St Peter's
Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Parent Information Pack

Online Safety

December 2018

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Introduction

The purpose of this information pack is to bring to your attention information, which will help you as a family, make decisions around e-safety and, hopefully, make you think and re-think your strategies as a parent.

At school, we constantly receive updates from the Police, e-safety advisors and various charities. There is a wealth of information out there, which details ways in which we can protect our children online. It does, however, take some wading through! The information in this pack is taken from a range of sources which I we hope that you will find useful. The views represented are not necessarily my own, or those of the school, but are there as food for thought!

Alan Mackenzie is an online safety consultant and some of his recent articles are included in this pack. At St. Peter's we deliver e-safety lessons to children through our Computing and PSHE curriculum. Our new governor, Debbie Stoneley is also a CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) trainer and is therefore able to advise us on ways in which we can keep our children safe online.

The digital magazine, **Parent Zone**, which is produced by Vodafone and CEOP, is a great resource and the links are included for you.

Below are the links to two quizzes. They can both be found on the NSPCC website and are quite fun to do. See how much you do (or don't) know about your child's online world.

https://www.o2.co.uk/nspcc/quiz

https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/internet-safety-quiz/

What causes children upset online?

South West Grid for Learning have published some interesting information around this. See link below;

https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/swgfl-publishes-report-what-causes-young-people-upset-online

PARENT ZONE

https://parentzone.org.uk/advice/parent-guides

https://parentzone.org.uk/parent-info

This magazine, which is produced free of charge for schools and parents provides lots of useful information and articles. They also provide weekly briefings- a chance to have a look at anything that is new that week or articles on current trends.
For example, the week beginning 26th October there were articles on Fortnite- The Church of England says Fortnite is encouraging children to gamble; 81,00 hacked Facebook accounts up for sale for 8p each and legislation not keeping up with the digital world.
Within the Parent information section you can find:
Reviews
LGBTQ+ Hub
Sex and relationship information
Health and well-being information
Education
Special needs information.

FORTNITE - getting bigger and bigger

If you hoped the furore over the most popular game we saw last year was going to go away any time soon, I'm afraid it isn't. Towards the end of the school summer holidays the Android version was released, meaning we will see more playing. Don't forget, Fortnite is just a game, it is the Battle Royale element that concerns most people, mainly due to the intensity of the very short 20-minute games.
Battle Royale is not exclusive to Fortnite, many other games have it too. And guess what came out in late September - Call of Duty Battle Royale (18 rated).

So, what is Fortnite, and what do we need to be concerned about?

If you are a parent, chances are in the past six months you have been nagged about Fortnite, an apocalyptic survival video game that has attracted legions of fans and controversy in equal measure. The free multiplayer spans Windows and Mac, Xbox and PlayStation platforms, and pits players against 99 others in a frantic fight for survival on an island where the last gamer standing is the winner. Its bright, cartoon-like graphics prevent it from descending into bloody violence, but parents and politicians have voiced concerns over its effect on young children.

What is the point of Fortnite?

Originally released in July 2017, the game comes in two versions: Fortnite: Save the World (previously known as just Fortnite, which you have to pay for), and the free Fortnite: Battle Royale – the most popular one that more than 40m people have downloaded. It does, however, contain

in-game purchases to buy outfits, weapons and other helpful items. The aim of Fortnite is to stay alive, playing as an individual or as part of a team with people across the globe to ward off hordes of enemy monsters, build forts and defend the island's survivors. Each game lasts around 20 minutes, providing you don't get killed. The game's new Playground mode is being taken offline on 12th July to allow developers Epic to add a host of new features, including aim assist, team selection and traps, which affect teammates and enemies.

Why has the game caused so much controversy?

The official age rating the Video Standards council have given it is **12**, for "frequent scenes of mild violence," but while the game is violent by nature, it is not gory. Parents have complained about how the fiendish difficulty of staying alive to the end has made it highly addictive, leaving their children feeling tired and withdrawn after playing it for hours on end, while some have racked up significant bills buying add-ons their parents have had to pay off.

Culture Secretary Matt Hancock is concerned that too much time spent playing games like Fortnite could have a "damaging impact on our children's lives." "Whether it's social media or video games, children should enjoy them safely and as part of a lifestyle that includes exercise and socialising in the real world," he told the Daily Telegraph.

Should I let my child play it?

