

Welcome to the February 2024 Scomis Online Safety Newsletter for Parents and Carers

Online Gaming

In the December 2023 issue of the SCOMIS Online Safety newsletter we recommended 'setting up devices' before wrapping up. In this issue we will sign-post you to advice and guidance available for parents and carers about Online Gaming. Knowing where to begin 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 games safely
- The risks of Online Gaming
- How to report inappropriate behaviour
- Further support and guidance

CEOPS ThinkUKnow—[Gaming: what parents and carers need to know](#) includes advice and videos on:

- 3 ways to make gaming safer for your child
- how to find out about 'in-game chat'
- how you can tell what is an age appropriate game
- In App purchases

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](#) find out about:

- how to talk to your child about gaming
- how to game safely
- how to set boundaries
- why gaming is so addictive
- the positive sides of gaming
- how to encourage healthy screen time

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, grieving and scams
- how to report problems

Young Minds—[Gaming: A guide for parents](#) includes:

- what to do if you are worried
- finding professional help
- view their [guide for young people](#) on gaming and mental health

South West Grid for Learning—[Online Safety and Gaming](#) includes articles on:

- what is gaming?
- benefits of gaming
- [Online safety and gaming](#)
- basic privacy and security settings

Review the [Gaming Dictionary](#) and discover the meaning of: FPS, CCG, MMO and much more.



Screen time—Benefits v Potential Risks

Learn about the impacts of screen time on children

Benefits of screen time identified by [Internet Matters](#) include:

- Online games and activities can enhance teamwork and creativity
- The internet gives children access to a wealth of information to help build their knowledge
- Interacting with computers improves both visual intelligence and hand-eye coordination

Potential risks include:

- Sleep cycles are affected by blue light from the screen
- Impact on behaviour
- Impact on brain development
- how to get support with screen time

Review [Internet Matters](#) article in full



Watch the [video](#) from [Common Sense Media](#) on the 5 signs to make sure your child has a healthy relationship with screen time

Social Media Guides

Do you know if your child is using Social Media?

Does your child use chat sites, Apps to talk to family and friends?

Do you know if your child is sharing selfies?

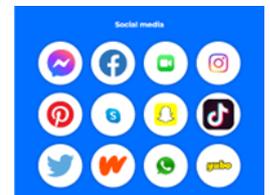
Have you set up parental controls? If you answered 'no' to any of the above questions visit

[Internet Matters](#) and review their advice and guidance on:

Facebook Messenger Facetime Instagram Skype TikTok Whatpad Whatsapp Youbo (and more!)

Remember if your child is gaming online, they could be chatting and communicating with other players (strangers) or friends. [Internet Matters](#) has provided safety guides and videos to help you keep your child safe on:

[Steam](#) [Xbox live](#) [Twitch TV](#) [Roblox](#) [Minecraft](#) [PlayStation Network](#) [Nintendo Network](#) – NB Nintendo's consoles are more family-friendly than most, its chat functionality is a lot more geared to safe interaction for younger players.



Check the following websites:

[Childnet's Parent and Carer's Toolkit](#)

[ThinkUKnow's advice for Parents and Carer's](#)

[ThinkUKnow's interactive website for 4-7 year olds](#)

Need Help in the holidays?

Remember FREE advice is just a phone call away from the [NSPCC helpline](#):

0808 800 5000

[Childline](#): 0800 1111