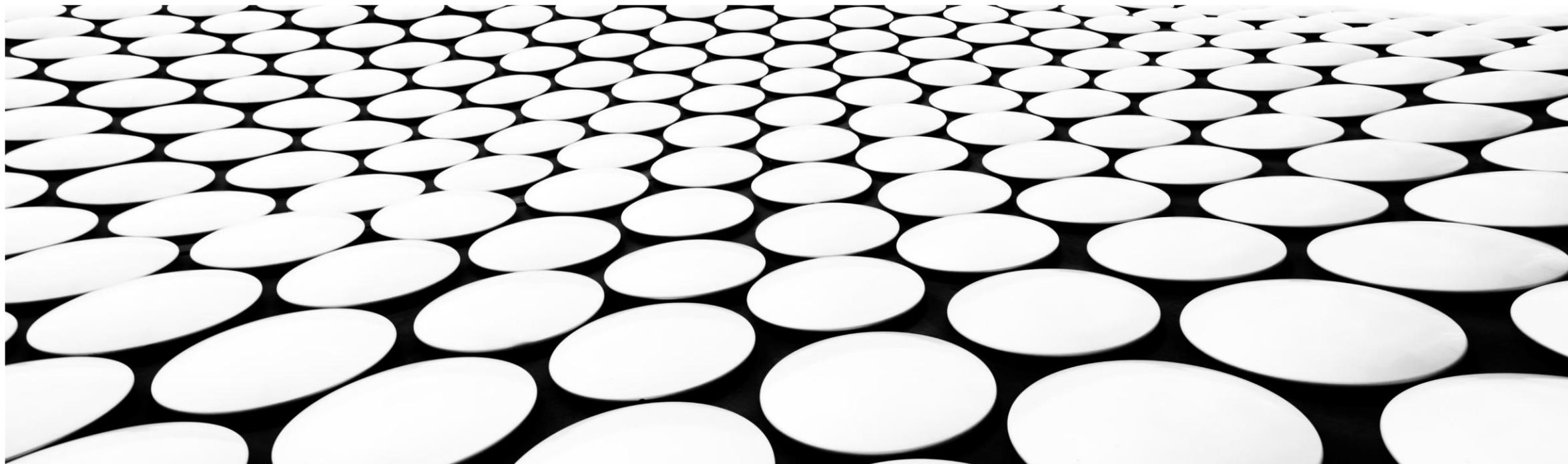

SAFER INTERNET DAY 2022

PARENT INFORMATION MEETING – TUESDAY 8TH FEBRUARY

PREPARED BY MRS. A WHARTON (IT LEAD)



ALL FUN AND GAMES? EXPLORING RESPECT AND RELATIONSHIPS ONLINE.



TOP TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

- Having conversations without judgement.
- Knowing where you can learn more about their favourite apps and games.
- Getting support if things go wrong.
- Reassuring your child that whatever happens online, you are there to support them.
- Children's online vulnerability.

HAVING CONVERSATIONS WITHOUT JUDGEMENT.

- Whether by playing games, watching videos, or doing things your child enjoys, spending time together online is a great way to start conversations about the online world and how they're finding being a part of it. It is important to ask questions and take an interest in what your child enjoys online. An essential part of having this open dialogue is to not judge, even if their behaviour or life online isn't what you wanted or expected. This ensures that your child feels they can come to you if ever they make a mistake or experience a problem online.

Start the conversation on a positive note:

- 🗉 What do you like most about the internet and why?
- 🗉 How do you have fun using the internet and technology?
- 🗉 What's your favourite game, app or website?
- 🗉 How does going online make you feel?
- 🗉 How does the internet and technology make your life better?
- 🗉 Do you most enjoy going online alone, or with other people?



Talk about relationships and communicating online:

- 🗉 Who do you communicate with online? What different methods do you use to communicate online? (E.g. in-game chat, video calls, group chats, etc.)
- 🗉 What is good about communicating online?
- 🗉 What can be challenging about communicating online?
- 🗉 What is different about talking to someone online compared to talking face to face?
- 🗉 How much can you trust people you only know online?
- 🗉 What do you and your friends do to keep yourselves safe and happy, when you are chatting and communicating online?

Ages
3-7

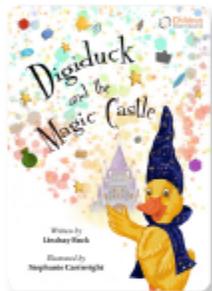
Whooo helps yooou?

Read the story 'Digiduck and the Magic Castle' with your child:
[childnet.com/digiduck-magic](https://www.childnet.com/digiduck-magic)

Discuss together how Wise_Owl and Eagle_Owl help Digiduck and his family.

Ask your child: Who helps you when you have a problem online?

Work with your child to write or draw a list of people they could speak to if they had a problem online. This might include you, other family members, a class teacher or trusted family friends. You could even practise what they might say or come up with a code word that everybody knows.



The Digiduck Series

Did you know that 'Digiduck and the Magic Castle' is the fourth book in the Digiduck series?

Read all the stories and join Digiduck, Wise_Owl and more on their online safety adventures at:
[childnet.com/digiduck](https://www.childnet.com/digiduck).



Ages
7-11

Childnet SMART Video Lessons

Watch this series of 6 mini video lessons hosted by the Childnet Education Team together with your child. You'll be guided through activities and discussions about different online safety topics. The sessions are aimed at children aged 6-9 and can be found here: [childnet.com/resources/video-lessons](https://www.childnet.com/resources/video-lessons).



<https://www.childnet.com/resources/digiduck-stories/>

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/video-lessons/>

KNOWING WHERE YOU CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR FAVOURITE APPS AND GAMES.