The National Crime Agency's Safer Internet Centre has encouraged parents to play the game with their children in order to better understand it, and to have open and honest conversations about the strangers they may be playing with and talking to online while playing. Setting sensible screen time limits and using the parental controls available on the given platform can also help to provide peace of mind.

https://inews.co.uk/news/technology/what-is-fornite-explainer-for-parents/

Kik Messenger

I am not a great believer in 'this app is dangerous' and 'this app is safe' because that simply is not the case. However, there are increasing concerns over the Kik Messenger app. Kik has been around since 2010, it has around 300 million users worldwide and can be popular with children and young people alike. The NPCC (National Police Chiefs Council) reported last week that the number of CSE/A reports over the last 2 and a half years has quadrupled. Whether that is an actual increase of more children being contacted or larger awareness and reporting we will never know but given the concerns of NPCC it is worth taking note. Remind children of all ages about the concerns and what to do if something doesn't feel quite right, and for parents of younger children please check their phones to see what apps they are using.

Few pupils would tell a teacher about online risk

There was an interesting article in TES recently (link HERE). It was based on a survey of 2,000 secondary students regarding whether or not a student would confide in a teacher if they had an online concern. Only 4 in 10 said yes, 30% said no with just under 30% unsure. Concerning that, 30% felt that their e-safety education had no relevance to their use of technology outside school. You could flip this figure and say that 70% thought their e-safety education was relevant, and that is quite a good figure.

It's really difficult for primary and secondary schools to teach such a fast moving and very fluid subject; online safety is now so huge in terms of the risks and issues (and of course the positives), getting information across in a way that has a positive impact is no easy task.

Online CSE

Whilst Cyber fraud is the fastest growing criminal activity, CSE is (and in my opinion always will be) the most disturbing. Offenders are continually looking for new ways and as always they will be in the spaces that children are in (which is why talking about those spaces is important). Live streaming is an incredibly difficult area for law enforcement to investigate and all indications are that CSE via live streaming is going to increase as the upward popularity trend of live streaming continues. Please talk to your children about this, find out the apps they are using for live streaming (commonly ones such as TikTok (formerly Musically), YouNow, Instagram Live and many others).

Whilst recent research from IWF showed the majority of victims are under 13 (98%), let's not be complacent, it could be happening to older students. A good way of engaging with the older students in something like this is to instil a sense of moral responsibility for their younger brothers/sisters and the younger students in school, in other words, you're not telling them, you are giving them the information to be on the lookout for with younger children. I have found this to be quite effective in the past.

Skin Gambling

With skin gambling starting to come to the front of the queue in terms of concerns to children and young people, it is good to see regulators looking very closely at this. A skin is simply a design in a game (usually a weapon design) which you can physically gamble in unregulated websites for other skins or or/for real money. There is now an international coalition looking at this.

Alan Mackenzie

Musical.ly / Tik Tok

If you haven't heard of Musical.ly where have you been? A massively popular social media app with younger teenagers and older children. It was released in 2014 but didn't become really popular until early 2016. Predominantly used in Europe and the U.S., it had approximately 100 million active users.

Essentially, it is an app where you sing (lip sync) and act out to your favourite musical genres live (live streaming) and you could also upload the videos directly to your YouTube channel. There were two privacy settings, which is fairly common, private or public, and the majority of the children I spoke to in school over the last couple of years had the setting to private. The service has been purchased by a Chinese company called ByteDance, and in August they removed the Musical.ly service, but before doing so they transferred all user accounts into an app called TikTok. TikTok has also been around for a few years but the predominant user base has been Asia with a whopping 300 million active users. It is quite similar to Musical.ly for the most part; a different interface but the same short-form videos that can last up to 15 seconds. Interestingly the users

aren't being combined as far as I am aware, I initially thought they were, however it appears the app will remain a standalone app in China, maybe it's to do with the more strict censorship laws? I don't know to be honest. So are there any concerns?

As with any of these things, it isn't the app. Apps are neutral. It is the behaviour; sometimes the behaviour of our own children, and sometimes the behaviour of others towards our children. As with Musical.ly, TikTok is used for live streaming, broadcasting yourself live either to a private or a public audience. Musical.ly was mainly about lip-syncing but TikTok is more than that, it describes itself as a 'global video community, making it easy for you to watch awesome short videos and make your own videos', but on the vast majority of the accounts I've looked through it is acting out, or syncing to music.

Since early 2017, this has become an emerging issue, whereby sexual predators are using apps such as this to contact children. Just before the summer break the IWF (Internet Watch Foundation) released their latest research which revealed really concerning statistics regarding children being groomed, coerced and blackmailed into live-streaming their own abuse over webcams, tablets and mobile phones.

Some of the highlight statistics are:
 • 98% of images found were of children 13 and under.
 • 28% of children were 10 or under.
 • 96% of victims were girls.
 • 96% showed a child on their own.

