



Welcome to the December 2020 Scomis Online Safety Newsletter for Parents

Christmas is just around the corner!

Will you be ready?

Remember! If you are buying your child a new mobile phone, games console, tablet PC set up the device before you wrap it!

Do you know how?

- To disable 'in-app' purchases
- To download games and apps to ensure they are age appropriate
- To set up mobile phones and boundaries
- To set up social media safely - Roblox, TikTok, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram
- To manage screen time
- To set up games consoles

Need some help?

Check the following:

1. Learn how to make sure 'in app' purchases are disabled and read the **Parent's Technology Guide at the UK Safer Internet Centre** for more help and advice about setting up smartphones, gaming devices, tablets and other internet-connected devices.
2. Find out about age-appropriate games and apps
BBC iPlayer Kids
YouTube Kids
3. Are parental control settings switched on? All mobile phone providers offer free parental control services which limit the content children can access via the internet to content suitable for under 18s. *However, they may not always be automatically switched on. Check with your service provider that the parental control settings are switched on, and ask for them to be switched on if they are not.*
Remember FREE advice is just a phone call away from the O₂ and NSPCC helpline **0808 800 5002**
Or visit any O₂ Guru in an O₂ store
4. Parent's social media survival guide from South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL) - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Roblox and TikTok available on their **social media checklists page**.
5. Screentime guidance and advice from SWGfL in conjunction with the UK Safer Internet Centre and the Norwegian Safer Internet Centre
Young People and Screentime – A Good Start



6. Guidance for specific platforms. SWGfL have produced **one for PlayStation**, and **one for Xbox**.

Find out whether games are age appropriate:

www.pegi.info or www.askaboutgames.com

HELP IN THE HOLIDAYS!

Don't forget! advice is just a phone call away from the O₂ and NSPCC helpline **0808 800 5002**

Websites to check:

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

Loot Boxes

Did you know that 'Loot boxes' are virtual items users can purchase in games with real money. The user **will not** receive any physical objects in the offline world as a result of these boxes.

Childnet recommends your child clearly understands:

- loot boxes cost real money
- you expect them to respect any rules you set about money and responsibility

What you should do if your child gets in trouble with loot boxes?

Support and contact details for some of the major game publishers can be found in the links below:

Blizzard – makers of Overwatch

Activision – makers of Call of Duty

Epic Games – makers of Fortnite

EA – makers of Star Wars Battlefront II, Apex Legends, and FIFA

Konami – makers of Pro Evolution Soccer

Nintendo – makers of Animal Crossing

Ubisoft – makers of Assassin's Creed

Worried about your child?

If you are especially concerned about your child's behaviour and how it might link to gambling, contact

The National Gambling Helpline, operated by GamCare.

Check: BBC Own It's **great resource** on loot boxes that speaks clearly and effectively to young people.



Latest research from Common Sense Media

Common Sense Media's **latest research** shows young children are watching online videos more than ever before.

Remember that children will also be coming across lots of adverts and inappropriate content too! **Learn how YouTube targets your children for ad content and other videos**

The Internet of Things

Did you know?

- Internet connected devices can send and receive data
- respond to voice commands and be controlled remotely using a smartphone app.
- They can also be called '*the internet of things*'.

Examples of internet connected devices include:

- smart speakers, such as Google Home and Amazon Echo
- wearables, such as Fitbit and Apple Watch
- smart meters measuring household energy consumption
- Doorbells, CCTV
- Toys, robots, drones and much more

If not set up properly, the risks include:

- Others could be accessing your device and content without your knowledge
- Developers or hackers may be connected to your device
- Baby monitors, children's tablets, remote-control helicopters or drone toys, can be hacked and used by people outside of your home.
- Internet connected devices can collect personal data, including audio and visual data

Find out how to keep you and your family safe and visit the **NSPCC's website**

Remember to Stay Safe
Online!

SCOMIS
Your ICT Partner