- The risks
- Frequently asked questions
- Support and information

ThinkUKnow—Gaming: what parents and carers need to know includes advice on:

- 3 ways to make gaming safer for your child
- how risky is in-game chat?
- how to tell what is an age appropriate game
- In App purchases

Parentzone—Gaming: a parent's guide | Parent Zone includes advice on:

- the links between gaming and gambling
- what you need to know about gaming communities
- top tips on helping your child play games safely
- inappropriate content
- how much time is too much time?

Internet Matters—Online Gaming | Resources for Parents - Internet Matters includes advice on:

- setting parental controls on games and consoles
- gaming guides for parents
- gaming guides for children
- gaming books

Family Lives—Gaming | Family Lives includes advice on:

- talking to your child about gaming
- keeping teens safe
- setting boundaries

watch the video on Pros and cons of social media: top tips to help parents of teens

NSPCC— Online Games: understand the risks and get advice to help children play online games safely

Find out more about:

- age ratings of games they play
- messaging and contact functions on the games
- trolling, griefing and scams
- how to report problems

Young Minds—Gaming:A guide for parents includes:

- how gaming may affect mental health
- what to do if you are worried
- finding professional help
- further support

South West Grid for Learning—Online Safety and Gaming Includes articles on:

- what is gaming?
- benefits of gaming
- why people game
- the gaming community
- basic privacy and security settings

Review the Gaming Dictionary and discover the meaning of: FPS, CCG, MMO and much more.

Draft Online Safety Bill

What is it?
The three things the bill sets out to do are:

- prevent the spread of illegal content and activity such as images of child abuse, terrorist material and hate crimes, including racist abuse
- **protect children from harmful material**
- protect adults from legal - but harmful - content

The NSPCC, has signed an open letter to Nadine Dorries, asking her to put children "at the heart" of the bill to:

- disrupt grooming pathways
- tackle how offenders use social media to organise abuse
- have a named manager responsible for children's safety
- give more powers to combat abuse in private messaging
- **set up a statutory body to represent the interests of children**

What's next? Joint parliamentary committee is due to lay out its recommendations any day now before going back to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) for a final decision on what to include in the bill, with a view to presenting it back to Parliament around March 2022.
Watch this space!

Roblox in the news!

With Roblox making the news this week, this article provides link to CommonSense Media's review: Recommended Age: 13

Parents need to know that Roblox is a game-creation website where users design and upload their own games Rated for age 13+ based on continuing challenges with problematic content. Potentially OK for kids younger than 13 *if account restrictions are turned on and parents pay close attention to their kids' activities on the platform*.

Posts and chats are filtered for inappropriate content and personal information references if a user is 12 or younger. Parents can restrict their child's chatting capabilities, CommonSense Media recommend that parents disable the chat functionality as a protective measure when they can't supervise their kids' play.

Read **CommonSense Media's** review in full

Find out more about the Roblox Privacy and Safety Checklist from South West Grid for Learning including:

- How to block users
- How to report chat on the website
- Reporting a game
- Reporting abuse in-game
- Chat and Privacy
- Chat and interaction settings

Need Help in the holidays?

Remember FREE advice is just a phone call away from the O_2 and NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5002

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