

Safeguarding Bulletin

Gambling

Whilst the majority of gambling activities are for over 18's it is still important to educate your children around gambling activities.

Gambling is when you risk money (or something of value) in a game or a bet in the hope of winning money or a prize.

There are lots of different types of gambling and you may not immediately realise some activities are gambling. The Gambling Act 2005 sets out how gambling is regulated in Great Britain and it covers arcades, betting, bingo, casinos, gaming machines, society lotteries, and online gambling.

For most gambling activities, the legal age is 18. However, there are some which do not have age restrictions, like playing a toy grabber game in the hope of catching a prize or making a bet with one of your friends about something.

Arcades

If you have been to the seaside with your family then you will most probably have seen family entertainment centres, most commonly known as amusement arcades, which contain a wide range of machines. There are 1,000 family entertainment centres in the UK, commonly located at seaside resorts, in airports and at motorway service stations, and these cater for families, including unaccompanied children.

Children and young people are permitted to enter a family entertainment centre and may use category D machines (e.g crane grab machines or coin pusher machines). They cannot use category C machines (e.g. fruit machines) and it is a requirement that there must be clear segregation between the two types of machine, to prevent under-18 access.

Betting

No one under the age of 18 is allowed to bet with a licensed gambling business.

The most common form of betting is fixed odds betting where you bet a stake to win a fixed amount calculated by the odds available. For example, a £10 bet at odds of 2/1 would return £30 (£20 of winnings + £10 stake) if successful. If unsuccessful you lose your £10 stake. Bets can be placed online, in betting shops or on racecourses. The most popular things to bet on are sporting events such as the Grand National or football matches.



Bingo

Although the law does not prevent under 18s from entering bingo clubs, the industry generally chooses to apply a no under 18s policy. Under 18s are allowed in licensed

commercial bingo clubs but they must not take part in playing bingo or any other forms of gambling whilst on the premises.

Under-18's are only allowed to participate in bingo activities if it is fundraising for charity by charging a participation fee.

Casinos

No one under the age of 18 is allowed to enter a casino.

Casino games are available online or in casino premises. Most casinos offer a variety of games, such as roulette, poker and blackjack.

Lotteries

A lottery is a type of gambling game in which people buy numbered tickets. Several numbers are then chosen, and the people who have those numbers on their tickets win a prize.

The legal age to play the National Lottery is 16 years old, but this will be raised to 18 from April 2021 for online sales and October 2021 for offline sales. You also have to be 18 years old to play society lotteries, customer lotteries and local authority lotteries.

Raffles, tombola's and sweepstakes are all types of lottery and there is no minimum age requirement for these activities. Lotteries can only be run for good causes and cannot be run for commercial or private gain.

Gaming machines

Most gaming machines are of the reel-based type, also known as fruit, slot or jackpot machines. Gaming machines fall into categories depending on the maximum stake and prize available. There is a minimum age of 18 for all players for all category A, B and C machines. Staff are expected to stop children playing on the machines and there should be clear signage indicating the age restriction.

At the end of June 2018, the Gambling Commission made a series of commitments to protect children from the dangers of gambling, including looking at how children are exposed to it, the online risks of it and improving education around gambling.

E-sports

Esports is a term used to describe competitive video gaming. It is different from standard video gaming in that Esports is competitive (human-vs-human) and usually has an engaging spectator element to it, like traditional sports.

Just like other sports, you can bet on a team or on individual player who you think will win a particular tournament or match. Many of the big gambling operators now offer opportunities to bet on Esports and like other forms of betting, no one under the age of 18 is allowed to bet with a licensed gambling business.



Spotting signs of potential harm

Financial signs

- Money missing from bank accounts, wallet/purse or money jar
- Household items and valuables missing
- Regularly short of money even though they earn a wage
- Borrowing money on a regular basis
- Having many loans at the one time
- Being secretive about financial records or payslips