We need to be careful about demonising particular apps; as I mentioned at the beginning of this article, apps/technology are neutral, it's the behaviour that is key. Any platform or service on the internet can be a target for offenders, particularly if it is popular with children, so it's important that we keep conversations going with children and talk to them regularly about what is right or wrong, and what to do if something doesn't feel right.

For more information about the TikTok app see the Common Sense Media guide here: http://bit.ly/dittotiktok

To see the IWF research see here: http://bit.ly/dittoiwf

CONTENT
As with any platform like this, there's going to be content that is inappropriate. When there's hundreds of thousands of users, moderation processes can be slow and sometimes seem non-existent. Remember, many (most) apps are designed for children 13+.

CONTACT
Most apps default to PUBLIC, meaning that anyone can view posts, follow and private message children. Double check privacy settings and ensure your child knows how to block/report users.
CONDUCT
 Conduct is the behaviour of your own child. How are they expressing themselves? Are you happy with their bio and their profile picture? Are they behaving in a way that you are happy with?
Alan Mackenzie

If you are not sure what TikTok is, clink on the link below;
https://www.childnet.com/blog/what-is-tiktok-looking-at-the-latest-lip-syncing-app

And, if you're not sure about Live Streaming, click this one;
https://www.childnet.com/young-people/secondary/hot-topics/livestreaming

OPINION: BANNING PORNOGRAPHY

Pornography has always been around, it isn't new, but what has increasingly changed over the last 20 years is the pervasive nature, the ease of access, and certainly some of the more depraved stuff that is incredibly easy to find. For clarity, I'm talking about images and videos of adults here, I'm not talking about children or what is sometimes (and incorrectly) referred to as child pornography.

In the UK, and other countries around the world, there is no such thing as child pornography; it is child sexual abuse. In recent years our government has been trying to decide what to do about this, as parents are quite rightly worried about the free and easy access; you can't ban outright something which is legal, and you can't just stick an internet filter in front of it and be 100% certain that it will block everything (although if you're a parent I suggest you do as it can help).

In the not too distant future, you're going to be seeing more information in the media about new laws in regards to age verification. This is one of the many strands of an overarching Digital Economy Bill, and this strand was supposed to be in place by April 2018.

Essentially, it means that all pornography sites and apps must verify users' ages with an industry-approved age verification standard. Any site that fails to comply will face fines and/or other measures. Enforcement will take place by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). I don't want to go into too much detail in this article, but simply put across an opinion. As it stands, the law (when it comes out) is full of holes, for example there is an exemption for any site where pornographic material makes up less than a third of content. I'd love to see the job title and description for the person/s that's got to do the counting!!

Do I think it's the right thing to do?

Yes, I do, for all its flaws, it's a step in the right direction. It might be a flawed step but it is better than doing nothing, which is exactly what has happened for the last 20 years or so. My biggest concern is that, yet again, little consideration is being given to young people themselves in regards to their browsing habits.

I can almost guarantee that the large majority of those that view adult material don't visit individual sites where you have to pay to view, they'll use a variety of methods and that includes the popular social media services, which won't be subject to the new law because of the 'less than a third content' clause and the overwhelming number of non-commercial sites.

On a slightly different note

To enhance a point, if you ban something it just ends up elsewhere, you may be aware of a music genre called Drill. Essentially, it is a style where artists often rap about violent lifestyles and is often associated with gangs. In fact, recent reporting is correlating Drill music with rising crime levels (an argument for another time perhaps). In response to concerns from the Metropolitan Police, YouTube has banned a number of Drill videos. But it's the same old story. Ban content from one place, and it ends up elsewhere, this is the nature of the internet and there's no getting away from it.

In this case, some of those videos are now appearing on Pornhub. Pornhub is arguably the largest pornography repository online, with around 81 million visits a day (in 2017) and 800 searches a second. In the name of research, (don't judge me,) I went onto Pornhub and very easily found a

few of these Grime videos. Whether they will be staying up there remains to be seen, but again it brings back the point that you can't ban things online, all you do is shift it somewhere else. In the case of pornography, access by young people in particular, traditional web 'sites' are a small concern within a much bigger problem

What's the solution?

There isn't one! As much as we would like to think we could curtail content such as this, it's impossible. We have to come back to education and teach children and young people about safe, consensual relationships. We have to talk to them directly about pornography, not be embarrassed about it in good old British fashion, and I'm really hoping the forthcoming Relationships and Sex Education curriculum takes this into account.

Alan Mackenzie

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/digital-economy-bill-part-3-online-pornography

REMEMBER!

If you need to know about an app, game, book, film, etc., go to

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/

This web site, although American, regularly reviews apps, games, books
and films and gives a detailed description of the amount of violence, sexual content, positive role models, negative role models and more. It is a very useful site and one which is constantly updated.