

Online Safety Briefing: Parents - September 2026

This live event begins at 16.00

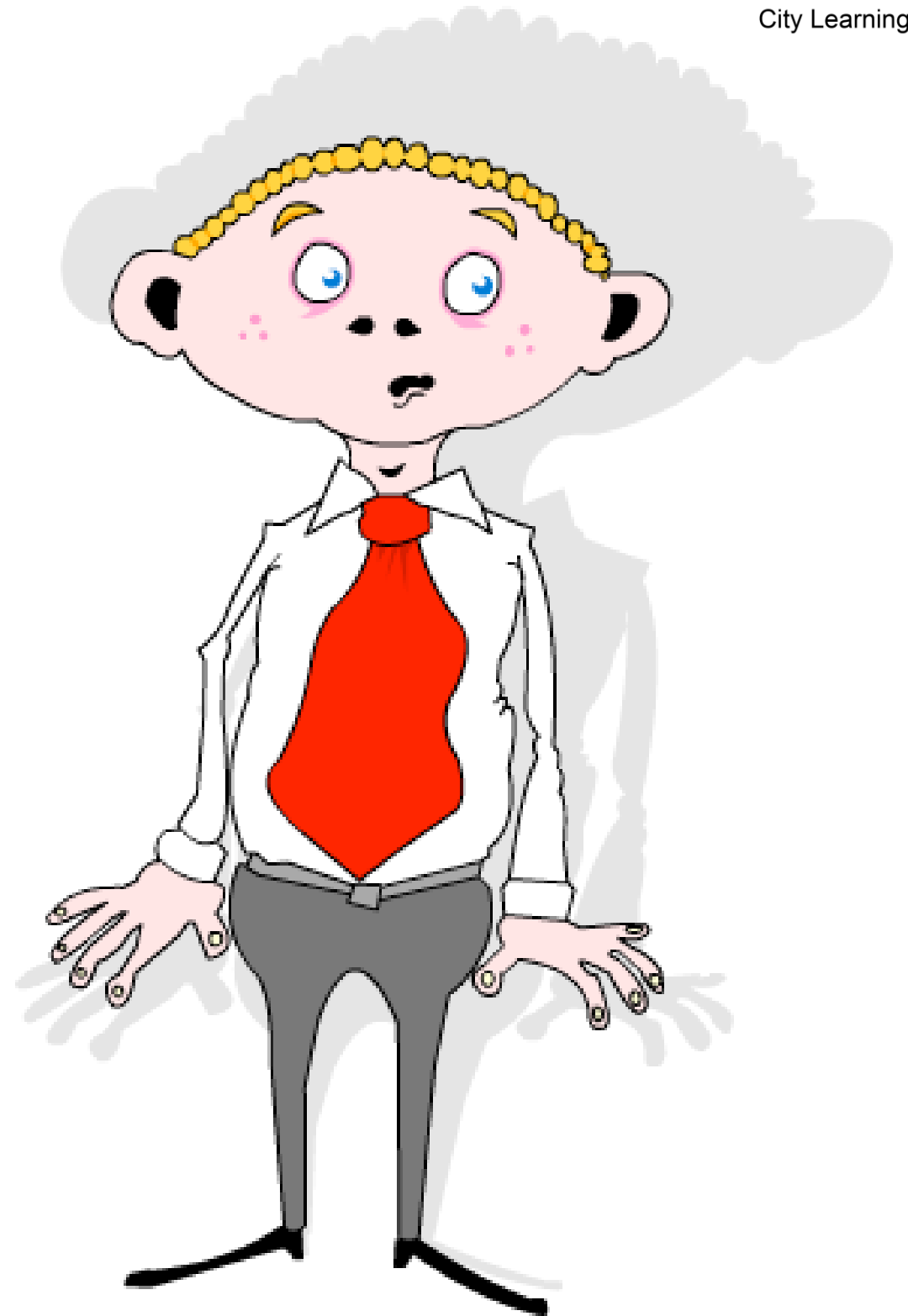
Introduction

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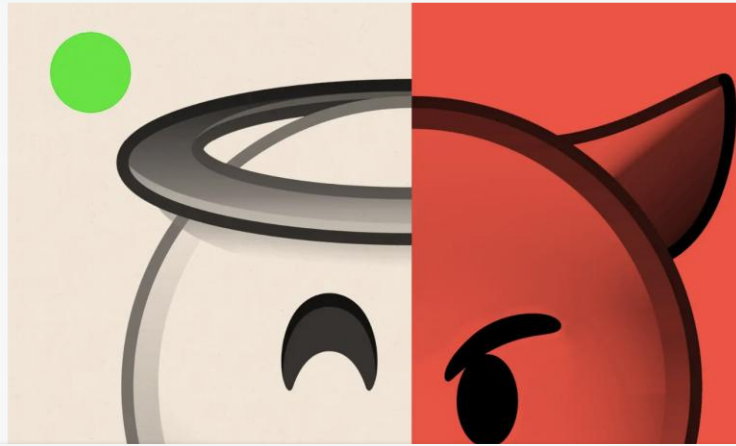


Social Media Ban

INDEPTH

How the social media ban could reshape how all of us use the internet

21 June 2026



Press release

Social media to be banned for under-16s in landmark government move to give kids their childhood back

Social media platforms to be blocked from offering services to under-16s, marking a line in the sand and setting a new normal for future generations.

Andy Burnham backs social media ban for under 16s and wants 'urgency' in delivery

EXCLUSIVE: Andy Burnham – who is expected to take over from Keir Starmer – will press ahead with a social media ban for under 16s as he sees it as a 'critical first step' to keeping kids safe online

'Worrying' study shows Australia's social media ban has made no 'meaningful difference' to teenagers

The vast majority of under-16s are still using social media, according to new research - but the problem isn't necessarily children evading the ban.

