

# Welcome to the February 2025 Scomis Online Safety Newsletter for Parents and Carers

## Online Gaming

*In the December 2024 issue of the SCOMIS Online Safety newsletter we recommended 'setting up devices' before wrapping up. In this issue we will sign-post you to advice and guidance available for parents and carers about Online Gaming. Knowing where to begin looking can be a challenge! The following websites have lots of information, summarised as follows:*

**Childnet**—[Online Gaming; an introduction for parents and carers](#) includes advice on:

- How and where to play games safely
- The risks of Online Gaming
- How to report inappropriate behaviour
- Further support and guidance

**CEOPS ThinkUKnow**—[Gaming: what parents and carers need to know](#) includes advice and videos on:

- 3 ways to make gaming safer for your child
- how to find out about 'in-game chat'
- how you can tell what is an age appropriate game
- In App purchases

**Internet Matters**—[Online Gaming | Resources for Parents - Internet Matters](#) includes advice on:

- setting parental controls on games and consoles
- gaming guides for parents
- gaming guides for children
- gaming books

**Family Lives**—[Gaming | Family Lives](#) find out about:

- how to talk to your child about gaming
- how to game safely
- how to set boundaries
- why gaming is so addictive
- the positive sides of gaming
- how to encourage healthy screen time

watch the video on Pros and cons of social media: [top tips to help parents of teens](#)

**NSPCC**— Online Games: [understand the risks and get advice to help children play online games safely](#)

Find out more about:

- age ratings of games they play
- messaging and contact functions on the games
- trolling, grieving and scams
- how to report problems

**Young Minds**—[Gaming: A guide for parents](#) includes:

- what to do if you are worried
- finding professional help
- view their [guide for young people](#) on gaming and mental health

**South West Grid for Learning**—[Online Safety and Gaming](#) includes articles on:

- what is gaming?
- benefits of gaming
- [Online safety and gaming](#)
- basic privacy and security settings

Review the [Gaming Dictionary](#) and discover the meaning of: FPS, CCG, MMO and much more.



## Protect yourself and others from Online Scams

Safer Internet day took place on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025. This year's theme was **'Too good to be true? Protecting yourself and others from scams online'** The [UK Safer Internet Centre \(UKSIC\)](#) has advice and guidance for parents and carers which inform you on:

- starting a conversation about how to spot an online scam
- how to respond to and report an online scam

Use these top tips to keep you and your loved ones safe online.

**Enjoy going online together and talk regularly about your family's online lives**

Make sure your child knows they can talk to you about anything that they see or experience online.

**Take online security measures seriously**

Use [strong and separate passwords](#) for online accounts and [set up two step verification](#) (2SV) where it's available.

You may also wish to [set parental controls](#) to prevent unwanted online purchases and limit children's access to harmful content.

**Look out for warning signs that someone or something online cannot be trusted**

"It just seems too good to be true!" – Other common signs of a scam include contact that you weren't expecting or being asked for money or personal information (think: bank or contact details, passwords, or phone numbers). Scammers use [other tactics](#) to manipulate their victims into paying, like playing with your emotions, or building a sense of urgency so you are rushed into making a decision. If you aren't sure it's reliable, don't risk it.

**Remember that anyone can be a victim of a scam**

Scammers are good at what they do and will target anyone. We all need to stay vigilant and support those who are **most vulnerable including children and the elderly** by helping them recognise what to look out for.

**Know where to get help if something goes wrong**

If you or someone you know has been the victim of a scam online, you're not on your own. Help is available and you are not to blame for what has happened. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, you can report fraud and cyber crime online to [Action Fraud](#) or by telephoning 0300 123 2040.

**Remember, if you or anyone else is in immediate danger, call 999 immediately.**

Check the following websites:

[Childnet's Parent and Carer's Toolkit](#)

[ThinkUKnow's advice for Parents and Carer's](#)

[ThinkUKnow's interactive website for 4-7 year olds](#)

### Need Help in the holidays?

Remember **FREE** advice is just a phone call away from the [NSPCC helpline](#):

0808 800 5000

[Childline](#): 0800 1111