SEE
SAY
DO

GAMING

Children and young people play games to pass time, to be creative, problem solve, socialise and for escapism. Games can be played on numerous devices, including hand held devices, which can all have some level of online access. Many games offer 'in game' chat functions and ways to connect with other users. Think Minecraft, Call of Duty, and Candy Crush.

GAMING

CALL OF DUTY

MINECRAFT

FORTNITE

ROBLOX

It is important young people learn to play online games safely and respectfully.

There may be some challenges young people come across when playing online games.

Most games will have a rating much like movies and TV shows. Ask yourself if the game is age appropriate for the young person playing it. These ratings are used to protect young people from accessing inappropriate material. This material may be psychologically harmful to children and exposure may desensitise children to extreme material, such as pornography, child exploitation material, radicalised ideologies, and criminal activity. Young people may also be subject to bullying, swearing and rudeness when gaming on a platform that is not age appropriate.

Many parents and carers may not be aware that some games have an 'in game' chat function.

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Anonymous 'in game' chat can provide a possible platform for online child sex offenders to target young people. Case studies have shown predators using 'in game' chat as a gateway, and subsequently directing their targets to other platforms to elicit photos and facilitate meetings.

It is important young people learn to question the value and accuracy of the content they see online. Have open and honest communication with your child about what to do if they see something that upsets them.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- ⬇ Check the classification, as these can be a good indication as to whether the content and functionality is suitable for children. Classifications are sometimes set by game or app developers and not independently assessed.

- ⬇ Many games contain in-app purchases which can lead to a hefty bill – it is a good idea to disable in-app purchases.

- ⬇ Only download apps from the official stores, such as Apple's App Store or the Google Play Store.

- ⬇ Encourage your child to come to you or a trusted adult if they see something online that makes them feel uncomfortable.