Australian ban

What we know

- 85% of under-16s were still using social media.
- More than half were still using their original accounts.
- There was only a minimal reduction in daily use.
- Researchers concluded there was "insufficient evidence" that the legislation had produced substantial early changes in teenagers' social media use
- 1 in 3 parents of children using social media are unaware they are using it - this is an increase from 1 in 4 prior to the ban.

Australian Ban

What we know

- Most common method of avoidance is using a fake date of birth.
- 66% of users had not been contacted to verify their age.
- Huge challenges when enforcing.



The Telegraph

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Labour's social media ban could lose public support if ID cards are needed

Ipsos poll finds seven in 10 back age rules but figure drops to half when all adults must upload personal data

 **Charles Hymas**
Home Affairs Editor
[Show biography](#) ✓

Labour's social media ban for under-16s could lose public support if it has to be enforced by digital ID checks, research suggests...

Published 05 July 2026 7:14pm
BST



Google searches for Discord alternatives have meanwhile spiked worldwide, with some **social media users** claiming to have cancelled their Discord subscriptions.

How to bypass Discord age verification in UK 2026

Last updated: 10 June 2026



Adomas Misiūnas, Tech Content Writer

Bypass
Discord age
verification in
UK



Since July 25, 2025, Discord has enforced strict age verification for users in the UK to comply with the [Online Safety Act](#). The new rules require users to be **at least 13** to access Discord at all, and **18 or older** to

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How to bypass Discord age verification in UK

Top VPNs to bypass Discord age verification

How does Discord age verification in the UK work

Is it legal to use a VPN to bypass Discord's age verification in the UK

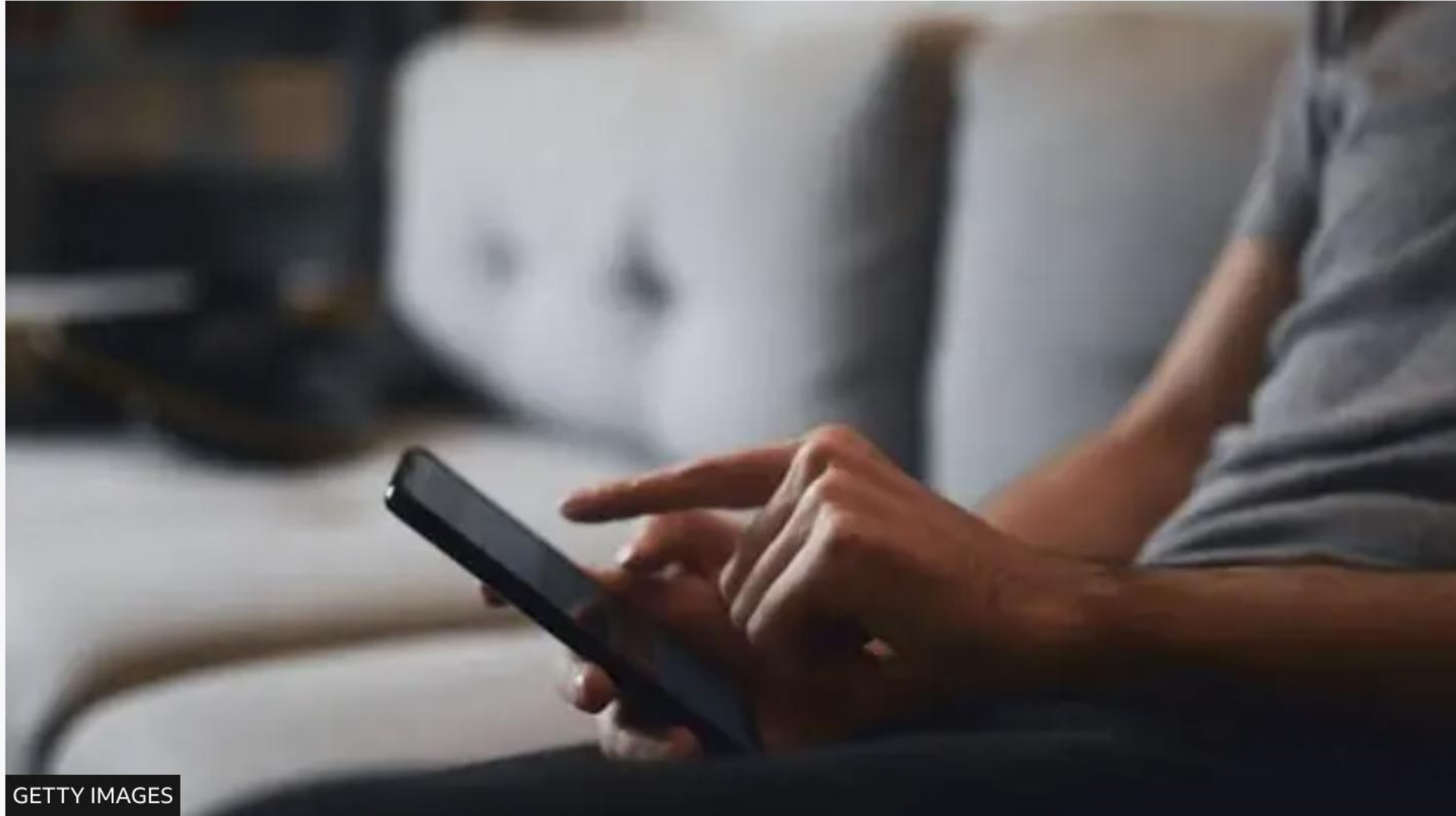
How to bypass Discord age restrictions in UK: full guide 2026

More popular websites that require age verification in UK

UK's Online Safety Act explained

Wrapping up

Pornhub investigated over its age checks



Laura Cress

Technology reporter

23 September 2026, 09:38 BST

Updated 33 minutes ago

Ofcom has launched an investigation into Pornhub owner, Aylo, over whether the site's new age checks are effectively stopping children from accessing adult content.

