

Venture MAT online



November 2018

Christmas Issue

With Christmas fast approaching we have put together some information on keeping your child safe over the holidays. We have included advice about new devices, games and smart toys.

New Devices for Christmas

Over Christmas many children receive gifts that require going online (smartphones, gaming devices, tablets, etc.). We have compiled a short checklist to help keep your children as safe as possible whilst using their new devices.

1. Research the device, make sure you have an idea of how your child will be using it. www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/parents-guide-technology is a very helpful website which provides helpful information about different devices (smartphones, tables etc.)
2. Have a look at the device before Christmas day and set up security and parental controls— paying special attention to location settings. If you can't set it up before Christmas ensure you sit with your child and set it up together. pwxp5srs168nsac2n3fnjyaa-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/IM-SetUpSafe-Checklist-24Jan.pdf this is a helpful checklist.
3. Look into the parental controls on your home internet. <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/parental-controls-offered-your-home-internet-provider> this website provides helpful information on different service providers. For smart phones check parental controls are also set up on the mobile network .
4. Finally, take time to play on the new device together with your child, talk about what the child is using it for and what they know about staying safe online.

Smart Toys (Internet Connected Toys)

In recent years new smart toys have been developed that access the internet, this might mean that the toy collects data and could possibly be accessed by other people.

It is important to research the toy and find out about:

- The type of information the toy collects
- Will it take photos or videos and where they are stored
- If it uses location services
- Who can interact with the toy and does it require a password
- Are there parental controls

nationalonlinesafety.com/christmas-gadgets-keep-children-safe/ provides helpful information on setting up your smart toy, for example turning off location services and changing any default passwords or pins.

Games and Apps

Along with new devices, children will also be receiving new games and downloading new apps. Some of these will not be appropriate for your child. There are several ways that you can check the games/apps to ensure your child isn't exposed to inappropriate content.

1. Look at the PEGI rating. This is an age rating used for games and apps, it will also give an indication of the type of content the game has.
2. Check the game/app on www.commonsensemedia.org/ this is a great source of information about games and apps and what to expect from them.
3. Play the game yourself, this is a great way for you to experience the game and any issues your child might encounter.
4. Use YouTube to watch videos of the games/apps being played.
5. Spend time with your child while they're playing the game and see for yourself what they are seeing. Ensure all chat functions are turned off.