AGE RES

What parents need to know about



Grand Theft Auto is an action-adventure video game series where Grand Theft Auto is an action-adventure video game series where players control criminals and wreak havoc in order to complete missions and progress through the game. During the early stages of the game, it solely focuses on completing missions to go up a level. However, as the game grew more popular the makers of GTA decided to introduce a narrative to each edition of the game. The aim of this was to increase user engagement, making gamers believe that they were not just playing as the character, but they became the character. Grand Theft Auto is accessible on a number of devices including: PlayStation and Xbox, desktop computers, PSP, Nintendo DS, and Mobile.



Top Tips for Parents

THE RISK - PLAYING WITH STRANGERS

When buying GTA V you automatically have access to Grand Theft Auto Online, a version of the game that allows players to play online. They can play alone, invite players to a game, or be involved in public 'sessions' where people will be picked at random to play. When you first load into a game you are automatically placed into an open lobby, meaning you play with random people. The 'social club' is GTA's very own social platform where users can bet money, share in-game photographs (which users can like and comment on), and even message other users directly.

What parents can do

To prevent your child playing with strangers on the game, you can change the settings to ensure they only play with their approved friends list. Upon signing up to the 'social club,' it automatically sets a player's visibility settings to 'everyone', meaning their name and profile information is made public. Parents can alter this by changing the visibility settings to 'only me'.

Due to the nature of the game and the age restrictions, GTA includes content that is inappropriate for anyone under the age of 18, including sex, nudity, violence, profane language, and substance abuse. These are the main components that make up the game - you have to do certain things and witness certain things in order to move on in the game. Exposing your child to this type of content could affect their morals and understanding of right and wrong. Additionally, your child could become desensitised to similar situations, reinforcing the fact they they would find it hard to differentiate between right/wrong and good/bad. and good/bad.

THE RISK - ONLINE HACKERS

Hackers can make money by helping users cheat in the game. They can do a number of inappropriate things, including killing people, stealing weapons, spawning money into the game, and even raping other characters. Spawning money tends to be a gamer's most popular choice, being able to buy \$100,000,000,000,000 (of in-game currency) for as little as five US dollars.

What parents can do

Actively are not your child's online activity. These websites are very easy to find, meaning children and young people can easily navigate their way to these wesbites and pay for hackers. Not only is this an illegal activity, but you have the risk of giving your personal information to someone who may misuse it.

THE RISK - ADDICTION

Addiction is a risk with any game. Game developers use persuasive design techniques to force users to invest their time, and often money, in a game. Within GTA, your character is able to progress through the game for completing missions within a certain time frame, encouraging children to keep returning to the game. Gaming addiction is now a recognised health condition and the side effects are concerning, including sleep deprevation, decreased attention span and erratic emotional behaviour.

What parents can do

There are a number of things you can do if you are concerned about your child's screen time, including setting time limits within the home, especially during meal times and before bedtime. Talk to your child and ask why they are spending so much time on the game, and enourage healthy alternatives such as outdoor activities and spending quality time with friends and family.

THE RISK - LIVE CHAT

When playing GTA online, players have the option to use a microphone to broadcast their voice live to other players involved in the 'session'. These live voice chats are not moderated, meaning anything could be said, including inappropriate language, as well as verbal forms of bullying.

What parents can do

Talk openly with your child about not giving away personal information. Also remind them that conversations can be recorded, which could damage their online reputation. Depending on the device/platform, there will be ways to mute conversations. Make yourself aware of the device/platform's individual settings and ensure that your child knows how to block and report.

MICROTRANSACTIONS

By completing missions and partaking in certain activities you earn in-game currency. This allows you to buy things such as prostitutes, vehicles, weapons, ammo, new outfits, cars, apartments and more. However, the items that are available to buy often have a high price that require a lot of game time, meaning the items are pretty unrealistic to buy.

What parents can do

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 purchasing a pre-paid gift card for your child. 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 or debit card to be used with their account.