The regulator said in May that Pornhub started using a new age verification process for some users, which relies on a third party, in this case Apple.

The world we live in....

What children learn in school: Internet Safety for children, the four Cs.

1

Content Risks

What children see, read or watch online: Illegal, inappropriate, harmful, e.g., AI, fake news, synthetic media, racism, misogyny, self-harm, extremism, pornography.

2

Contact Risks

Who can children talk to, and who can reach them: Bullying, grooming, sexual harassment, exploitation, influencing, companion bots 'end-to-end encryption.

3

Conduct Risks

How children behave online: Acting in ways that might hurt others or being victims of this behaviour—privacy, digital footprint, health and wellbeing, nudes and semi-nudes, copyright and live streaming.

4

Contract Risks

The financial/legal side of being online: Contracts, membership agreements, or terms and conditions that they aren't aware of or don't understand. Online gambling, advertising, phishing scams, financial scams and micro-transactions.

Being a parents is a difficult job at the best of times...

Parents let's start with five simple questions

New parental jobs:

- Tech Support, fixing the Wi-Fi.
- Cyber-Security Officer, resetting passwords.
- Marketing Manager, curating your family's Instagram.
- Crisis Negotiator, defusing drama in a Year 5 WhatsApp group chat.
- Gamer Guru, tackling Roblox money issues and learning Fortnite dances.

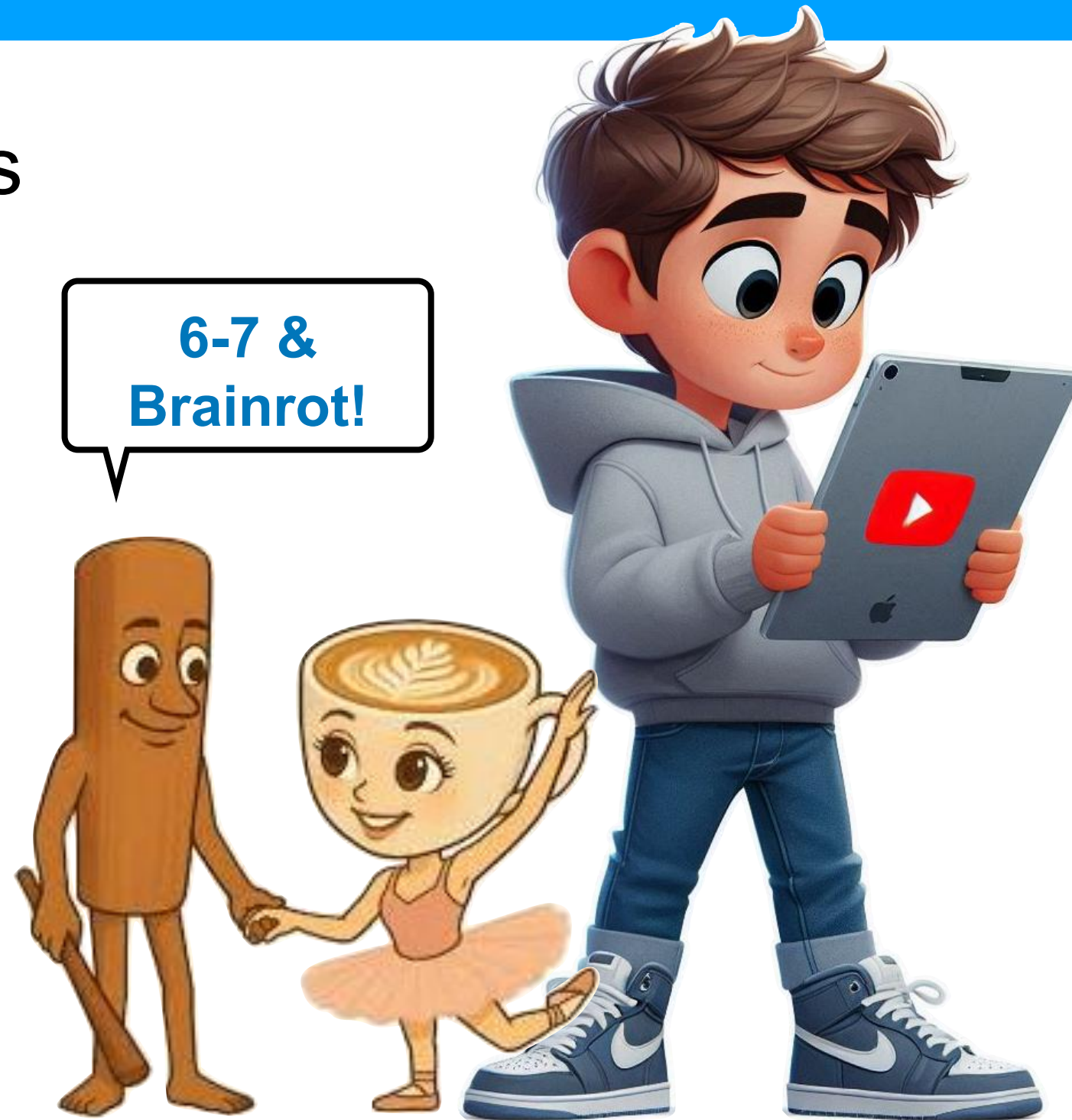


Can you answer?

- Do you know how much time your child spends on a device each day/week?
- Do you always know what your children do online?
- Do you always know who they interact with?
- Do you always know what online content they are viewing?
- Do you always know what that content is rated?

We live in “The Age of the Screen.”

- For most children, screens are their cultural environment. They shape language, humour, friendships, and even identity.
- If parents don't understand this new age, they miss the context in which children are living and learning.