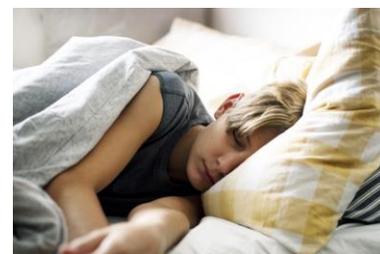


Mood and behavioural signs

- Becoming withdrawn from others/family events
- Performance at school/work is affected
- Seeming worried, agitated or upset for no apparent reason
- Reporting feeling hopeless, depressed, frustrated or suicidal
- Changes in personality – sleeping, eating, or sexual relationship patterns
- Controlling and/or manipulative behaviour
- Using threats, lies or charm to manipulate others

Time-related signs

- Spending more and more time gambling
- Being secretive about unexplained absences
- Often being late for commitments
- Taking a lot of sick days or days off
- Taking an unusual amount of time to complete simple tasks



Chatting to your child

There are many must-have chats we need to have with our children and gambling is another one to add to your list.

You might think it's a bit early to be talking about gambling. After all, you're unable to participate in most forms of gambling until you're 18. However, the reality is that pre-teen children can be influenced by gambling opportunities, ads, promotions and behaviours.

Whether it's on TV, on the radio, at the football stadium or popping up during video games, gambling ads and influences are everywhere.

And with 1 in 5 adults with gambling problems starting to gamble before they were 18, you can see how an open conversation with your child now could help avoid difficulties down the track.

There are no scripts for tricky topics like gambling, but being prepared can help you feel more confident, as does accepting the fact that you don't have to be an expert.

These 5 top tips on how to get the conversation started can also help.

1. Bring it up before your child does

You may worry that you're putting ideas in your child's head, but the likelihood is that your child is already forming attitudes to gambling, without your input. This is especially true if your child is in the teenage years and has more exposure and/or access to gambling through digital devices, social media and interaction with their mates.

2. Pick your moment(s)

If your child is engrossed in something, it's probably not the right time to talk about gambling.

Children can smell a lecture a mile off so grab the opportunities as they arise – perhaps in the car on the way to school or sports practice, or when a gambling ad comes on TV. Don't feel you have to cover everything in one chat either. The most important thing is to let your child know that the topic is on the table, and that they can talk to you about gambling at any time.

3. Be a good role model

If your child is regularly exposed to you or other family members gambling, it sends a message that gambling is a harmless, risk-free activity. You'll also be much less likely to be taken seriously. Children are always good at noticing if what you say doesn't match what you do!



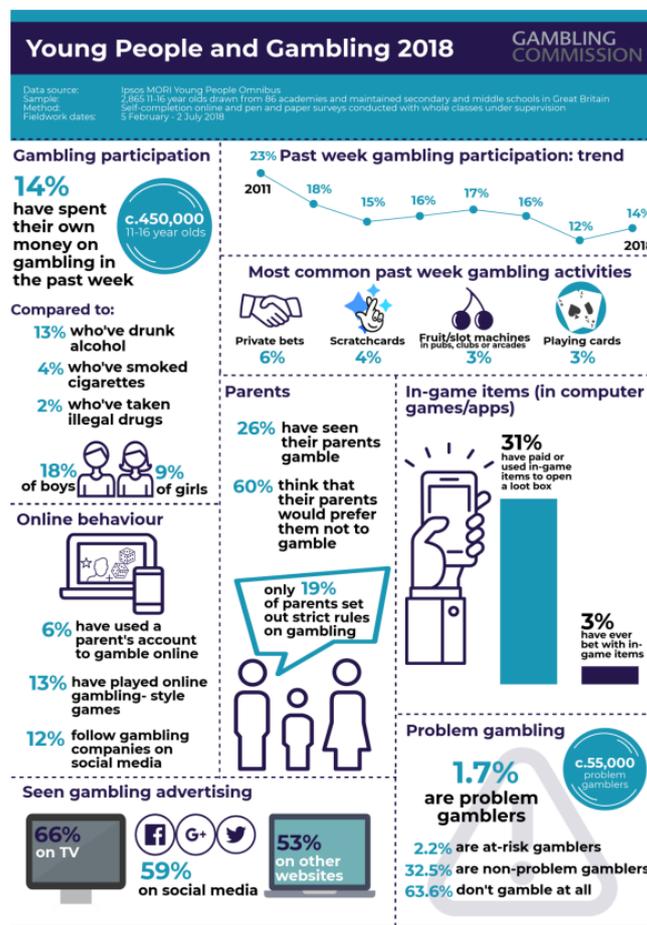
4. Cover a few basics

- Talk about what you love about sport, and make sure your child knows sport and gambling don't have to go together.
- Help your child understand that gambling companies are in business to make money from customers, and that the chances of winning are limited.
- Discuss the things that can influence attitudes to gambling. For instance, you could talk about the blurred lines between gaming and gambling, and how technology has made it easier to gamble.
- Point out gambling is risky and can cause harm. Consider talking about the immediate consequences, like not having enough money to spend on other things your child may want.

