



Online Gaming: risks

Ofcom's latest report on media use shows 35% of children aged 5 – 7 are playing games online, this rises to 66% of 8 – 11 year olds and 72% of 12 – 15 year olds.* There are risks associated with playing games online, one of these being that many games such as FIFA, Fortnite, Minecraft and Call of Duty (COD) feature chat facilities. This heightens the risk of bullying and potentially online grooming as some people may use the online chat features to build a relationship with your child. For some games, the chat can be turned off and depending on the age of your child, this may be the safest manner for your child to play games online.

What can I do?

Review what games your children are playing and check the PEGI rating (age rating). Should your child be playing that game? As always talk to your child about what they are playing and discuss the following points:

- Do they know how to report and block players?
- Encourage them not to share personal information online. If somebody asks them for personal information, to meet up or if they just feel uneasy then make sure that they know that they should talk to a trusted adult.
- Tell your child that they should be very wary of anybody who encourages them to keep anything secret or who offers to buy them gifts.
- Talk to your child about the importance of only accepting friends.

If somebody does do anything inappropriate then you should report that person using the in game reporting options. If you think somebody has tried to groom your child online then you can report this to CEOP. CEOP can help in a number of ways, for example they can assist you if you are worried that your child is being groomed online or if somebody is asking your child to communicate with them on a live-streaming platform. (<https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>).

Further information about Grooming:

- <https://parentinfo.org/article/what-you-need-to-know-about-online-grooming>
- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/grooming>

*(source:

[parents-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2](#)

Online Safety Let's talk

It's really important to regularly chat to your child about their online lives but it can sometimes be difficult to start these conversations. We thought these resources may help you to start these conversations:

- <https://www.childnet.com/ufiles/Let's-talk-about-life-online.pdf>

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>

Instagram update

Instagram is used to post photos and videos. Users can also DM (direct message), send disappearing messages, add to their stories (these disappear after 24 hours) and broadcast using IGTV. **You should be over 13 years of age to set up an account.** You should be aware that Instagram have released the following new features:

- The ability to delete up to 25 unwanted (negative) comments all at once as well as block or restrict multiple accounts at the same time.
- As tags and mentions can be used to target or bully, you can now choose whether you want everyone, only people you follow or no one to be able to tag or mention you in a comment, caption or story.

Further information

- Read about the new features in more detail here: <https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/continuing-our-work-to-fight-online-bullying/>
- More tips from Instagram including how to manage privacy: <https://help.instagram.com/154475974694511>

Zoom reminder

Is social media a concern for you?

There has been a recent 'zoombombing' incident in Plymouth where children were exposed to distressing content**. Zoombombing is a term resulting from those users who are entering meetings uninvited to post inappropriate content.

You can read further steps to follow as a host or participant to try and reduce this happening here:
http://www.knowsleyclcs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Online-Safety-Newsletter_Zoom.pdf

(**Source: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/news/2020-05-nspcc-warns-of-zoom-security-risks/>)

