Online Safety Newsletter November 2022

Anti-Bullying Week 2022

Monday 14th - Friday 18th November

The theme this year is Reach Out. The Anti Bullying Alliance have worked with Kidscape to develop resources to help you support your child:

https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week/parents-and-carers

Early Years

Is your child online? It's important that devices are set up with age-appropriate parental controls and access is restricted to appropriate apps/content. **We would advise that children only access devices when you are with them.** Sometimes, regardless of what controls we have in place, children may accidentally view inappropriate content so it's important we are around to help them if they do.

The Australian eSafety Commissioner has published a short booklet including advice and guidance on how to navigate the online world with your child. This is aimed at parents/carers with children under the age of 5: https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/children-under-5/online-safety-for-under-5s-booklet

Roblox – updated PEGI rating

PEGI have announced a change to the age rating for Roblox. PEGI used to rate Roblox as 7+, however because of the huge level of user generated content within Roblox, PEGI have changed the rating to a Parental Guidance label (icon shown right). You can read more about this change here: https://pegi.info/news/pegi-changes-rating-advice-roblox

What is Roblox?

You can either use Roblox to create games or play games that other users have created. **As a lot of the content is user generated, it may mean not all games will be suitable for your child to view/play. It is important to set up Parental controls appropriate to your child.**

Allowed Experiences - NEW

Roblox has introduced Allowed Experiences, which allows you to select age-appropriate experiences, so your child can only join experiences that match their age set. Please note that experiences above the age restriction set may be seen in search results. Age categories available are 9+, 13+ and all ages. You can find out how to set up Allowed Experiences here: https://en.help.roblox.com/hc/en-us/articles/8863284850196-Allowed-Experiences-Controls

What should I be aware of?

Chat Facility - Players can chat to each other on Roblox. You can add parental controls to turn this feature off completely or add restrictions.
Virtual Currency - Players can buy Robux (their virtual currency) to buy in-game upgrades or accessories. If you do not want your child to purchase them, then ensure you set the Monthly Spend Restriction to zero.
Game content – as mentioned, games are created by different users so sometimes the content may not be appropriate for your child.
Blocking users and reporting – ensure your child knows how to do this.

What should I do?

- Play the game with your child.
- Explore the parental controls within Roblox and set as appropriate.
- Show your child how to use the Report Abuse system within Roblox to report inappropriate content and how to block other users.

Further information:

- https://corp.roblox.com/parents/
- https://parentzone.org.uk/article/roblox

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into.
Current as of the date released 1.11.22.

Discord

Discord is a social networking app used by gamers to **chat to each other**. There can be in app purchases through Discord's premium subscription service. The minimum age to access Discord is 13. The Apple App store rates it as 17+. Discord is made up of servers, which are spaces for groups to chat, upload files and share images etc. Anybody can set up a server and they can either be public or private. Users can video call and send direct messages to other individuals or groups.

Children who play online games such as Fortnite may use Discord to chat about the game (**rather than the game's own chat facility**).

How can I make it safer?

Discord have created this article, which outlines four steps to creating a safer account, including how to block users.

- https://discord.com/safety/360043857751-Four-steps-to-a-super-safe-account

What do I need to be aware of?

We always encourage you to chat to your child to see why they use different apps/websites and ensure that they know how to block users and what to do if they see any inappropriate content. It is important to be aware that Discord does include video/voice calling which cannot be filtered. **Discord is used by an array of users and therefore adult content can be found on Discord as well as inappropriate language.** Discord have produced this article, which answers common questions:

- https://discord.com/safety/360044149591-answering-parents-and-educators-top-questions

Further information

- https://www.childnet.com/blog/what-is-discord-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers

Social Media Algorithms

Parent Zone have written this article explaining how algorithms work on social media. Algorithms influence what we see on social media platforms and predict what type of content we are most likely to interact with, thereby keeping us online for longer. There are benefits but unfortunately there are negatives, which are outlined in the below article: https://www.parents.parentzone.org.uk/morearticles/what-are-social-media-algorithms-and-how-can-they-be-manipulated

Yubo

Yubo is a social network, which you must be over 13 years of age to join **although the App store rate it as 17+.** Those aged 13 to 18 years old must have parental permission and will join a separate Yubo community that is for under-18s. Yubo do use an age-verification system (you must take a photo of your face and then facial age estimation technology is used to check).

You make 'friends' by swiping right on someone's profile picture and if they do the same on yours then you can chat with them or stream live videos. **Due to the nature of this app, your child may come across content that is not appropriate to them.** If your child does use this app, then ensure they know how to use the app's reporting facilities and know how to block other users.

What do I need to be aware of?

Location: Users have the choice to share their location. You can hide/show your location at any time (country will always be visible). Location is disabled for all users under 18.
Live Streaming: - this is when somebody broadcasts live (real time).
Inappropriate Content
YuBucks - Yubo's official Currency, can be used to gain additional functionality.

Guides

Yubo have created the following guides, we would recommend reading them before you allow your child to access this app. If you do not think this app is appropriate for your child, then talk to them and tell them why and what your concerns are.

For Parents: http://parents-guide.yubo.live/
For Teens: http://teens.yubo.live/

Checklist

SWGfL and the UK Safer Internet Centre in collaboration with Yubo have created this checklist.
https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/introducing-the-yubo-social-media-checklist