5. Back up words with action

Manage access to your money. Are your credit or debit cards linked to accounts your children access, such as those for downloading music? Virtual gaming and gambling websites regularly offer purchased credits or rewards and it's not always obvious that these purchases relate to real money.

Enforce rules around internet use. Create a screen-time plan, locate devices in a shared or visible place in the home, filter access with safe internet search settings, or install software to block gambling sites.



Social Media and Child Abuse Image Offences

An NSPCC investigation has revealed that UK police recorded a 66 per cent increase in child abuse image offences over the last five years.

NSPCC

In a recent [news blog](#), the NSPCC also argues unregulated social media is a central cause of the increase because social media companies are failing to prevent their sites being used to organise, commit and share images of **child sexual exploitation**.

Recent research revealed:

- Snapchat is the site most used to share child abuse images.
- Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, were used in 33 per cent of child abuse crimes on social media.
- Virtual reality environments, such as the Metaverse which is accessed through VR headsets, are now involved in child sexual abuse image crimes.

The SWGfL supplies a series of **social media checklists** to help guide users through their profile settings on several social media platforms, protect their privacy and keep them safe from abuse on social media.

Grooming



Unfortunately there has been a rise in online grooming since the start of the pandemic and Instagram is increasingly being used.

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

You meet friends of friends online and just chat, and that that is ok. But sometimes people are not who they say they are, so you need to spot the signs:

Too good to be true – do they say they share all your interests, do they agree with everything you say? If they ask you to do anything you're comfortable with say no!

Flattery – do they lavish you with praise for pictures you post?

Let's talk about sex – sometimes groomers will get young people to talk about sex really quickly, and being online means they may lose the shyness they would have in real life. Be cautious, you do not have to say or do anything you are not comfortable with. Remember – it is against the law for an adult to have sex with anyone under 16. It is also illegal for someone to put pressure on an under 18 to send sexual photos of themselves.

Got any sexy pictures? If they ask you for pictures they are breaking the law. They may try and entice you by saying other people have sent pictures...this is probably not true!

Can we go somewhere more private? Always be safe. If you met online, then they may ask to meet you in person. It is not good to do this, but if you want to then take a friend with

you and meet in a very public place. If you met in a game online, they ask you to contact them via another app like Snapchat or Whatsapp. Again make sure that you use group chats or stay on public forums

Out little secret? Abusers don't want other people to know that you're chatting, so they may ask you to keep it secret. If someone is making you do things you don't want to do or aren't comfortable, it's not your fault, and you will not be blamed. You do not need to keep their secret and contact CEOP or Childline for help (see below for contacts)

Mood swings – some groomers tend to change from being nice to being nasty. They might do this to make you do something and react. No one deserves to be treated like this

“My camera's broken” – they say this because they might be pretending to be younger than they actually are and because you cannot see them you can't tell. Sometimes they even use fake pictures and videos to trick you. If you think this is happening report it (see below)



What to do:

- Block people that make you feel uncomfortable
- Keep personal information private
- Be careful about meeting up – it is best not to meet up with people you have met online. If you do take a friend with you
- Take breaks – remember to go offline as well! It is important to talk to others in your house, but also to move around for your health
- Speak to a trusted adult – if you feel uncomfortable talk to someone about what is happening
- Make sure you and your child know how to report any misuse – use the CEOP report button (see link below)

Gaming

VR safety advice

We're encouraging parents to familiarise themselves with the risks young users can face in virtual worlds. Products such as Oculus are expected to be a festive favourite, but our child safety online experts are concerned about children being given unchecked access to such an unregulated online space.