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2103188/parentalguide https://www.telegraph.co.uk/gaming/news/grand-theft-auto-v-has-made-money-film-history/ http://www.techaddiction.ca/addiction-to-video-games.html



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According to the Roblox website, 'Roblox is the world's largest interactive social platform for play.' For those of you who are unfamiliar 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 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 to remove games from the platform Roblox relies on people reporting negative/violent content.

CHATTING & 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 that 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 and enables 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 ability 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 Parents

ALERT!

Tell your children to be careful and to think twice before they click any random advert or popup. There a lot of phishing scams that advertise free roblux etc. with the intent of stealing your child's personal information.

UNLIST SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Make sure your child's social media accounts are not listed in the settings/account information. If they are, advise them to set them to private or remove them from their account. This will ensure that nobody will be able to 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 two-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 generally doing something in the game to spoil their gameplay. Essentially, 'Griefing' is a form of cyberbullying and can be extremely frustrating and upsetting for players.

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 restrict spending, we suggest using a games console gift card. These can be purchased in specific amounts, which will enable you to restrict how much your child spends and removes the need for a credit/debit card to be used with their

DISABLE IN-GAME CHAT

Roblox is great for children to play together and chat to each other. However, if you want to completely turn off in-game chat for your child (meaning they cannot 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.'

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.



















LiveMe is a streaming video app that lets you watch live streams and broadcast your own live videos to anyone interested. The service, which claims to have amassed more than 60 million global users and streams around 300,000 hours of footage a day, is aimed at giving creators a 'platform to reach a wide audience and share their talents and passions directly with their fans.' Users can buy virtual coins and gifts and send these to broadcasters who create content 'they love,' which can be redeemed for real money.



What parents need to know

Sexy

Beautiful





Sexy

LIVE

Beautiful

ONLINE PREDATORS

Law enforcement agencies have warned that LiveMe is placing children at risk from online predators. A sheriff in Texas even issued a warning that paedophiles have a virtual open window to your child's bedroom. Live chat can be used by groomers to target young people who may be manipulated into sending sexual images and videos. LiveMe also has a chat feature, which allows users to speak to each other in private. In 2018, a 65-year-old in the UK was jailed for posing as a teenage boy to groom young girls on LiveMe, and offered virtual currency in exchange for teenagers exposing themselves.

INAPPROPRIATE & ADULT CONTENT

Live streaming apps can potentially expose young people to graphic and inappropriate content. Live. Me says it is 'explicitly intended to be used by individuals 17 years of age or older, and those under 18 should have their parents permission to download and use the app, but there are no age verification checks. As soon as you open the app or website's homepage, you are greeted with scantily clad adult broadcasters posing suggestively with captions, such as 'Join me in bed, and some people even have inappropriate usernames. There is every chance your child will watch content that is not suitable for them or be encouraged to share similar content themselves.

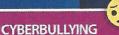


ENCOURAGES CHILDREN TO SEEK FAME

LiveMe describes itself as for new stars and famous celebrities, and suggests that 'influencers' can make up to \$20,000 to \$30,000 (£14,000 to £21,000) in a week through broadcasting live about all types of things, from fashion, music and gaming to art and beauty. Those who use the site seek to gain 'likes' and 'electronic gifts' from others, as the more they receive, the higher their status within that online community. Glorification of fame for fame's sake can be a concern for parents.

SPENDING MONEY ON VIRTUAL GIFTS

Coins are the Live.Me currency. Viewers and broadcasters can buy coins and use them to purchase gifts or do coin drops to interact with one another. When viewers send gifts, they immediately earn the same number of diamonds. Once someone has made a certain level of diamonds, they can cash them out for real money or convert them back into coins. There is always the danger of children spending too much on in-any nurchases without you knowing. much on in-app purchases without you knowing



Users of LiveMe can send private messages, videos and public comments to their connections. Some people can use the anonymity of the internet to be abusive towards others or threaten, tease, upset or humiliate someone else. If your child broadcasts live, there is a very high risk of receiving hurtful comments on their video. Bullying videos can also be posted on live-streaming sites, which can leave children feeling worried or helpless. One British teen told The Sun newspaper that she had been mercilessly bullied and that trolls on the app told her to "go kill yourself", and her address was even shared on Twitter as a target for burglars.