The hardest moment: “Put it down now”

You are not “losing battles”, the tech is designed to win

Parents are not weak or failing. Apps, games and platforms are designed to:

- Grab attention
- Keep children watching
- Make stopping hard

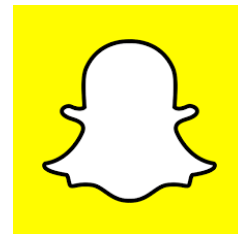
When children resist stopping, it is not bad behaviour; it is biology meeting design.



The Online Business Model



The more time you spend online, the more money they make.



Have you heard of 764 or
'Com'?

What is 764?

An extreme online right-wing Satanist group

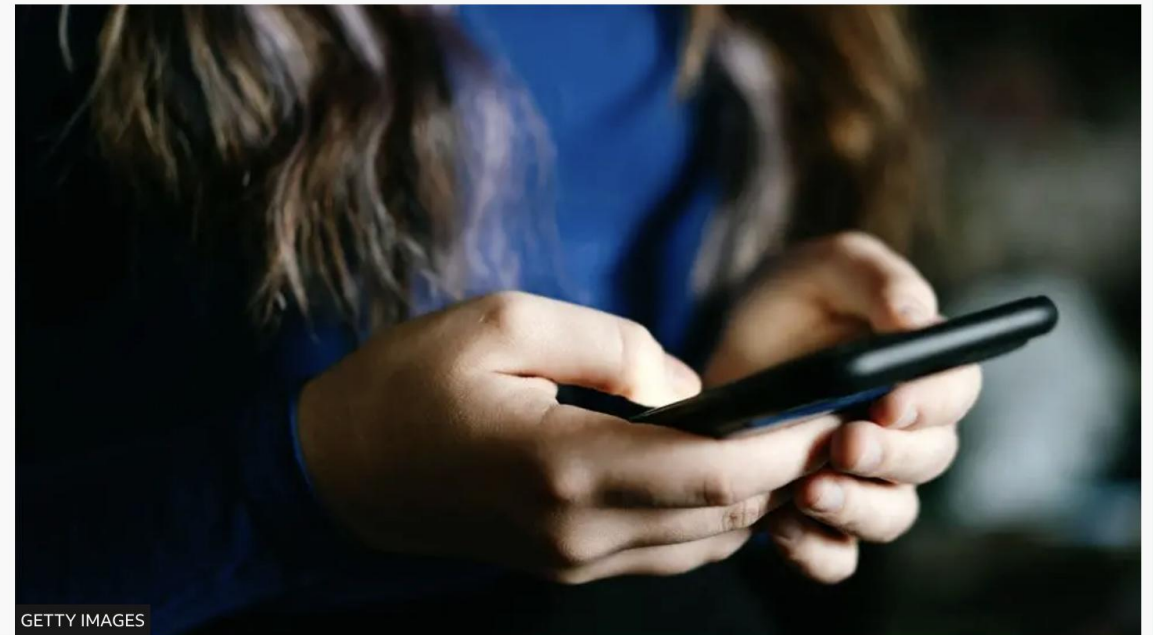
- Described as ‘nihilistic violent extremism’ or ‘misanthropic’ - disliking, distrusting, or hating humankind and human society.
- Extremism without a cause
- Nihilistic violent extremism is characterised by the encouragement, glorification or engagement in acts of extreme violence without a coherent ideological framework.

An extreme online right-wing Satanist group

The National Crime Agency (NCA) considers groups like 764 to be one of 'the most severe and serious online threats' it is dealing with.

- Extremism
- Grooming
- Self-harm
- Exploitation
- Cyberbullying

'My teenage daughter fell victim to a satanic online group – and I felt powerless to help'



How the group operates

Finding vulnerable people

- Members typically contact children through:
 - Discord
 - Telegram
 - Roblox
 - Minecraft
 - Instagram
 - TikTok
 - Gaming communities
 - Livestream chats

Inside the horrifying online network where children coerce others to commit violence and self-harm

Ariel Bogle

Mon 20 Jul 2026 16.00 BST

[Share](#)

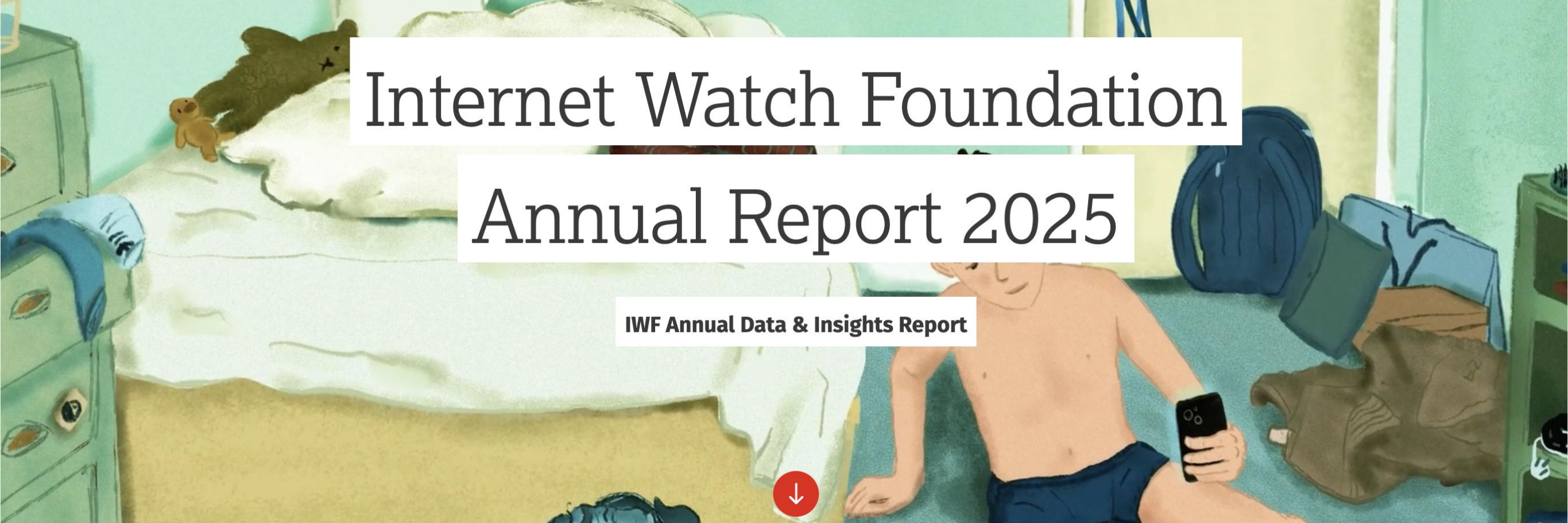
The 764 network is just one part of a growing online ecosystem that pushes young members into brutal and degrading acts. It has perpetrators and victims in dozens of countries

