eSafety newsletter

Herts for Learning

Parent edition

Autumn 2016

Pokémon Go

Pokémon Go is a new gaming app that has quickly been adopted by millions of adults and children alike. There were 15.3 million tweets worldwide about Pokémon Go in its first week. The new game is different from others before it because it uses the real world as a background through the camera on a user's device. The best way to understand it if you haven't played before is to watch the trailer on the official Pokémon website: **www.pokemongo.com/en-uk/**

The Risks:

- **Meeting people they don't know face-to-face** The game is designed to bring people together. Usually strangers. So you never know who they might meet.
- **There's a physical risk** It's easy to forget to look where you're going with this game, but they need to be careful of where they end up. There are already stories of people being lured to places that aren't safe for children.
- **It can cost a lot of money** There are in-app purchases and other incentives which can cost up to £79.99 (14,500 Pokécoins). Make sure the app's set up without payment options.
- **Access to personal data** Pokémon Go asks for personal information like your child's birth date and email address, which they're asked to enter or receive through social media accounts. Parents have the right to contact the creators to stop them from using their personal information.

(the above risks have been taken from the NSPCC website)

Currently on Apple's App store, the age is 9+, yet on Android, there is no age restriction at the moment. Despite this, parental caution is advised, even for teenagers.

Whilst the game is undoubtedly clever, keeps people fit and is apparently very good fun, there are two main physical dangers to children using it. The first is related to awareness. People walk around staring at their screen (you might ask, what's new?) and risk physically harming themselves by not watching where they are walking. The second is related to those who wish to harm children. It is widely believed that the game is susceptible to personal information hijacking and identifying a user's location, although the developer will most likely provide clarification soon, and hopefully provide a solution. More about this can be found from online searches, such as the following from gaming site Nintendo Life.

http://bit.ly/NSPCC-on-Pokemon

Continued on the next page

New terminology such as 'pokestop' or 'pokegym' won't help the current confusion for non-users but fortunately The Telegraph did a good job of explaining things recently **http://bit.ly/The-Telegraph-on-PokemonGo** It seems that either of these being in an inconvenient location can be remedied by visiting the following website and requesting their removal **http://bit.ly/PokemonGo-Request**

If there is an actual Pokémon, the characters which players need to collect, in an inconvenient location, then this seems to be more of a problem. You will know soon enough if this is the case because you might have people knocking at your door who ask to walk over to that spot with their phones. As each Pokémon captured by one person does not disappear and can be captured by others, it means that you could have lots of visitors spotting them on their maps and asking for/demanding entry. The good part about this is that if your property is not too large, the characters can be caught from a neighbouring property or road. If you have a particularly large garden or premises, this is less likely and people will want to walk up to it. Obviously you can deny access, and for child protection reasons, it is definitely best not to admit random children into your house or garden. So where does that leave you? How do you get this digital character removed from the map which leads players to your house? At the moment, it seems that there is no solution to this. The NSPCC is on the case and hopefully the developers will do the right thing very soon. **http://bit.ly/PokemonGo-open-letter** For now though, be vigilant and keep your eye out online for a remedy to this situation.

Please read the NSPCC parent guide for more information:
http://bit.ly/PokemonGo-Parent-guide

IT'S NOT OKAY

The 'It's not okay' website and campaign has been put together by Project Phoenix, a collaboration of public and third sector partners.

Their aims are to:

- raise awareness of child sexual exploitation
- help people recognise the signs
- encourage people to report it
- provide support to victims and those most at risk

To find out more about this, particularly with reference to online safety and sexting, please follow this link
http://bit.ly/eSafety-itsnotokay

THINKUKNOW sexting campaign

Thinkuknow are currently running a 'The world changes. Children don't' campaign to increase understanding about sexting. Visit **www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/** to see their 'Modern Day Romeo & Juliet' video. Check out the other resources on offer while you are there.

Child safety online: age verification for pornography

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport Sets out the government's response to the consultation on Child Safety Online: Age Verification for Pornography. The consultation sought views on protecting children from seeing pornographic material online. Following its analysis of responses to the consultation, the government intends to bring forward legislation, in the Digital Economy Bill, to establish a new law requiring age verification for commercial pornographic websites and applications containing still and moving images, and a new regulatory framework to underpin it.

Access to online pornography by children is often a concern held by many parents. Following a consultation on Child Safety Online: Age Verification for Pornography, the government intends to introduce the Digital Economy Bill, which will establish a new law to help prevent this access. A new age verification system will soon become a legal requirement for commercial pornographic websites which contain images and videos: **http://bit.ly/Age-verification**

Useful websites

"I want to make it less likely that my children will get into trouble at home when online"

Find out how to make internet access safer at home on the Internet Matters website: **http://bit.ly/ParentCont**

"I don't want people to see that when they search on the internet"

Find out how to ask Google to remove information from their search results here **http://bit.ly/RemInfo**

"I have found a website that holds illegal content. How do I report it?"

Report illegal website content here: **https://www.iwf.org.uk**

For further eSafety advice visit:
http://bit.ly/eSafetyAdviceforParents