PRIVACY & SECURITY CONCERNS

PRIVACY & SECURITY CONCERNS
Many of the broadcasts by teens come from their bedrooms, often sharing peeks at sleepovers, hangouts and parties.
Anyone can watch live broadcasts at the LiveMe website without even registering or logging into the service (although you can't interact with the user). By sharing too much information about their home life, your teenagers could unwittingly share their location and other identifying features with others. Last year, The Sunday Times also reported that a covert method of extracting the locations of users had been widely shared on the internet, exposing children's addresses to predators.



Tips for Parents

LIVE



It is important for children to understand the risks of broadcasting live. Live-streaming services have limited privacy controls, so it is hard to know who is watching, and is difficult to prevent people accessing the stream. Explain to your child that it is possible for any video to be recorded and shared without the permission or knowledge of the person who made the video.

MONITOR WHAT YOUR CHILD IS

WONITOR WHAT YOUR CHILD IS WATCHING OR BROADCASTING
The only way to know what your child is watching or broadcasting on LiveMe is by regularly monitoring their usage. Chat to your child about what they like about LiveMe and what videos they enjoy watching. Ask them why they want to broadcast live and who they hope will see their videos – understanding their intention could guide you to suggest more appropriate services.

DON'T SHARE PERSONAL

Remind your child that they should never share personal information with people online, including their last name, ome address, school name, or telephone number. If someone asks them for personal information, it does not mean they have to tall those numbers. have to tell them anything.

REPORT INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

If someone has been acting inappropriately, you are encouraged to ask for help by emailing LiveMe@cmcm.com with the subject line 'ATTENTION: INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR' and send evidence, including a screenshot of their profile. You can also directly report inappropriate, offensive, and harmful content from inside the app using the Report option. However, it is worth remembering that it is not wise to screenshot and save inappropriate material.

BLOCKING PEOPLE

Explain to your child that if they notice inappropriate behaviour, bullying, or any other rule-breaking conduct on LiveMe, they can block a user from chatting on their broadcast and profile by tapping on their name, navigating to the profile page, and then choosing 'block'.

RESTRICT IN-APP PURCHASES

Stop your children from making in-app purchases by changing the app and device settings. For example, you can change the settings so a password is required to proceed with a transaction. Advise your child not to buy anything online without talking to you first.

Publishing live video can give away clues to your child's identity and location. Predators will search videos to identify information in the background that gives details about your child, such as street names or school uniforms. Explain to your child that they need to think carefully about where and when they broadcast live.

THINK BEFORE YOU BROADCAST

As with anything that is posted and shared with other people and online, remember that once it is up, it is hard to take back. Once videos are shared online, they become public. Videos can attract the attention of sex offenders or someone may threaten to share videos with others unless the child sends money or more videos.

BE RESPECTFUL OF OTHERS

Remind your child to always consider what they are about to comment on and to think about whether they would do that in the 'real world' or may regret posting at a later date. Encourage your child to think about the language they use online and to think carefully before commenting on content posted by someone else.

DISCUSS SEXTING

Although it is an awkward subject, it is important to explain to children that creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal. A young person is breaking the law if they take an explicit video of themselves or share a video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age.

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What parents need to know about

BEING INFLUENCED

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More than one third of children aged 6-17 consider 'social media stars' to be among their top role models. There are millions of creators on TikTok, showcasing their 'talents, moments and knowledge', from singing to dancing to stunts and comedy skits, which receive thousands of likes and comments from around the world, quickly turning people into 'stars'. There is the danger that children may develop unrealistic expectations of how they should look and behave on the app in order to become the next 'star'. They may have featings of inadequary and low self-esteem or become swayed

eelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem or become swayed by certain opinions.

INAPPROPRIATE SONG LYRICS

TikTok lets users lip-sync to their favourite songs and produce their own music videos. Some of the music choices contain swear words or sexual themes. So not only can children be posed to potentially inappropriate content but they can broadcast themselves miming or singing these lyrics.