sky news

THE COM:
IS YOUR CHILD AT RISK?

Behavioural and Emotional Indicators

- Unusual secrecy around their online activity - creating new accounts, deleting messages or adopting new privacy measures, being cautious not to leave a device unattended.
- Sudden or secretive use of new messaging platforms – particularly encrypted or invite-only apps like Telegram. Or dramatic shifts in the nature of use of platforms like Discord.
- Obsessive use of digital devices.
- Social withdrawal, irritability, anxiety, paranoia, mood swings or other signs of emotional distress.
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns.
- Substance abuse.
- Distancing from longstanding peer groups and prioritising new online contacts or 'friends'.
- Mention of threats, [doxxing](#), [swatting](#) or indications that someone may be able to blackmail them.

An illustration of a messy bedroom. A boy is sitting on the floor, holding a smartphone. There is a bed with a white sheet and a brown teddy bear on it. A blue backpack and a brown jacket are on the floor. A red circle with a white arrow points down towards the boy.

Internet Watch Foundation

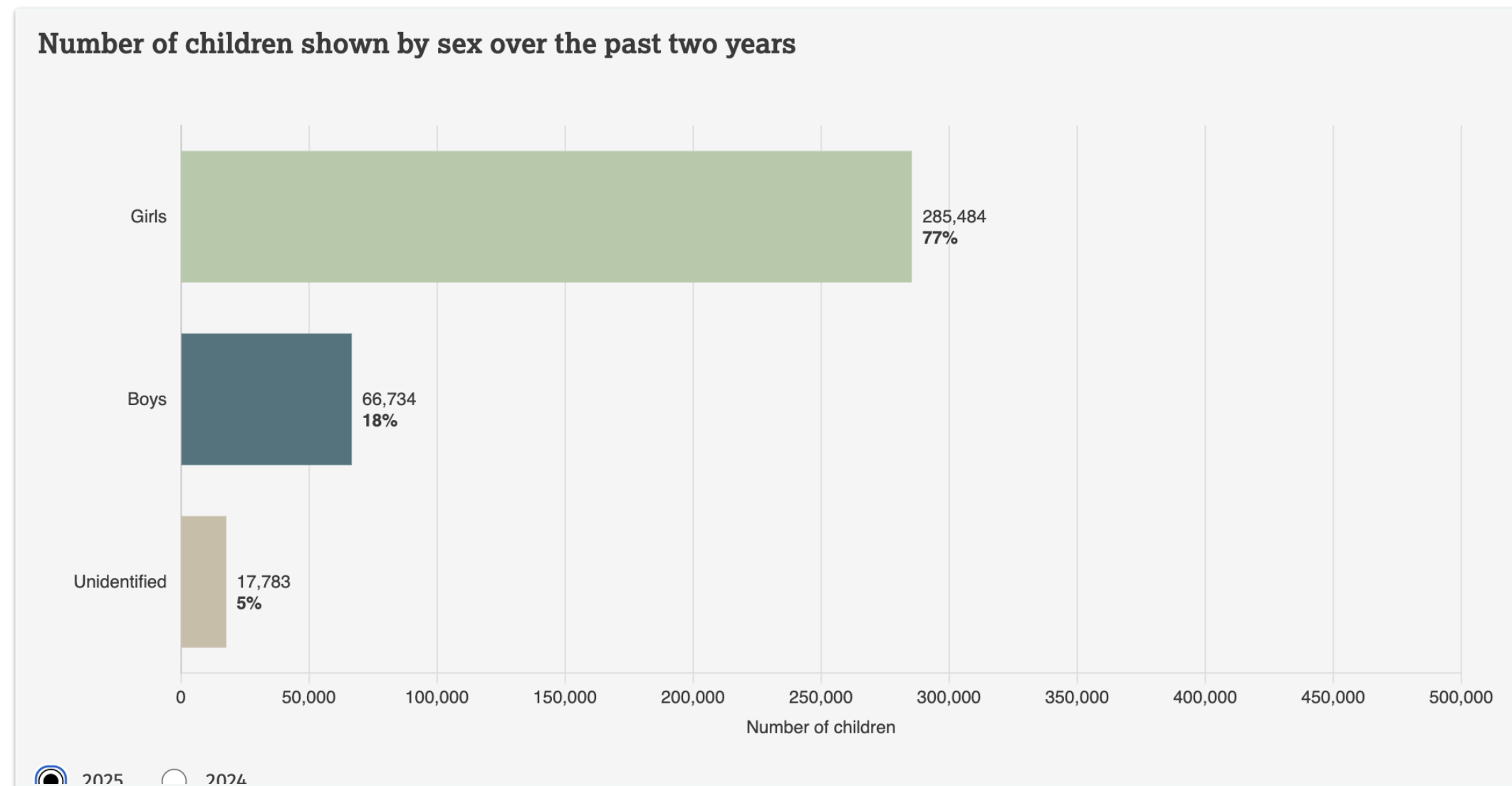
Annual Report 2025

IWF Annual Data & Insights Report

- 2025 Report Identifies Persistent Threats
 - Live Stream Abuse
 - Violence against women and girls
- Emerging Threats
 - AI Generated Child Sexual Abuse.
 - Sexually Coerced Extortion.
 - Abuse Targeting Older Teens.

