



# Parents E-Safety Newsletter



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## Posting videos on YouTube and other online platforms

In the last term, we have become aware of more children, especially younger children posting videos of themselves on YouTube.

Many children watch YouTube celebrities such as Zoella, Stampy, DanTDM or Joe Sugg. With the technology available now on mobile phones, it is very easy to create a video and many children and young people will then want to share that video in the same way as the celebrities they follow.

So what are the issues with young people sharing these types of videos? Well, they will depend to a certain extent on the age of the child and the content of the video but the following issues might need to be considered if your child is asking to put videos of themselves up online.

1. Once the video is in a public forum like YouTube, it is not possible to guarantee being able to remove every copy of it if any of the people in the video are later embarrassed, upset or angry about its content.
2. Does the video really need to be in a public forum? If there are some friends or family who would like to view it, can the forum be made private to those people – this can be done on YouTube and some other forums.
3. How will your child cope if some viewers make negative comments? Does the platform allow the comments to be hidden?
4. Does the video, the username or biographic information contain anything that could put the child at risk? We have seen videos clearly

showing the front of a child's house or identifiable landmarks, videos taken in school uniform or videos showing children's bedrooms.

5. Does the video contain any inappropriate content, for example rude comments, swearing, criticisms of their school? Your child's friends may watch the video and show their parents – is there anything that anyone might take offence to? Does it breach any of the sites' terms and conditions?
6. Are your child's expectations realistic? Some children can get very disappointed if they do not receive a lot of likes/subscriptions etc.

Remember that YouTube and many other platforms have a minimum age limit of 13 and accounts can be deleted if they are thought to belong to someone younger.

## Parenting in the digital age from the ParentZone

The ParentZone, which produces the Digital Parenting magazine, have launched an online training product for parents containing 3 modules:

- Module 1: Understanding online risk.
- Module 2: Using tools and settings to keep your child safer online.
- Module 3: Effective digital parenting.

This is free to parents if their child's school is a Parent Zone Digital Schools member or £6.99 +VAT for other parents.

<https://parentzone.org.uk/training/online-training-parents>

### Parental controls: how helpful are they?

Parental controls can be set on the broadband or mobile network, on individual devices or on specific websites, games, or apps to filter the content that your child can access. Parental controls on broadband networks usually require you to log in to your broadband account and set the required level of controls manually. The major broadband suppliers have to provide this service free of charge to customers. Details of how it works for different suppliers can be found on the link below. Broadband parental controls will not block content a young person is accessing via the 3G/4G phone signal.

However, it is also possible to block adult content on a child's phone – you will need to contact the mobile phone provider in order to ensure this is switched on.

You might also wish to consider parental controls on devices such as mobile phones, tablets, games consoles, handheld gaming devices or Smart TVs. They all vary but will allow control of things such as what can be downloaded, when the device can be used and what apps or websites can be accessed. This can also prevent location sharing and streaming of video. If a device has no or only a few built in controls, there are free and paid apps you can download for tablets and phones. See the below link for more info.

Lastly, controls can be set on the website, game or app using the Account settings – this is often shown as a cog wheel. Search engines such as Google, YouTube and Bing and entertainment services such as iPlayer and Netflix also have controls within them, for example Restricted searching. See the Help on the site for further information.

Remember that while parental controls may have a part to play in keeping your child safe, there are limitations on what they can achieve. For example, they will not usually block user-updated content such as texts and YouTube videos. In addition, Older young people or those with more technical knowledge may be able to bypass these controls or find other ways to access content.

<http://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>

### Grand Theft Auto V

Grand Theft Auto V is the fifth in a series of games available on games consoles and PC platforms. It is a game for adult audiences as its main theme is to play a criminal and commit various types of offences. It has been rated 18 (for adults only) by the PEGI organisation for “Extreme violence - Multiple, motiveless killing - Violence towards defenceless people - Strong language”.

Parents need to be aware that gang violence, nudity, extremely coarse language, and drug and alcohol abuse are present in the game. In addition, women are frequently depicted as sexual objects.

Unfortunately, we are seeing quite a number of primary age children being exposed to this game, sometimes as players and sometimes as observers, and three have been instances where children have re-enacted scenes or brought in the languages and conversations they are hearing from the game which can be distressing for other children. A further issue is that children may be playing this game with unknown people online and given the nature of the game many of those will be adults so there are issues around strangers and the type of language they may be experiencing.

Our recommendation to parents and carers would be to look at the guidance for this game before allowing children and young people to view or play it. Also, if your child is going to someone else's house, check that they will not be exposed to it by having a chat with the parents/carers before they go. For further information on games ratings, see <http://www.pegi.info/en/index/id/952>

For a more detailed game review from Common Sense Media see

<https://www.common sense media.org/game-reviews/grand-theft-auto-v>