CONCERNING CONTENT

Some of the outfits and dance moves in videos can be overtly sexual and provocative. There have also been reports of some users sharing concerning content, such as videos that promote anorexia, porn, self-harm and violence.

DANGEROUS TRENDS & CHALLENGES

On TikTok, there are always 'trending challenges' and hashtags that users can copy or build upon, and sometimes, these challenges can pose risks to young people.

STRANGERS CAN FOLLOW YOUR CHILDREN

If your child's profile is open, strangers can use the app to comment on your child's videos. While this isn't always sinister, it gives potential predators the ability to contact your child through the platform.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Of course, as with many apps, there's a paid element to TikTok. Users can buy virtual coins to be exchanged for virtual gifts - for example, if they like a specific video, your child can use coins to purchase emojis to show approval. These can be expensive and easily purchased - there is the option to buy 10,000 coins for £97.99 with a one-click buy button.

ANYONE CAN SEE YOUR CHILD'S CREATIONS

TikTok encourages users to 'share their passion and creative expression through their videos' and while something may seem fun at the time, videos can get in the wrong hands and cause embarrassment in the future. If posted publicly, anyone in the world can see your child's homemade music video and potentially cause bullying within personal friendship groups or even online.



National Online Safety

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or Parents



TALK ABOUT THE PITFALLS OF OVERSHARING

Encourage your kids to always think before they do, say, like or post anything online, explaining that their digital footprint' can shape their online reputation and the way that other people see them. Something they may find funny and entertaining now may impact them in the future. Talk about how to deal with peer pressure and how doing something they think will impress others could affect them.

HANDLING CRITICISM

While it's fantastic to see your child being creative and expressive and bonding with people with similar interests, they need to be aware that not everyone will be supportive online. Comments can be negative or even cruel. Make sure they know how to comment respectfully and handle negative feedback. In the app's Privacy and Safety settings, your child can decide who can react to their videos, who can comment, and who can send them private chat messages. We suggest using these settings so only their friends can interact with their posts.

SIGNING UP WITH THE CORRECT AGE

When signing up to TikTok, you are prompted to input your birth date. If your child inputs their age as 'under 13', the app will not allow them to sign up and will be locked for 24 hours. The app is intended for users aged 13+, so explain that the rating is there for a reason; to keep them protected from online dangers. It is actually possible to watch TikTok videos without even creating an account, so it's important to check if your underage child has downloaded the app to their devices.

USE THE 'DIGITAL WELLBEING' SETTING

If you're concerned about the amount of time your child is spending on TikTok, in the app's setting, you can switch on a feature called Digital Wellbeing. This includes 'Screen Management' to limit the amount of time your child spends on the app.

SET THE ACCOUNT TO PRIVATE

of can see their creations. To make an account private, tap the three dots at the top right of the screen to access settings. Click 'Privacy and Safety'. Scroll down until you find 'Private Account' and turn this setting on.

REPORT INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

MEPORT INAPPROPRIATE CONTEIN I MAPPROPRIATE CONTEIN I map round so be inappropriate, they can report content in different ways within the app. They can report an account, video, comment or chat conversation by simply tapping 'Report'. In the app's 'Digital Wellbeing' feature, there is also an 'Enhanced Restricted Mode', which limits the appearance of videos that may not be appropriate for all audiences. appropriate for all audiences.

AVOID IDENTIFIABLE OBJECTS

To ensure that there's no way of anyone tracking your child's location or identity, make it clear to them that they should never film a video in their school uniform or near a landmark that gives away where they live.

DISCUSS IN-APP PURCHASES

To lower the risk of your child making accidental in-app purchases, teach them exactly what in-app purchases are and the risks of making them without permission. Tell them that they are not essential to enjoy the app and that if they want to make a purchase, they should always ask you beforehand. In the app's 'Digital Wellbeing' feature, there is the option to disable the function of purchasing coins and sending gifts.









Snapchat is a photo sharing app for mobile phones and tablets. The app allows users to share images, videos and chat with friends. Users can share images and videos directly to specific friends, or through a 'story' shared with their entire friend list, which documents the previous 24 hours. In a study, Snapchat was ranked the 4th most negative app in terms of having an impact on young people's health and wellbeing, with children feeling that they can use the app Snapchat to "make you look pretty."