- Websites like Common Sense Media or The Family Gaming Database can be invaluable sources of information. When your child starts talking about a new game or app, why not do some research into the reporting and blocking options available? Then you can help your child if they come to you with an issue.
- Useful Websites
- <https://www.common sense media.org/>
- <https://www.taminggaming.com/en-gb/>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>
- Games with a chat function are a common worry with parents, making sure that the correct privacy settings are in place so that children cannot be communicated with by strangers is vital to keeping younger children safe
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-games/>
- <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/online-gaming/>

At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What parents & carers need to know about ... PLAYSTATION 5

The PlayStation 5 is the next-generation video game console from Sony. It offers improved graphics, sound and much quicker loading times. It also has a new controller with motion- and force-feedback features for a more immersive experience. Parents should note that there are two different versions available that support discs or digital downloads.

Safely setting up your Playstation 5

PlayStation 5 Blu-ray

PlayStation 5 Blu-ray is the larger of the two consoles, although not by a lot. It enables you to play games on disc or by digital download. Although all new games are available digitally, the disc drive is still useful to watch movies from discs as well as play most existing PlayStation 4 games you own. It also enables you to purchase second-hand games on a disc, which is often much cheaper.

PlayStation 5 Digital

PlayStation 5 Digital is slightly smaller as it doesn't contain a Blu-ray drive. This means the console is cheaper but can only run games you download via an internet connection. Unlike the Xbox Series X and the cheaper Series S, the digital-only PlayStation 5 is just as powerful as its more expensive disc-and-download counterpart.

Family Settings

Both PlayStation 5 models offer important family controls that should be set up before your family starts using the system. Although this can take a little time, it ensures that children have their own accounts and sets limits on spending, interactions and age ratings. If done correctly, children cannot circumvent these controls that require the parent's password to alter.

Setting Limits on Play Time

You can specify how long, and at which times of day, the console can be used to play without needing a password. Talk to your children and agree how long is appropriate, then set this on their profile, so it's something they understand and accept. You can set different time limits on each of the users on the system.

Managing Spending

You can set a limit on spending via Parental Controls. This means that any additional purchase requires your password. Another alternative is not to put credit card details into your account and instead add credit as they need it using the book-token-like cards in-store or online. A nice feature on the PlayStation 5 is setting an amount of pocket money to spend on games each month.

Setting Age Ratings

You can set a limit that stops any older-rated games being played without a password being entered. This is not only a good way to ensure children are playing appropriate content but is a good chance to talk about the games they are playing.

Downloading the PlayStation App

The PlayStation 5 uses the same PlayStation app as the PlayStation 4. This is a super-easy way to tweak the user settings for your family without having to log on to the console. It's a good way to keep track of what different people are enjoying on the system. The app can also be used as an easier way to log-on by scanning the QR code.

Creating Guest Account Password

An important step during the PlayStation 5 set-up is specifying the default settings for guest accounts as well as a password for your own account. This ensures that all users need to access the system with their own account and related limits and settings.

Managing Online Interactions

Another important area of the Parental Controls is specifying how and who your child can interact with online. Modern consoles enable players to share text, voice, images and video with each other. You can set whether they can do this, and also apply a password before they can add new friends.

Game Subscriptions

In addition to buying individual games digitally or in-store, you can also subscribe to services that offer access to hundreds of games for a monthly fee. PlayStation Plus is needed to play games online with other people and offers a set of games you can immediately download for the new system. PlayStation Now enables you to stream (and download) a wider set of games.

Types of Accounts

Set up Parent Accounts

Setting up a parent's account is important so you can manage the console for your family. After plugging your console in, connect to the internet and wait for updates to finish. Once updated, create a parent user account with an email address you regularly check and password specified.

Set up Child Accounts

Setting up child accounts are important to be able to limit play time, spending and apply age ratings automatically. Separate accounts for each child user can be set up. It's a good idea to specify a password for the guest account so children cannot access this also.

Meet our expert

Andy Robertson is a freelance family technology expert who often works for the BBC. He runs the Family Gamer TV YouTube channel and contributes to a range of national media on the topic of video games and family.



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What parents & carers need to know about... XBOX SERIES X'S

The Xbox Series X and Series S are the next-generation video game consoles from Microsoft. They offer improved graphics, sounds and much quicker loading times. Parents should note that the two versions available are quite different.

Safely Setting up Your Xbox Series X / S

Xbox Series X

Xbox Series X is a larger device, with a disc drive, twice as much storage and higher performance chips. It can play the new Xbox games at the highest resolution and with the best visuals. It enables you to run games from disc or digitally.

Xbox Series S

Xbox Series S is a smaller, disc-less version of the console which plays all the new games but with reduced visuals or possibly frame-rates. Because it doesn't support discs you can't play old games from discs and must purchase new games digitally. It also has smaller storage, offering 500GB which is about half that of the Xbox Series X.

Apply Family Settings

Both Xbox models offer important family controls that should be set-up before your family starts using the system. Although this can take a little time, it ensures that children have their own accounts and sets limits on spending, interactions and age ratings. If done correctly, children cannot circumvent these controls that require the parent's password to alter.

Setting Age-Ratings

You can set a limit that stops any older rated games being played without a password being entered. This is not only a good way to ensure children are playing appropriate content but is a good chance to talk about the games they are playing.

Managing Spending

You can set a limit on spending via the family settings. This means that any additional purchase requires your password. Another alternative is not to put credit card details into your account and instead add credit as they need it using the book-token-like cards in-store or online.

Managing Online Interactions

Another important area of the Family Settings is specifying how and who your child can interact with online. Modern consoles enable players to share text, voice, images and video with each other. You can set whether they can do this, and also apply a password before they can add new friends.

Setting Limits on Play-Time

You can specify the time of day and how long the console can be used to play without needing a password. Talk to your children and agree how long is appropriate, then set this together so it's something they understand and accept. On the Xbox Series S, you can also limit time on a particular game, which is a good way to encourage children to play a wide range of experiences.