Internet Watch Foundation

Annual Data and Insights



imagery (often captured from livestreams or webcams) now makes up a significant



Choose model

Filters

Change pose

Undress

Enter image prompts



version 4.0



Hundreds of British under-18s
reporting nude or sexual imagery of
themselves say it's faked or
manipulated

Children in UK report online sextortion attempts in record numbers

Exclusive: Call for nudity-detection tech on phones as number of under-18s reporting blackmail attempts rises by 34%

● **'I felt ashamed and scared': how an online friendship became a sextortion nightmare**

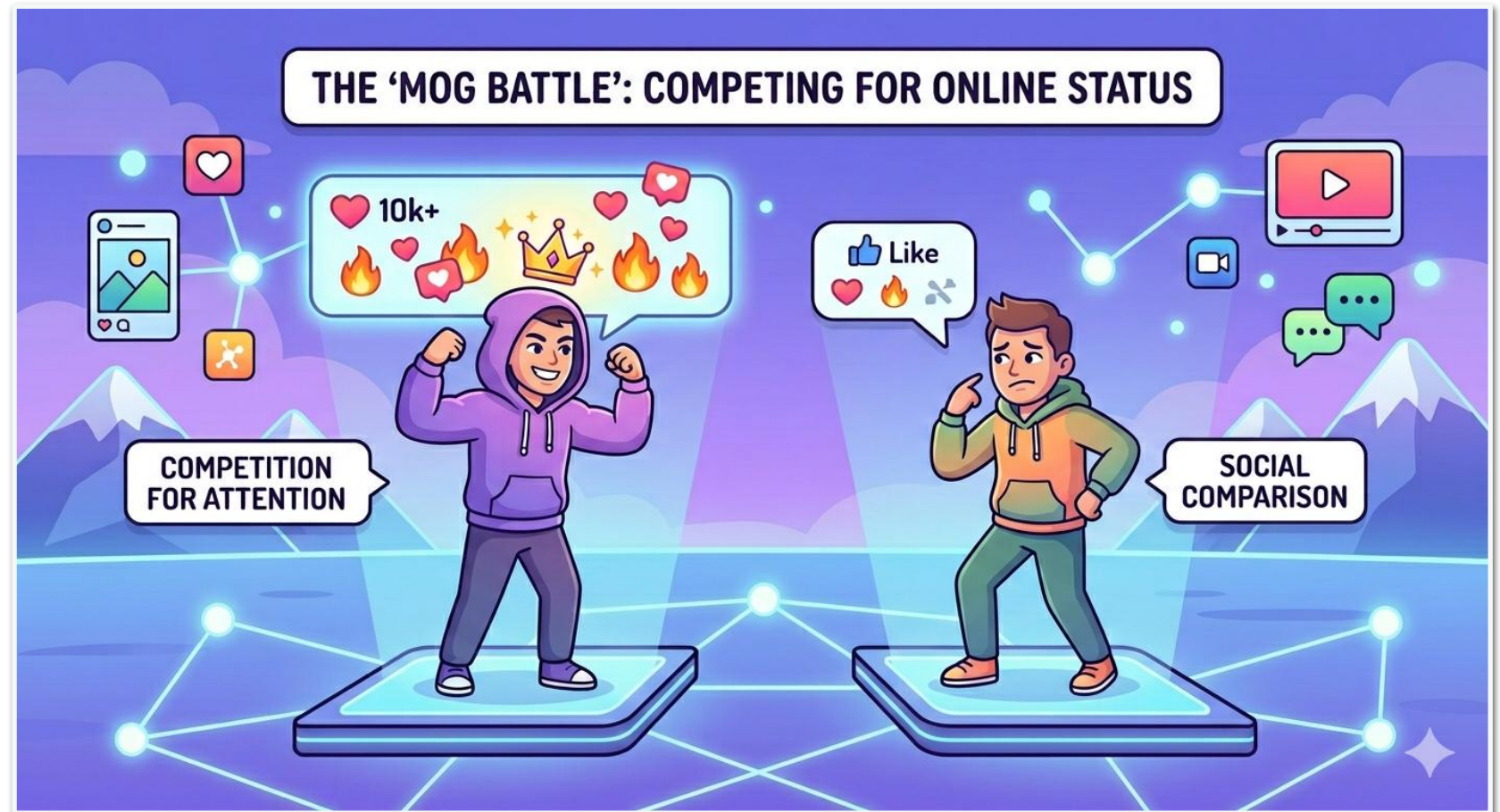


📷 Boys aged 14 to 17 accounted for 98% of the victims of blackmail recorded by the Report Remove service. Photograph: Manuel Arias Duran/Getty Images

