

Online Safety Newsletter

June 2022

Family Settings

Do you need help managing your children's accounts and devices? You can use Google Family Link or Apple Family Sharing to help you.

Google Family Link

This is a parental control app from Google that lets you:

- See activity reports showing how long they spend on each app.
- Approve or block new app downloads.
- Set screen time limits.
- Find their location (using their device).

You will need to download an app and then decide appropriate settings.

Further information available here: <https://families.google.com/familylink>

Apple Family Sharing

You can set up Family Sharing in the settings of your device. Family Sharing allows you to:

- Share Apple subscriptions.
- Share purchases from the App Store.
- Approve what children purchase/download.
- Limit screen time.
- Share locations and find devices.

Further information available here: <https://www.apple.com/uk/family-sharing/>

Netflix

Did you know that Netflix have parental controls available so you can restrict what your child is watching to suitable content only? You can set up a profile for your child and then set a maturity level to restrict titles to an age rating (for example 12+ or 15+). You can learn how to set up profiles here:

<https://help.netflix.com/en/node/264>

In addition, you can block/unblock specific TV shows and movies for your child. Find out here:

<https://help.netflix.com/en/node/114276>



Watch Parties

Have you heard of a Watch Party? This is where friends can watch programmes online together whilst chatting. You are able to do this within Amazon Prime or by using Teleparty, which adds group chat to Netflix, Disney Plus, Amazon Prime and a few others. The host can choose a programme and then share the link with others (up to 100 people). Each user must have their own subscription to the chosen platform. You can then chat and watch the programme together.

What do I need to be aware of?

There is a chat facility within this service and you need to check if the age rating of the selected programme is suitable for your child.

More information available here: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/adlp/watchparty> or <https://www.teleparty.com/support>.

Virtual Reality (VR)

Virtual Reality (VR) uses a headset such as Oculus Rift to immerse the user in a 3D environment. As an example, Oculus is designed for ages 13 and older: <https://www.oculus.com/safety-center/>

You can read more about VR and safety tips by accessing these two articles:

<https://parentzone.org.uk/parent-guide-to-virtual-reality> and <https://www.connectsafely.org/metaverse-and-vr-tips-for-parents/>



Call of Duty

Call of Duty games are predominantly rated 16+ or 18+ by PEGI (<https://pegi.info/>), which means you should **be over these ages to play** them. Many of the games receive this rating because they contain **bad language and graphic violence**. You should also be aware of in app purchases and in game chat. As with all games, make sure your child is aware of how to block/report other players within the game and that they know to talk to you or another trusted adult if anybody or anything is making them feel uncomfortable.

Call of Duty can be played across a range of devices, such as Xbox and PlayStation.

Further information is available here:

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/parents-guide-call-duty-warzone>

Grand Theft Auto (GTA)

GTA is rated 18+ by PEGI (some earlier versions are rated 16+), this is largely because of bad language, violence, glamourisation of crime and the depiction of drugs. **GTA is not suitable for those under this age.**



Grand Theft Auto can be played across a range of devices, such as Xbox and PlayStation.

Grand Theft Auto Online is a multi-player version of the game and is included with Grand Theft Auto 5. Players can play this version alone, or they can invite players to a game, or be involved in games with random players. The settings can be changed so you only play with those on your approved friends list.

What do I need to be aware of?

- Mature content – content can be unsuitable for children (which is why it is rated as 18).
- In game chat – this can be disabled and other players can be muted. This will depend on the device and version.
- In game spending – make sure your bank account details are not linked to the device your child is playing on.

It is important to talk to your child regularly about what they are playing online and make sure that they know that they should always talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any concerns.

What can they play instead?

You can use this database to search for games based on your child's age: <https://www.taminggaming.com/cgi-bin/taminggaming.cgi>

Gaming Communities

Have you heard of Gaming Communities? These are online places where players can meet to chat about different games. Parent Zone have published this useful article discussing what they are, the risks and what parents do. You can read the article here:

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/gaming-communities-%E2%80%93-what-you-need-know>

Dove Self Esteem

Dove has a whole host of articles, videos and activities on their website as part of their self-esteem project, the aim of which is to boost the self-esteem of young people. The free resources are designed to help you communicate with your child on a variety of subjects including the effects of cyberbullying and social media.

<https://www.dove.com/uk/dove-self-esteem-project/help-for-parents.html>

Media use and attitudes report 2022

This report from Ofcom looks at media use, attitudes and understanding among children and young people aged 3-17. The report shows what children and young people are doing online. It provides an interesting read to help our understanding in how we can support our children and young people further.

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/childrens/children-and-parents-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2022>