Creating Guest Account Password

An important step on the Xbox Series S set-up is specifying a password for your own account and a password to access the Guest account. This ensures that all users need to access the system with their own account and related limits and settings.

Game Subscriptions

In addition to buying individual games digitally or in-store, you can also subscribe to services that offer access to 100's of games for a monthly fee. Xbox Game Pass is often bundled with the Xbox Gold subscription you need for playing online. Most of the bigger Xbox games are provided as part of the service, as well as a wide range of independent games that often offer educational and wellbeing based experiences.

Types of Accounts

Set-Up Parent Accounts

Setting up a parent's account is important so you can manage the console for your family. After downloading the Xbox app to aid set-up, connect to the internet and while the console updates, use the app to start specifying settings. Once updated, create a parent user account with an email address you regularly check and password specified.

Set-Up Child Accounts

Setting up child accounts are important to be able to limit play-time, spending and apply age ratings automatically. Separate accounts for each child user can be set-up. It's a good idea to specify a password for the guest account so children cannot access this also. You can also download the Xbox Family Settings app to help you adjust these settings in the future without having to access the console directly.

Meet our expert

Freelance family technology expert for the BBC. Andy runs the Family Gamer TV YouTube channel and contributes to a range of national media on the topic of video-games and family.



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What you need to know about... GAMES CONSOLES



What are they?

'Games Consoles' are devices that allow you to play video games. The most modern ones are named you might be familiar with - Sony PlayStation, Microsoft Xbox, and Nintendo Switch - and almost all of them can now connect to the internet and be enjoyed online with friends.

Know the Risks

Online Content
While modern consoles don't strictly need to be connected to the internet, many of them do. This means you can connect to the internet, which gives you the ability to stream TV shows and movies, but it's important that the appropriate filters and parental controls are in place to restrict children viewing any unsuitable content.

Addictive nature
Games consoles require video games, and both can ultimately contribute towards an addictive habit. Playing too much and too often can force children to disengage from the good feelings released when playing games, making them more likely to want to play them more frequently and for longer periods of time.

Hacking risk
It's almost impossible to avoid signing up to different services when using modern consoles. Keeping track of all these accounts can be confusing and in a worst-case scenario, fraudsters could gain access to personal information, addresses and bank details by hacking online profiles.

Online Chat
Once connected to the internet, players can talk to each other either over headsets or using text chat functions on the consoles. Without the proper protections in place, children could speak to anybody of any age and find themselves building relationships with strangers they know nothing about.

Safety Tips

Check contacts
Online predators and hackers often use spy tactics to build relationships with children get them to illicit personal details through gaming platforms or gaming communities. Be on the lookout for suspect communications such as intrusive personal messages or people you suspect might not be who they say they are.

Look for behaviour changes
Becoming withdrawn, irritable and anxious when not playing on a games console are trademark symptoms of gaming addiction. If children turn angry when asked to stop playing, that could also be a sign that an intervention is needed.

Keep details private
Games consoles will almost exclusively ask you to enter your details securely on the console itself, or through a trusted website led to the console maker. If somebody claiming to be working for Sony, Microsoft or Nintendo asks you to share your passwords or account details, do not give it to them.

Use parental controls
Most gaming consoles will have parental controls which can be used to set up things like family management accounts. From here, parents can often set age limits on games and content, spending restrictions, limit play time and set up passwords and authentication to help keep children safe.

Further Support

Block and report
If someone has made your child feel uncomfortable, make note of suspect player usernames. Often, you'll be able to ban or block these players in a game's settings. If you have proof of their intentions, don't hesitate to contact your local police force or authority with as much information and evidence as you can gather.

Seek Support
If you're concerned about your child playing too much on their console and think they may have developed a gaming addiction, try and offer them support. The World Health Organisation has classified gaming disorder as a mental health condition and there may be external providers locally who can offer you more targeted help.

Keep IDs safe
Be sure to talk to your child about the importance of keeping their identity safe. If they ever receive messages claiming to be from companies but something doesn't feel right, tell them not to respond and inform you. Things like odd spelling and grammar, strange email addresses or asking for personal information are tell-tale signs.

Our Expert Mark Foster

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 5 years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.

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What you need to know about... AGE RATINGS

What are they?

'Age Ratings' are labels that indicate the suitability of content for that age group. The PEGI (Pan European Game Information) system rates games and, instead of indicating the level of ability required to physically play a game, it indicates the suitability of content for that age group. 3, 7, 12, 16 and 18 are the labels that can be awarded to games and a variety of content descriptors such as violence, bad language and beer are used to further clarify why the label was assigned.

Know the Risks

18+ **Inappropriate content**
The 18+ rating is the highest rating a game can receive. It indicates that the game contains content that is unsuitable for anyone under the age of 18. This could be anything from blood and gore to sexual content and drug use.

Peer pressure
The 16 & up only rating is the highest rating a game can receive that is suitable for children aged 16 and over. It indicates that the game contains content that is unsuitable for anyone under the age of 16. This could be anything from blood and gore to sexual content and drug use.

Level of Rude
The 16 & up only rating is the highest rating a game can receive that is suitable for children aged 16 and over. It indicates that the game contains content that is unsuitable for anyone under the age of 16. This could be anything from blood and gore to sexual content and drug use.

Free Platforms
The 16 & up only rating is the highest rating a game can receive that is suitable for children aged 16 and over. It indicates that the game contains content that is unsuitable for anyone under the age of 16. This could be anything from blood and gore to sexual content and drug use.

Spot the Signs

Being vague
Be aware of children being vague around the content of what they want to play. If they are unwilling to supply you with information about what the game is about, this could be an indicator that you wouldn't like them to purchase it if you knew.

Unfamiliar sites
There are plenty of indie games that can be bought using online stores that don't necessarily feature news sections. If you notice your child using sites such as GOG or itch to purchase their favourite games, such as the Google Play Store, they might be accessing games that aren't only rated but still aren't right for them.