To help keep children and young people safe when delving into these unregulated spaces, we have published parental guidance with some simple steps to follow. Our parents' guide to VR headsets covers straightforward advice for families on how to keep children safe when using virtual reality, including to:

- make the headset a family activity, taking turns and playing with it together
- take some time to explore the headset before allowing a child to use it
- talk to children about how they use VR. Make sure they know that personal information should not be shared with people they don't know
- get to know the safety features the device offers. Make sure the location is set to private, use parental controls and check that privacy settings are switched on
- set healthy boundaries and manage your child's screen time.

Virtual reality (VR) headsets have become popular over recent years and you may have one already or be considering one as a gift for your child. A VR headset is a device that you wear over your eyes, like a pair of goggles. It is used to give you a 3D experience, meaning that you can see all around you in virtual reality. But what is virtual reality?

What is virtual reality?

Virtual reality is a computer-generated 3D world. In this world you can experience different environments like exploring an underwater world or visiting a different country, all from your own home. When you put on a VR headset, you can enter one of these environments and become part of what is happening.



You enter this virtual world by putting on the headset. This blocks out the real world and replaces it with the virtual reality world by creating life-like images and video.

Everything you can see in VR moves with you to make you feel like part of the action.

There are different types of VR headset, ranging from simpler, cheaper models to more expensive, high-tech versions. These headsets all work in slightly different ways, but most come with controllers to help you guide what is happening.

The main different headsets are:

- those which have to be physically connected to a computer (or PlayStation) by cables, such as the Sony PlayStation VR and HTC Vive Pro
- headsets which can work on their own and do not need to be connected, like the Meta Quest 2
- ones which use your mobile phone as part of the headset, by simply clipping it into a slot, like the Samsung VR.

For more information [Virtual Reality Headsets | NSPCC](#)

Understanding the Playground - Fortnite



Since its release 2017, the battle-royale simulator – Fortnite, has become ubiquitous in classrooms and playgrounds throughout the world. The game, which features cartoonish renderings of characters, bright colours and non-visceral consequence free violence, has had a mass appeal to children. Each Christmas another draft of young pupils are induced into its overcrowded multi-player lobbies, to the point that there is not a school pupil in the country who hasn't owned it, begged their parents for it or played it round a friend's house. As a result more children than ever are exposed to multi-player chatting with strangers, and financial exploitation via the game's spend-to-gain-advantage operating style. Allowing children to use real world money to gain perks and costumes. From criminal blackmailing, to the coercion of nude exchanges by online 'friends' posing as children, the danger this game presents from a safeguarding perspective is clear. As an added complication, the verbiage surrounding the game used by pupils is near-

incomprehensible, frustrating adepts to secure their safety. Fortunately to allow for greater comprehension of reports to staff involving the game, Internetmatters.org has published a guide to understanding the game and its terms. You can find the link below:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/guidance/fortnite-battle-royal-parents-guide-keep-kids-safe-gaming>

The Young Gamers and Gamblers Education Trust (YGAM) is a national charity with a social purpose to inform, educate, safeguard and build digital resilience amongst those who work with young people, helping them to make informed decisions and understand the consequences around gambling and gaming.

(Some) Gaming phrases to be aware of: I am sure there are a lot more!

- N00b/noob – A new or inexperienced gamer
- Bot – A player so bad they're compared to a very bad computer-controlled player
- Lag – When game is slow or glitchy due to a poor internet connection
- Nerf – When a game developer weakens a weapon due to lots of players using it
- Face roll – An easy victory over an opponent
- Twink – When a player deceives other gamers about their gaming ability
- Easter Egg – A hidden message, image or feature that occurs in a game
- Tank – A gamer that takes all the damage in the group
- GG – Good game. A polite sign off after an entertaining game, a term of respect
- Camp/camping – Find a hiding place and wait there for your enemies

Gaming is more fun when people...