Mog Battles

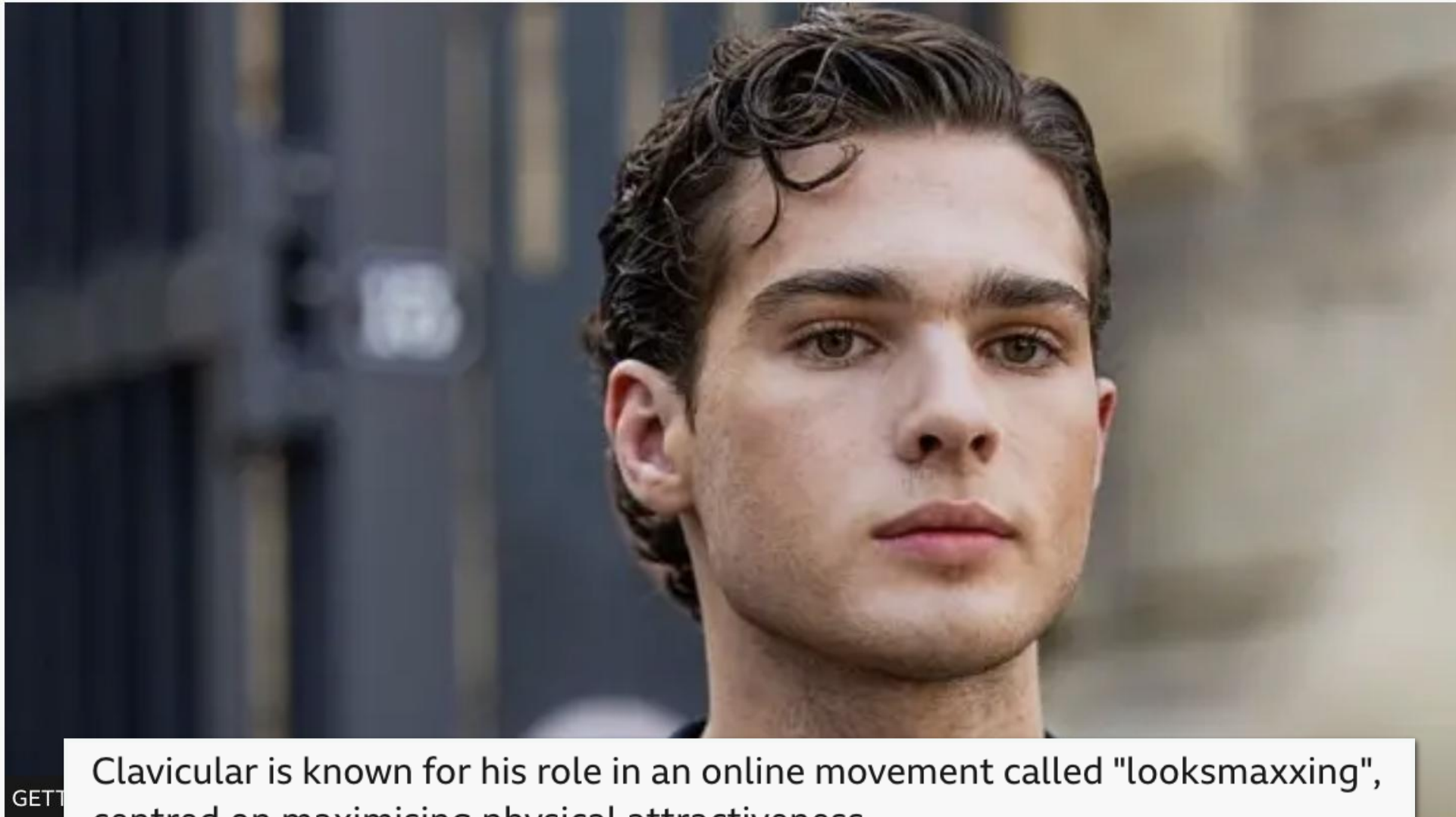
Mog Battles refer to competitive, comparisons of physical attractiveness, fashion or overall 'looks maxing' success

- Tik Tok
- Omegle
- Mog Battle App
- AI / Viewers Judge



Looks maxing is a male dominated fitness and lifestyle trend that emerged from incel culture in the mid to late 2010s.

'Looksmaxxing' influencer Clavicular charged with rape in Massachusetts



GETTY

"Clavicular"

Clavicular is known for his role in an online movement called "looksmaxxing", centred on maximising physical attractiveness.

His online account has amassed a large following, where he streams the lengths to which he goes to achieve physical perfection.

Peters has spoken openly about methods such as "bone smashing", which involves hitting his jawline with a hammer or other objects to get a more chiselled look.

Online Gaming

The numbers parents should know

- **88%**
of children aged 3–17 play games on a device.
- **96%**
of 10–12-year-olds play games — the highest level across the age groups.
- **72%**
of 8–17-year-olds play games online.
- **55%**
of children who play online say they play with people they haven't met in person, at least sometimes.
- **20%**
say they do this frequently.

Let's look at Roblox



There are 24 million games within the platform.

The platform's Terms of Use say that users under the age of 18 require parental consent to use the services.



Age Rating 12+

Infrequent/Mild Realistic Violence
Infrequent/Mild Cartoon or Fantasy Violence



Everyone 10+

T Teen

Diverse content: Discretion advised

Users interact, In-game purchases (includes random items)

[Learn more](#) OK



Parental Guidance Recommended

This serves as a warning that these apps can offer a broad variety of user generated or curated content. Typically, this applies to products such as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube.

Age ratings are often ignored at home

Ofcom reports that children frequently use apps and platforms rated for older users, usually with adult permission or supervision. This is especially common for video and gaming platforms.

Age ratings exist because of content, not because of skill. A confident reader is not emotionally ready for older material.



Does your child play Roblox?

Do you know which of the 24 million games available on Roblox they play?



Piggy Roblox

ROBLOX PIGGY STORY:

In Roblox Piggy, you are a **police officer investigating the disappearance of George Pig**. When you arrive on the scene, you get knocked out by a mysterious pig and wake up in a bedroom you have never seen before. You must escape the room before you are tracked down and killed by the strange pig. 10 Jan 2022

Risks to children playing Roblox 'deeply disturbing', say researchers

Exclusive: Gaming platform accused of 'troubling disconnect between child-friendly appearance and reality'

● **'A man approached him': parents describe their children's Roblox problems**



📷 More than 40% of Roblox users are estimated to be under 13. Photograph: Jeff Gilbert/Alamy

"Deeply disturbing" research exposes how easy it is for children to encounter inappropriate content and interact unsupervised with adults on the gaming platform [Roblox](#).