Unfamiliar terminology
Your child might start using phrases or terminology that is new to them or mimicking actions that they have learnt from a game without realising their inappropriate.

Warding to be secluded
Be aware if suddenly your child wants to move the device that they play their games on into a more secluded area of the house away from adults. It is a good indicator for your child to play online games in shared areas where you can see the screen.

Be aware of spending
Setting up accounts with online stores requires bank account details. Keeping an eye on your bank account means that you will be able to tell if there has been a new purchase and can provide your child with an opportunity to ask about what new game they've purchased.

16 & UP ONLY

12-15

Safety Tips

Do your research
If you've noticed a new game that your child has downloaded, then use quality resources to read reviews that give an insight up-to-date. Online websites, such as National Online Safety, can provide you with the information you need.

Review parental controls
Review your parental controls on the stores where you buy games from. Most allow parents to set passwords to lock settings with certain age restrictions from being downloaded.

Encourage open dialogue
Encourage open dialogue with your child. You don't want to be in a position where they won't talk to you if something has made them feel uncomfortable in a game because they are worried they will get in trouble for playing the game in the first place.

Discuss ratings
Talk to your child about why the game has been awarded a certain label. Discuss the positives and negatives of playing a game and decide on some ground rules together.

Our Expert Heather Cardwell

Heather Cardwell is a practising Online Safety Lead and senior school leader who is passionate about safeguarding online and educating children around online risks. She has over 10 years as a Computing Lead and has successfully developed and implemented a whole school approach to online safety in schools, delivering online safety training to both school staff and parents and helping to roll-out a bespoke online safety policy across her local network of education settings.

GETTING SUPPORT IF THINGS GO WRONG.

- There are lots of organisations who are there to support you and your family if something has gone wrong. The Report Harmful Content website can help you with issues such as cyberbullying, impersonation and threats. You can report worrying behaviour towards children to CEOP. Find out more on Childnet's Get Help page.
- <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>
- <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>
- <https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/get-help/>

REASSURING YOUR CHILD THAT WHATEVER HAPPENS ONLINE, YOU ARE THERE TO SUPPORT THEM.

- Let your child know that the best way to address any problem they have online, is to tell a trusted adult immediately. For example, this might include someone sending them a friend request; an online message; telling them to visit a specific website, or app; or asking them for their personal information. Reassure them that if anything happens online that they are unsure about, or makes them feel worried or upset, they can come to you for help.

Talk about looking after yourself and others online:

- 🗋 How do you stay safe online? What tips do you have and where did you learn them?
- 🗋 Do you know where to go for help and where to find the safety tools on your favourite apps and games?
- 🗋 What could you do if being online is making you feel worse rather than better?
- 🗋 What could you do if you saw that a friend online needed some help or support?



Talk about respect online:

- 🗋 What does respect mean to you? What does it look like online?
- 🗋 What does disrespect look like online?
- 🗋 What makes a good friend online?
- 🗋 What can you do if you fall out with a friend online?
- 🗋 Do people disagree more online or offline? Why do you think that is?
- 🗋 What could you do if someone you were talking to online was unkind to you, or made you feel worried, upset, or uncomfortable?



CHILDREN'S ONLINE VULNERABILITY

- Online bullying

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/online-bullying/>

- Fake News

- False body image on Social Media

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/social-media/>

- Sexting

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/sexting/>

- Online Sexual Harassment and Sexual Abuse

<https://www.iwf.org.uk/about-us/our-campaigns/talk-and-gurls-out-loud-self-generated-child-sexual-abuse-prevention-campaign/>

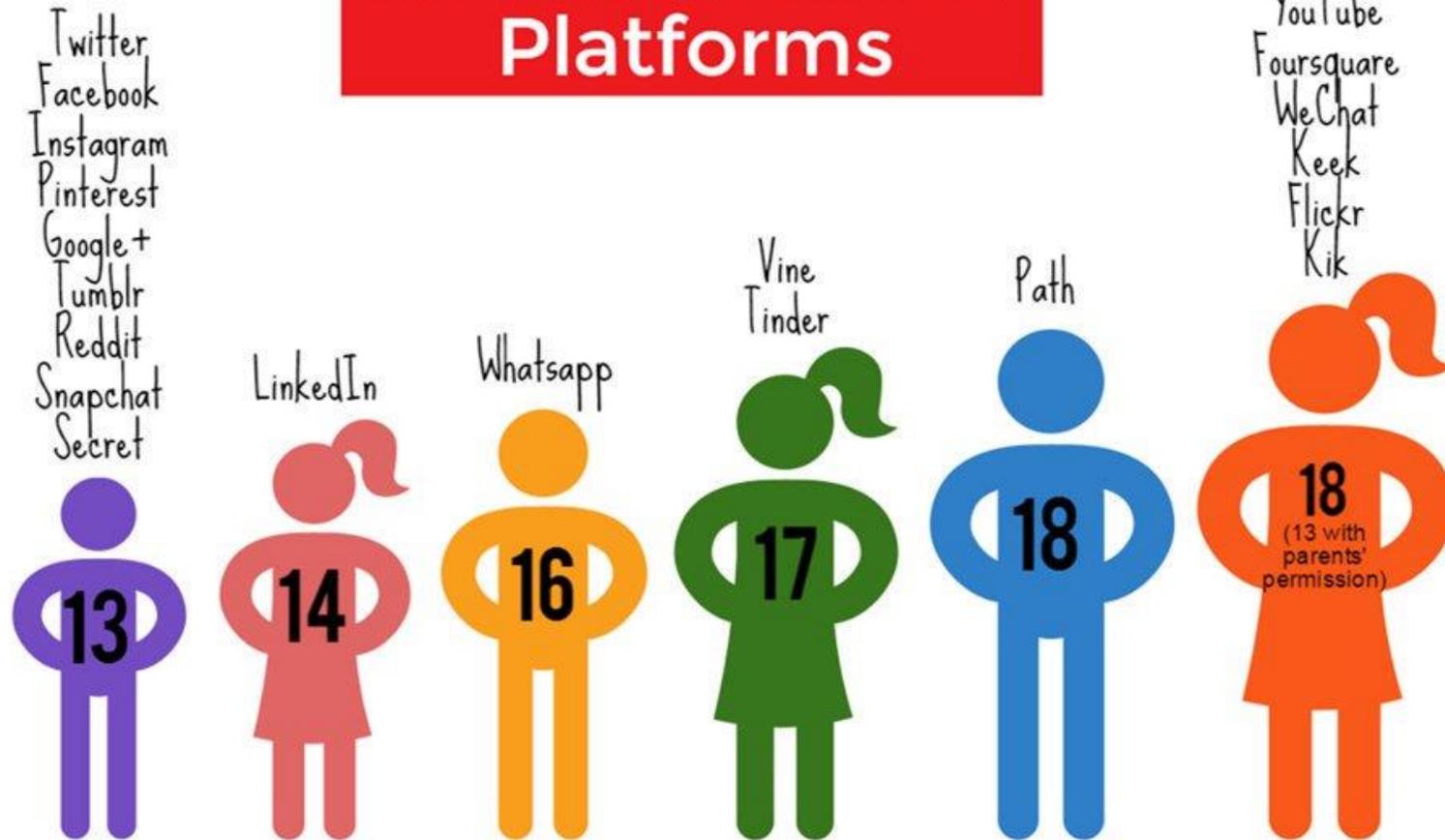
<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/online-sexual-harassment/>

