

New Technology

As some children may be receiving new technology or related games at Christmas, here is a quick reminder of the importance of setting up appropriate parental controls.



Games/Consoles

- Check age ratings: look at the PEGI rating of any new games. Remember, PEGI rates the gameplay so whilst it is important to review age ratings, you must also check to see if it has any communication elements.

- If a game does allow your child to communicate with others, then adjust or disable the settings as appropriate to your child.

- On the device itself, set up applicable controls such as restricting spending limits.

Follow the links below to find out how to set up Parental Controls for popular devices here:

Xbox: <https://www.xbox.com/en-GB/family-hub>

PS5: <https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parentalcontrols-spending-limits/>

Nintendo Switch:

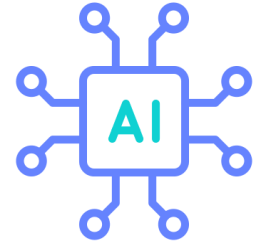
<https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Hardware/NintendoSwitch-Parental-Controls/Nintendo-Switch-2-Nintendo-Switch-ParentalControls-2873385.html>

AI (Artificial Intelligence)

What is AI?

AI is when a computer/machine can learn and perform tasks like a human. Its popularity continues to grow, and examples include:

- Search engines such as Google now include an AI generated overview as part of their results.
- Virtual assistants like Alexa, Meta AI and Siri.
- Chatbots such as ChatGPT and My AI from Snapchat.



Risks and concerns

- Misinformation - ensure your child understands that AI can sometimes provide incorrect or misleading information.
- Privacy issues - read any privacy policies before using.
- Chat apps - a simple search of "AI Chat" within the App store highlights the number of apps already available that are not suitable for children as many are rated as 17+.
- Image manipulation - there are AI tools that can be used to digitally remove clothes from photos, which clearly raises serious safeguarding and privacy concerns.
- Deepfakes - there are also AI tools that create realistic, fake videos that can be used to spread misinformation or cause harm. AI can also create songs using key words or phrases that you type.

Further information:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/byactivity/using-artificial-intelligence/what-is-ai-artificial-intelligence/>

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/should-you-worry-if-your-childhas-ai-friend>

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/newsroom/blogs/ai-chatbots-and-companions-risks-to-children-and-young-people>

Tablets/Smart phones

Set up parental controls on the device to prevent purchases, restrict content viewed and adjust privacy settings.

Furthermore, remember to check any apps your child requests to check that they are suitable for their age. Follow the links below to find out more:

iPhones/iPad:

<https://support.apple.com/en-gb/105121>

Android Device:

<https://support.google.com/googleplay/answer/1075738>

Italian Brainrot

Have you heard of Italian Brainrot? It is a viral trend consisting of AI generated characters featuring in memes and videos. It originally started on TikTok but can now be seen on other platforms such as YouTube and Instagram. There are also lots of spinoff content including a game on Roblox.

Whilst the content is generally nonsensical and children will find some of it funny, some content can include inappropriate/offensive language and content that might not be suitable for your child's age.

YOUTUBE



YouTube is one of the most popular platforms, available across many different devices - phones, tablets and Smart TVs etc. YouTube is intended for users over the age of 13, however, younger children can still access YouTube with consent from a parent/ guardian.

There are different options available to access YouTube, depending on your child's age:

1. YouTube Kids

- a separate app that includes a smaller selection of videos based on the age category you select: Preschool (ages 4 and under), Younger (ages 5-8) or Older (ages 9-12).

2. Supervised accounts

- a parent-managed version of YouTube that allows you to control the content your child can access. You can select one of the following options: Explore - Generally for viewers aged 9+. Explore more - Generally for viewers aged 13+. Most of YouTube - This setting includes almost everything except for videos marked as 18+. Find out more:

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/10315420>

What do I need to be aware of?

Whilst YouTube can be educational and fun, it is important to be aware of the potential risks, such as:

- Inappropriate content
- Excessive Screentime - particularly due to the autoplay feature.
- Unwanted contact / cyberbullying - particularly via comments if your child is sharing videos.
- Algorithms - algorithms influence what we see to keep us engaged. This can lead to a user being exposed to large amounts of content about one topic/theme, which may not be helpful if it is negative.
- Adverts that may not be aimed at or suitable for your child's age.

What can I do?

Set up appropriate parental controls. Show your child the reporting and blocking tools available. Watch YouTube together or supervise use.

Further information <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/entertainment-searchengines/youtube-app/>