- Treat others with respect
 - Play fairly and within the rules of the game
 - Keep personal information private
- Make sure that content they're sharing is not racially, religiously or sexually offensive

Gaming can be good for them to be in contact with friends and family and it gives them a release from pressures they may be finding from school or family issues. However, be aware of some of the dangers to be aware of with gaming:

Gamers look out for:	Parents:
People who seem too good to be true	Talk to your children about their online life, reassure them that you are interested in their life online and offline. Start having regular conversations with them
People who want to chat in private	Ask your child to show you what they enjoy doing online so that you can understand them
People who say sexual things	Be positive but also open about things you are worried about

People who are much older than you	Ask them if they are worried about anything and let them know they can talk to you
People who put pressure on you	Listen to the reasons why your child wants to go on a website or app

Useful places to go for information for your son/daughter:

Samaritans: 116 123

Childline 0800 1111 Specifically online safety 0808 800 5002

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/> 0808 802 5544

<https://www.kooth.com/>





ROBLOX
Powering Imagination

According to the Roblox website, 'Roblox is the world's largest interactive social platform for play'. For those of you not so familiar with the game, it is a multi-player online gaming platform which allows children to play and create a variety of games in a 3D world. Roblox is free to play and available on all modern smartphones, tablets, desktops, Xbox One, Oculus Rift, and HTC Vive.



What parents need to know about **ROBLOX**



ROBLOX STUDIO

The Roblox Studio allows users to create their own games and 'worlds' for others to play on the platform. As the games are user generated, it gives users the freedom to potentially include things you do not want your child to be exposed to, for example, weapons, violence and even pornographic content. There are no age restrictions on the games created in the Roblox Studio and Roblox can only rely on people reporting negative/violent content in order to remove the games from the platform.



CHATTING AND FRIEND REQUESTS

Whilst the games in Roblox are aimed at 8 to 18-year-olds, there are currently no age restrictions for signing up. This means both adults and young people can play and communicate with each other and send friend requests through the platform. Once a friend request is accepted, this means that they can communicate with each other outside of gameplay.



ROBUX ONLINE PAYMENTS

When a user creates a game, they earn something called 'Robux', which works as a currency within the platform, allowing the purchase of upgrades and memberships. If the created game is of good quality and attracts multiple players and in-game adverts, children have the potential to earn a lot of 'Robux'. Once a user has earned a certain amount of Robux, they can convert this to real cash and withdraw it to a PayPal account. To withdraw money, users need to be over 13, have a PayPal account and have paid for the Roblox premium subscription.



National Online Safety

Top Tips for Parents



UNLIST SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Make sure your child's social media accounts are not listed in the settings/account info. If they are, advise them to make them private or remove them in their account. This will ensure nobody can find and contact them on their social media platforms outside of Roblox.

CHECK SHARED INFORMATION

In the account settings, check that your child is not giving away any personal information in their bio/profile. For example, their full name, phone number or snapchat name. If you see that they have, explain why this is potentially dangerous and remove immediately.

2 STEP VERIFICATION

Roblox has a great 2-step verification security feature which we recommend you enable to add an extra layer of security to your child's account.

HAVE A CHAT ABOUT 'GRIEFING'

Griefing is when someone purposely upsets another player in a game. This can be done by setting traps, damaging or stealing something from another player, intentionally killing them and just generally doing something in the game to spoil gameplay for them. Essentially, 'Griefing' is a form of cyberbullying and can be extremely frustrating and upsetting for players.

IS YOUR CHILD UNDER 13?

Unfortunately, there are hundreds of YouTube videos showing children how to change their age settings on Roblox, so firstly, you should talk to your child to set up some rules/an agreement. There are additional safety features for children under 13, for example having their posts and chats filtered for inappropriate content and behaviour, so it is worth checking that your child has set up their account with the correct age. You can find this in their account settings.

DISABLE IN-GAME CHAT

Roblox is great for children to play together and chat to each other. However, if you wanted to completely turn off in-game chat for your child (meaning they could not contact anyone including their friends) you can do so by following these steps: When logged in, go to the Account Settings page by clicking on the gear icon at the top right corner of the page, then click Settings. Next, click on the Privacy tab and under 'Who can chat with me in game?' select 'No one' and this will disable in-game chat.

RESTRICT PAYMENT METHODS

Roblox is a free to play game, but there are still options to make additional in-game purchases. If you do not want your child to make payments, ensure your card is not associated with their account. If you are happy for your child to make payments in the game, but want to limit spending, we suggest using a games console gift card. These can be purchased in specific amounts, which will allow you to limit how much your child spends and removes the need for a credit/debit card to be used with their account.



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This is not a definitive guide. Please always check with the app's support information to see if your security and privacy concerns are addressed.

www.nationalonlinesafety.com