- Online grooming

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/online-grooming/>

Age Restrictions for Social Media Platforms

action for children



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION 13+

Snapchat is a photo- and video-sharing app which also allows users to chat with friends via text or audio. Users can share images and videos with specific friends, or through a 'story' (documenting the previous 24 hours) visible to their entire friend list. Snapchat usage rose during the pandemic, with many young people utilising it to connect with their peers. The app continues to develop features to engage an even larger audience and emulate current trends, rivaling platforms such as TikTok and Instagram.

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

Even if your child only connects on the app with people they know, they may still receive friend requests from strangers. Snapchat's links with apps such as Wink and Hoop have increased this possibility. Accepting a request means that children are then disclosing personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features. This could allow predators to gain their trust for sinister purposes.

EXCESSIVE USE

There are many features that are attractive to users and can keep them excited about the app. Snap streaks encourage users to send snaps daily. Spotlight Challenges give users the chance to obtain money and online fame, and the Spotlight feature's timer of videos makes it easy for children to spend hours watching content.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some videos and posts on Snapchat are not suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's discover function lets users swipe through snippets of news stories and trending articles that often include adult content. There is currently no way to turn off this feature.

SEXTING

Sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat. The app's disappearing messages feature makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images or videos. While these pictures do disappear – and the sender is notified if it has been seen – users have found alternative methods to save images, such as taking pictures with a separate device.

DAMAGE TO CONFIDENCE

Snapchat's filters and lenses are a popular way for users to enhance their 'selfie game'. Although many are designed to entertain or amuse, the beauty filters on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations and create feelings of inadequacy. Comparing themselves unfavourably against other Snapchat users could threaten a child's confidence or sense of self-worth.

VISIBLE LOCATION

My Places lets users check in and search for popular spots nearby – such as restaurants, parks or shopping centres – and recommend them to their friends. The potential issue with a young person consistently checking in locations on Snapchat is that it allows other users in their friends list (even people they have only ever met online) to see where they currently are and where they regularly go.

Advice for Parents & Carers

TURN OFF QUICK ADD

The Quick Add function helps people find each other on the app. This function works based on mutual friends or whether someone's number is in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this feature could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).

CHOOSE GOOD CONNECTIONS

Snapchat has recently announced that it is rolling out a new safety feature: users will receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This 'Friend Check Up' encourages users to delete connections with users they rarely communicate with, to maintain their online safety and privacy.

CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

Talk to your child about what is and isn't wise to share on Snapchat (e.g. don't post explicit images or videos, or display identifiable details like their school name). Remind them that once something is online, the creator loses control over where it might end up – and who with. Additionally, Snapchat's 'Spotlight' feature has a challenge like TikTok's: it's vital that your child understands the potentially harmful consequences of taking part in these challenges.

KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Your child can send snaps directly to friends, but Stories are visible to everyone they have added, unless they change the settings. If they use SnapMaps, their location is visible unless 'Ghost Mode' is enabled (again via settings). It's prudent to emphasise the importance of not adding people they don't know in real life. This is particularly important with the addition of My Places, which allows other Snapchatters to see the places your child regularly visits and checks in: strangers, bullies and groomers could use this information to engage in conversations of taking part in person.

TALK ABOUT SEXTING

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it is important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Discuss the legal implications of sending or receiving explicit images, as well as the possible emotional impact. Emphasise that sexting should never feel pressured into sexting – and that if they receive unwanted explicit images, they should tell a trusted adult straight away.

BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending explicit images to them, your child can select the three dots on the person's profile and choose report or block. There are options to state why they are reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



NOS National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

www.nationalonlinesafety.com @nationalonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 03.11.2023

Probably the two main apps that your children will be interested in as they get into social media are these two apps.

These guides are great and can be downloaded for free by registering with the website on the next slide.

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION 13+

TikTok is a video-sharing social media app which lets people create, view and download looping 15-second clips. Typically, these are videos of users lip-syncing and dancing to popular songs or soundbites (often for comic purposes), enhanced with filters, effects and text. Designed with young people in mind, TikTok skyrocketed in popularity in 2019 and has featured near the top of download charts ever since. It now has around a billion users worldwide.