What parents need to know about

EXPOSING YOUR CHILD'S EXACT LOCATION

The 'Snap Map' lets you share your EXACT location in real-time through a map on the app. The user's location updates when the app has been opened on the device. There is a warming on the Snapchat washits about updating images and videos to 'Dur. the device, I here is a warning on the Shapchar website about uploading images and videos to 'Our Story' stating that "snaps you submit to 'Our Story' can still show up on the Map, no matter which location settling you choose!. When uploading to 'Our Story' your child's image or video could appear in "Search results and Stories on or off Snapchat -today or in the future."

LENS EXPLORER
The 'Lens Studio' on Snapchat gives users the freedom to use their imagination to design their own filters for themselves and others to use. Snapchat states that the lenses users create "must comply with our Lens Studio Submission Guidelines and Community Guidelines and must be appropriate for Snapchatters ages 13+."The 'Lens Explorer' in the app now enables users to choose from thousands of these creations to alter their snaps. Anyone can create a lens for Snapchat, which gives opportunities for age-inappropriate content to be uploaded.

THE RISKS OF SEXTING

THE RISKS OF SEXTING

It can be slightly awkward talking about this topic with your child, but if it helps them protect themselves, it is worth it. Talk to them about the consequences of sexting and make sure that they're aware of the risks. Ensure your child knows that 'Snaps' can be screenshotted. Teach them that if they post anything potentially embarrassing or harmful (either of themselves or someone else) it can have severe consequences as the message, image or video can be shared further.

SCREENSHOTS & SAVED MESSAGES

MESSAGES
While Snapchat's gimmick is that all photos, videos and text disappear eventually, users still have the capability to screenshot or record anything which has been sent to them. Users may sometimes forget that screenshotting is possible and send a compromising image or message to somebody who they think they trust. They may also accidentally send an image or message to somebody who they do not trust. Simply by pressing and holding a message, the user is able to save a message they have received, which can be screenshotted or used against them at a later date.

SNAPSTREAKS & ADDICTION

'Snap Streaks' are gained when snaps have been sent back and forth consecutively between friends. The longer that snaps are sent between users, the The longer that snaps are sent between users, the longer the streak becomes. Furthermore, Snapchat rewards users who have achieved high Snap Streaks, by gifting emojis, adding incentives for users to keep the streaks. Children invest time into making their streaks as long as possible, which can put an incredible amount of pressure on both themselves and their friendships.

SEXTING

Due to 'Snaps' disappearing, (users can even send a one-second photo or video), Snapchat has become the chosen platform for children and young people to send sexually explicit images or 'selfies.' Once a photo/video has been screenshotted, or recorded using another device or software, this can lead to further dangers, such as blackmail and cyberbullying. It is illegal to make, possess, download, store and share sexual images, photos and videos of a person under the age of 18. This also includes any sexual images, photos and videos that a child may have taken of themselves. However, if a young person is found creating or sharing images, the police can choose to record that a crime has been committed, but taking formal action isn't in the public interest.

SNAP ORIGINALS

Through 'Snap Originals', users can watch content which has been created by Snapchat on the app, including comedy shows, drama, news and more.
Additionally, there are new lenses and filters
available, inspired by the 'snap originals' shows. This



Top Tips for Parents

USE'GHOST MODE'

We highly recommend enabling 'Ghost Mode fiat your child's location will no longer be vis on the 'Snap Map.' To enable this, go onto the

HOW TO DELETE A MESSAGE

RESTRICT STORY VIEWS







REPORTING A STORY, LENS, FILTER, SNAP OR MESSAGE

If your child comes across inappropriate Snapchat content sent directly to them or in another person's story, advise them to report it immediately. This may include an inappropriate lens, filter, message or snap. To report an offensive lens, they should open the app and select the lens they want to report. An Info button will appear above the lens. Click this, followed by the flag icon. This will send a eport to Snapchat for further investigation. Reports can also be made on the Snapchat support website: support.snapchat.com. *#"@\$



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