

Dear Parents,

Does your child own or use a Playstation 3, Xbox 360 or other console?

Did you know that if your family's games console or even PC is used for online gaming, people online may have access to chat and speak to your children.

Many modern games consoles and devices can allow access to the Internet through wireless or wired connections. This allows children and young people to play games with their friends or other people online without the need to be in the same room as each other. It also often allows them to send messages, speak or see each other while gaming.

This adds a new dimension of fun when used with friends and family, but can also mean that children and young people may be playing games with people they don't know. It's worth looking at the game devices and consoles your children have, and see whether they allow your child to connect to the internet.

Most games devices will allow you to set parental controls restricting the age rating of games they play, and also regulating how the devices can access the internet. Refer to the documentation that came with the games console for more information, or visit the game console manufacturer's website.

These links take you to the various manuals to control settings for safety.

X-BOX - <http://support.xbox.com/en-gb/pages/xbox-live/how-to/parental-control.aspx>

PS3

<http://manuals.playstation.net/document/en/ps3/current/basicoperations/parentallock.html>

PSP - <http://manuals.playstation.net/document/en/psp/current/settings/parental.html>

Wii -

http://www.nintendo.com/consumer/systems/wii/en_na/settingsParentalControls.jsp

Dsi -

http://www.nintendo.com/consumer/systems/dsi/en_na/settingsParentalControls.jsp

3DS - http://www.nintendo.com/consumer/systems/3ds/en_na/parents.jsp

GAMES RATINGS

One other thing to bear in mind is the rating of Games that children are playing. These ratings are not about how difficult the games are - they are about how suitable the content of the game is for children of different ages.