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Most videos appearing on a child's feed are light-hearted and amusing. However, some clips have been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, themes of suicide and self-harm, or young teens acting in a sexually suggestive way. The sheer volume of uploads is impossible to moderate entirely – and since TikTok Jump's introduction in mid-2021, users can view third-party content outside the app.

EXPLICIT SONGS

TikTok primarily revolves around videos of users lip-syncing and dancing to music. Inevitably, some featured songs will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the app's young user-base, there is a risk that children may view older users' videos and then be inclined to imitate any explicit language or suggestive actions.

TIKTOK FAME

The app has created its own celebrities: Charli D'Amelio and Lil Nas X, for example, were catapulted to fame by exposure on TikTok – leading to many more teens attempting to go viral and become "TikTok famous". While most aspiring stars hoping to be the next big thing will find it difficult, setbacks may in turn prompt them to go to even more drastic lengths to get noticed.

HAZARDOUS VISIBILITY

Connecting with others is simple on TikTok – including commenting on and reacting to users' videos, following them and downloading their content. The majority of these interactions are harmless, but because of its abundance of teen users – TikTok has experienced problems with predators contacting young people.

ADDICTIVE NATURE

Like all social media, TikTok is designed to be addictive. It can be hugely entertaining but that also makes it hard to put down. As well as the punchy nature of the short video format, the app's ability to keep users intrigued about what's coming next means it's easy for a 3-minute visit to turn into a 45-minute stay.

IN-APP SPENDING

There's an in-app option to purchase "TikTok coins", which are then converted into digital rewards for sending content creators that a user likes. Prices range from 99p to an eye-watering £39 bundle. TikTok is also connected with Shopify, which allows users to buy products through the app.

Advice for Parents & Carers

TALK ABOUT ONLINE CONTENT

Assuming your child is above TikTok's age limit, talk to them about what they've viewed on the app. Ask their opinion on what's appropriate and what isn't. Explain why they should give out personal details or upload videos which reveal information about their location. Emphasise that sexting should never feel pressured into sexting – and that if they receive unwanted explicit images, they should tell a trusted adult straight away.

MAINTAIN PRIVACY SETTINGS

The default setting for all under-18s' accounts to "private". Keeping it that way is the safest solution: it means only users who your child approves can watch their videos. The "Stitch" (which lets users splice clips from other people's videos into their own) and "Duet" (where you build on another user's content by recording your own alongside their original) features are now only available to over-18s. This might clash with your child's ambitions of social media stardom, but it will fortify their account against predators.

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

'Family Pairing' lets parents and carers link their own TikTok account to their child's. Through your mobile, you can control your child's safety settings remotely – including limiting screen time, managing their ability to exchange messages (and with whom) and blocking a lot of age-inappropriate content. TikTok's safety Centre also provides resources for parents and carers to support online safety among families. These resources can be found on their website.

USE RESTRICTED MODE

In the app's 'Digital Wellbeing' section, you can filter out inappropriate content (specific content creators or hashtags, for instance) using 'Restricted Mode'. This can then be locked with a PIN. You should note, though, that the algorithm moderating content isn't totally dependable – so it's wise to stay aware of what your child is watching.

LEARN ABOUT REPORTING AND BLOCKING

With the correct privacy settings applied, TikTok is a relatively safe app. However, in case something does slip through, make sure your child knows how to report and report inappropriate content and get them to come to you about anything upsetting that they've seen. TikTok allows users to report anyone breaching its guidelines, while you can also block individual users through your profile.

MODERATE SCREEN TIME

As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child to manage their time on it in the 'Digital Wellbeing' section. Under 'Screen Time Management', you can limit the daily permitted time on the app (in increments ranging from 40 minutes to two hours). This preference can also be locked behind a PIN. That way, your child can get their regular dose of TikTok without wasting the whole day.

Meet Our Expert

Parvini Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Click: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



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NATIONAL ONLINE SAFETY - GUIDES

■ <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/hub/guide>

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about YOUTUBE

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one issue of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

YouTube is a video-sharing social media platform that allows billions of people around the world to watch, share and upload their own videos with a vast range of content – including sports, entertainment, education and lots more. It's a superb space for people to consume content that they're interested in. As a result, this astronomically popular platform has had a huge cultural impact: influencing online culture on a global scale and creating new celebrities.

YouTube is free and can be accessed through mobile devices, even without internet access. It's easy to use, and content is available on a wide range of devices (requiring the user to be logged into an account with a verified age of 18), but children can still view some really inappropriate material. This includes pornography, violence, which some young users may find upsetting.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed through mobile devices, even without internet access. It's easy to use, and content is available on a wide range of devices (requiring the user to be logged into an account with a verified age of 18), but children can still view some really inappropriate material. This includes pornography, violence, which some young users may find upsetting.

HIGH VISIBILITY

Content creators can also be put at risk – especially young ones who try to make their content go viral. This is why it's so important to educate children on potential harassment and trolling from comments sections, along with the possibility of direct messaging from strangers. Videos posted publicly, which were viewed by anyone in the world.

CONNECT WITH STRANGERS

YouTube is a social media platform, which means people in around the world (usually unknown) users. Account holders can leave comments on any video they have access to, as well as message other users directly. Connecting with strangers online, or even on person-to-person chat, can be risky. It's important to educate children on cyberbullying and even to encouraging reporting.

SUGGESTED CONTENT

YouTube recommends videos related to what the user has previously watched. This is done to help the user find more content that they might be interested in. However, this can also lead to inappropriate content being recommended. If a child is logged in with an account, they will see suggested videos from the last 24 hours, which might not always be suitable for them.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS & CARERS

APPLY RESTRICTED MODE

Restricted Mode is an optional setting that prevents YouTube from showing inappropriate content (such as drug and alcohol abuse, graphic violence, sexual content, hate speech, and profanity) to viewers. To prevent your child from changing their Restricted Mode settings, you should enable Restricted Mode on each device your child uses to access YouTube.

TRY GOOGLE FAMILY

Creating a Google Family account allows you to monitor what your child is watching, uploading and sharing with other users. It will also allow you to restrict what videos, searches and recommended videos, in general. A Google Family account gives you an overview of how your child is using sites like YouTube and helps to ensure they are only receiving direct messages from strangers.

CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

YouTube gives users the option of uploading videos as 'private' or 'public' – so they could be shared exclusively with family and friends, or anyone. Comments or video uploads will be disabled and channels that your child is subscribed to can be hidden. If your child is only uploading videos that are protected as 'private', they won't be able to receive direct messages from strangers.

MONITOR ENGAGEMENT

YouTube is the online viewing platform of choice for billions of people, many of them children. Younger children will watch different content to older ones, and react to content differently. You may want to keep an eye on how your child interacts with content creators. It's important to educate children on how to interact with content creators to see what type of content your child is being exposed to.

MEET OUR EXPERT

Claire Cochrane (a.k.a. Lancashire) has worked as an editor and producer in the games industry since 2011, providing videos with expert coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the co-author of National Online Safety's award-winning on-voice gaming-related projects including game development and editing roles. Twitter: @lancashire

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SETTING UP NEW DEVICES FOR CHILDREN

At Christmas, millions of lucky children will be excitedly ripping the wrapping off new phones, tablets, computers or consoles. However, in the rush to let young ones enjoy their shiny gadgets, many parents neglect to set these devices up safely – increasing the chances of children going online and stumbling across adult content, making expensive downloads or installing unsuitable apps. A little time configuring the device properly can save a lot of angst in the New Year. Here are our top tips to ensure that a dream gift on Christmas morning doesn't turn into a nightmare by New Year.

PASSCODES FOR IPHONE/IPAD

If your child is getting their own iPhone or iPad, you can set them to access content that is difficult to control or device it's appropriate. Once the device is set up, go to the Settings app > Screen Time > Turn On Screen Time > Set a Screen Time Passcode. You could log into your account and use your Apple ID to set up screen time. This will allow you to restrict what your child can access on their iPhone or iPad. You can also set up a Family Link account for your child, which will allow you to manage their device and restrict what they can access.

SCREEN TIME SETTINGS ON IPHONE/IPAD

Once you've set a screen time passcode, you can go to Settings > Screen Time > Content Restrictions. You can set up content restrictions for apps, websites, and media. You can also set up a Family Link account for your child, which will allow you to manage their device and restrict what they can access.

FAMILY LINK FOR ANDROID

Parents can manage Android devices and tablets, in a way that is similar to how they manage iPhones and iPads, through Google's Family Link app. This app allows you to manage your child's device and restrict what they can access. You can also set up a Family Link account for your child, which will allow you to manage their device and restrict what they can access.

PLAYSTATION PARENTAL CONTROLS

With parental controls for the PS5, you can restrict what your child can access on their PlayStation. You can set up content restrictions for games, websites, and media. You can also set up a Family Link account for your child, which will allow you to manage their device and restrict what they can access.

ADD A CHILD TO FAMILY LINK

The easiest way to add a child's device to Family Link is to use the Family Link app. You can also set up a Family Link account for your child, which will allow you to manage their device and restrict what they can access.

DISCUSS IT WITH YOUR CHILD

If you're planning to implement parental controls on your child's device, it's important to discuss this with them first. Explain to them why you're doing this and what you're trying to achieve. You can also set up a Family Link account for your child, which will allow you to manage their device and restrict what they can access.

STAY VIGILANT

It's important to remember that parental controls are not a magic solution. You should still be vigilant about what your child is doing online. You can also set up a Family Link account for your child, which will allow you to manage their device and restrict what they can access.

MEET OUR EXPERT

Many parents are worried about technology. However, it's important to educate children on how to use technology safely. You can also set up a Family Link account for your child, which will allow you to manage their device and restrict what they can access.

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

"Inappropriate" means different things to different people. What's acceptable for one age group, for example, may be unsuitable for a slightly younger audience. Online, young people can chance upon inappropriate content in various ways – from pop-up ads to TikTok videos. The increasingly young age at which children become active in the digital world heightens the risk of them innocently running into something that they find upsetting or frightening. Trusted adults need to be able to help children be aware of what to do if they're exposed to age-inappropriate content.

WHERE IS IT FOUND?

SOCIAL MEDIA

Age-inappropriate content is easily accessible through many social media platforms. For instance, it's highly popular with young people but is arguably best known for clips featuring sexualised dancing or profanity. Some social media users also express hate speech or promote eating disorders and self-harm, which could cause lasting damage to a child's emotional and mental health.

GAMING

Gaming is an enjoyable source of entertainment for many children. However, some games can contain inappropriate material such as violence, horror, gambling or sexually explicit content. Playing games unsuitable for their age risks normalising such content for young people. Some games also include in-game chat, where older (usually older) online players often use language that you probably wouldn't want your child to hear or repeat.

STREAMING

The range of video streaming services available online means that users can find almost anything they want to watch on demand. Children are therefore at risk of viewing TV shows and movies which contain nudity, drug and alcohol abuse, explicit language and extreme violence. Unfortunately, these streaming platforms can't always determine that it's not an adult who's watching.

ADVERTS

Online adverts frequently include age-inappropriate content, such as gambling and nudity or partial nudity, although adverts for alcohol or cigarettes are also common. Some search engines also feature adverts that you've recently looked up a new horror movie, alcohol or a linear or ordered alcohol online, then the ads appearing on screens could reflect this the next time your child borrows your device.

18 Advice for Parents & Carers

TALK IT THROUGH

Embarrassment or fear of getting into trouble can make it difficult for children to talk openly about inappropriate content they've watched. Remind your child they can always come to you if they're troubled by something they've seen online, without worrying about the consequences. Before offering advice, discuss what they saw, how they felt and how they came to find the content in question.

CONNECT, DON'T CORRECT

If your child's been particularly distressed by exposure to content that wasn't suitable for their age, it's important to offer guidance to prevent them from repeating the same mistake – but it's equally vital to help them deal with the situation that the consequences. You could tell them about your similar experiences you might have had at their age, and how you dealt with it.

BLOCK, REPORT, CONTROL

After discussing the problem, you and your child can take action together. This could include blocking any inappropriate sites and reporting any content which violates a platform's rules. In further steps, you could set up parental controls on your child's device to help you to keep an eye on what they're doing online. This will significantly reduce the chances of your child being exposed to age-inappropriate content in future.

GET SPECIALIST HELP

Age-inappropriate content can potentially have a negative impact on a child's mental health, which is sometimes displayed through changes in their behaviour. If the problem becomes more severe, you might consider reaching out to a mental health professional or an expert in this field who can provide you and your child with the proper support.

STAY CALM

Even though it is obviously difficult to stay calm in a situation where your child has been put at risk, it's essential to think before you react. Your child may well have hesitated to open up to you about watching inappropriate content for fear of the consequences, so being calm and supportive will reinforce the notion that it would be easy for you to talk to you about similar issues in the future.

MEET OUR EXPERT

Coyley Jorgensen is a Registered Counsellor with The Health Professions Council of South Africa and also runs a private practice offering counselling to children, teenagers and families. Her main focus is creating awareness and educating the community on the mental health pressures of today's world, as well as resources and techniques to understand and cope better.

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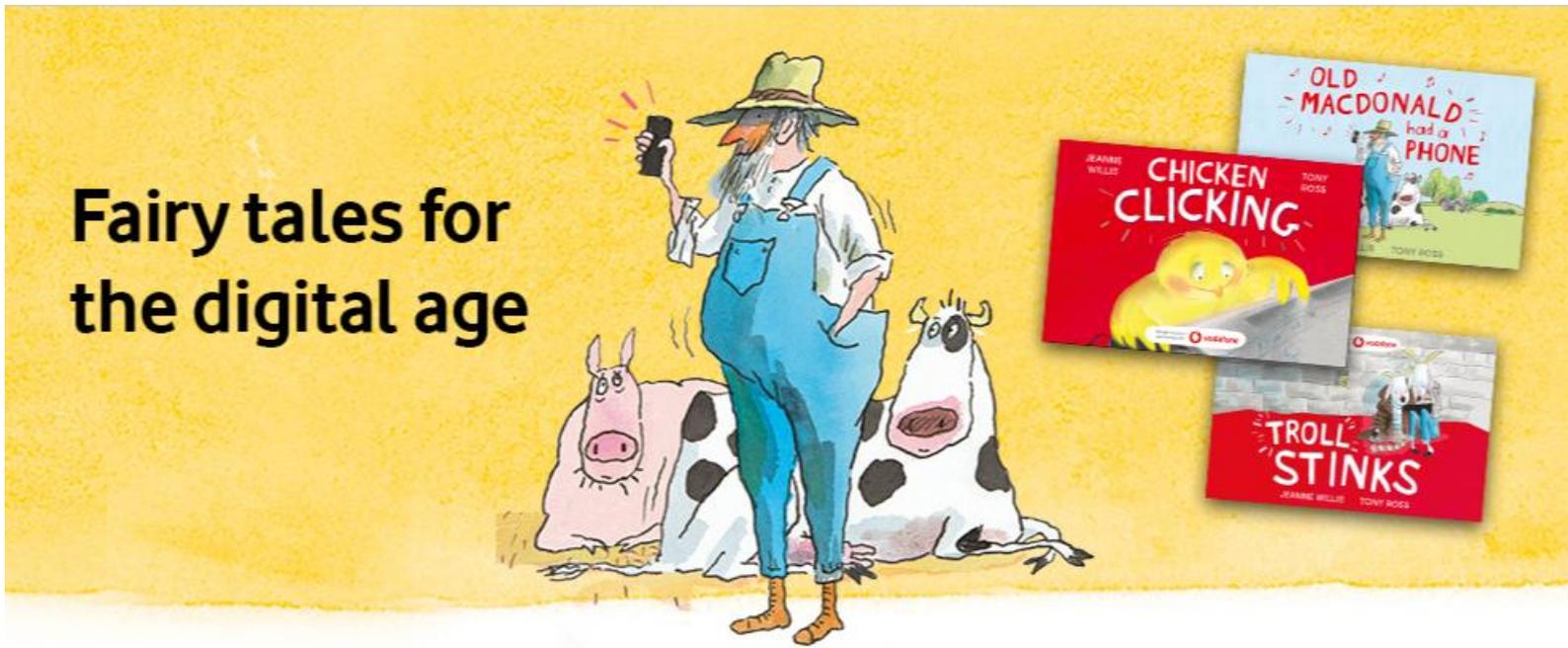
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VODAFONE'S DIGITAL RESOURCES

<https://www.vodafone.co.uk/mobile/digital-parenting/digital-fairytales>

https://assets.vodafone.co.uk/cs/groups/public/documents/document/vodafone_digital_parenting.pdf



Fairy tales for
the digital age



SAFER INTERNET DAY RESOURCES



Safer Internet Day – 8th February 2022

**All fun and
games?
Exploring respect
and relationships
online**



<https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2022/advice-for-parents-and-carers>

USEFUL WEB LINKS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

- <https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers>
- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>
- <https://www.internetmatters.org/>
- <https://www.lgfl.net/online-safety/resource-centre>
- <https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/>
- <https://www.bbc.com/ownit/curations/parents>

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