It comes as parents **shared their serious concerns** about children experiencing addiction, seeing traumatising content and being approached by strangers on the hugely popular website and app.

Mosque shootings and far-right skins: Teens playing Roblox exposed to extremist content

GAMING | FAR RIGHT | ⌚ Monday 17 November 2025 at 6:06pm



George Hancorn
Digital Reporter



What can you do?



[Home](#) > [Health and wellbeing](#) > [Screen use](#)

Screen use

How to limit children's screen use in settings and ensure it supports children's learning and development.

This guidance is aimed at nurseries, childminders, pre-school settings and providers of wraparound care for children aged 0-5. It may also be useful for reception year.

Evidence shows that screens can have a big impact on children and their development in the early years. Screen use should be avoided for under 2s and limited to up to an hour a day for children aged 2 to 5. You should take a precautionary approach to using screens in your setting by limiting screen use for children and only use it carefully and intentionally, for specific learning and development aims. This guidance covers managing screens, appropriate content for young children's brains and advice for working collaboratively with parents and carers on this topic.

Children don't always tell adults when something worries them

Ofcom found that **some children who see upsetting or confusing content do not always tell an adult.**

This is more likely when children worry they'll get into trouble or lose access to their devices.

Children need reassurance that talking is always the right thing, even if they clicked by accident.



What can you do?

- Open Dialogue
 - Make online safety a regular conversation.
 - Encourage children to ask questions and report anything disturbing.
 - It's *always* okay to say NO to anything online that makes them uncomfortable.
- Participate & Supervise
 - Co-watch or co-play digital content to understand what's normal for them.
 - For young children, you may initially supervise directly or use age-safe modes (e.g. YouTube Kids).
 - Gradually allow more independence as they demonstrate good judgment.
- Set Boundaries Together
 - Emphasise balance: offline activities (sports, hobbies, face-to-face time) so social media isn't the only focus.
 - Make these expectations clear but fair.
 - Develop a family media plan: agree on screen-time limits, offline hours.

What can you do?

- Digital Literacy
 - Teach critical thinking about online content.
 - Algorithms can trap them in “filter bubbles” or addictive feeds.
- Safe Sharing Practices
 - Coach your child on privacy habits.
 - Periodically review their friend/follower lists together,
- Handling Predators
 - Reiterate that they *won't get in trouble* for telling you.
 - Advise immediate steps: block the person, stop chatting, and tell a trusted adult.

What can you do?

- Sexting/Sextortion
 - Emphasise the dangers of sharing intimate images: once sent, they can be shared and misused.
 - No one has the right to blackmail them
- Promote Positivity
 - Help them find positive channels (educational, creative, supportive communities)
 - It's not all bad - 65% of children say it helps with friendship
- Lead by Example
 - Limit your own phone use around them to set a pattern
 - Show how to “unplug”
- Stay Informed:
 - Keep up-to-date via trusted sources (UK Safer Internet Centre, NSPCC, Ofcom reports)
 - Our Newsletters/ Videos and future sessions

Do you know your child's online habits?

Five simple questions:

1. Do you know how much time your child spends on a device each day/week?
2. Do you always know what your children do online?
3. Do you always know who they interact with?
4. Do you always know what online content they are viewing?
5. Do you always know what that content is rated?



What Platforms Are Winning Attention?

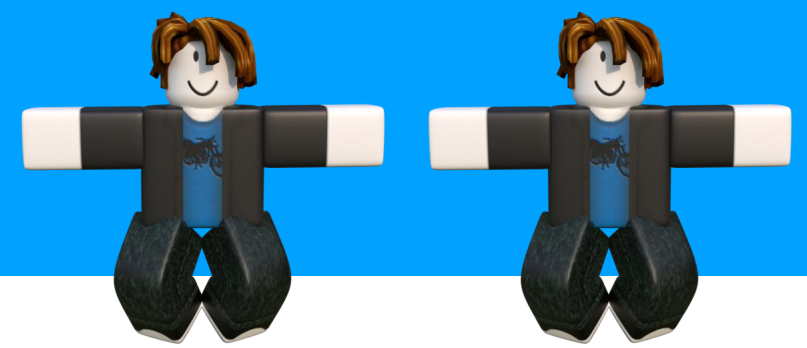
YouTube is now dominant across all generations

- If you ask 'what are you watching?' You may miss what's really happening.
- Ask instead:
 - Who are you watching?
 - Why do you like them?
 - Do they livestream?
 - Do they sell things?
 - Do they chat with viewers?





Roblox Advice



We advise every parent to:

- Check their child's ROBLOX account, as well as any other online games that they play. Have you set up parental controls and turned off chat?
- Check that their online friends are known.
- Speak with your child about staying safe online and monitor their usage.
- Look at and discuss what games your child is playing (age-appropriate?).
- How many friends do they have? Roblox accounts 'maxed out' at 200 online friends?



Check

The first step is to check the settings your child has in place for their gaming consoles or platforms. **It's important to check they're registered with their correct age.**

Gaming platforms and services restrict certain features, games or content for younger users. So having the correct age registered means they'll have an experience appropriate for their age – rather than the platform thinking your child is older than they are.

Chat

Take a few moments to regularly **speak to your child about the games they are playing online and crucially, who with.** More than half of children who game online say they play with people who they have not met in the real world.

Encourage them to come to you if they see or experience anything upsetting when gaming, or receive strange messages.

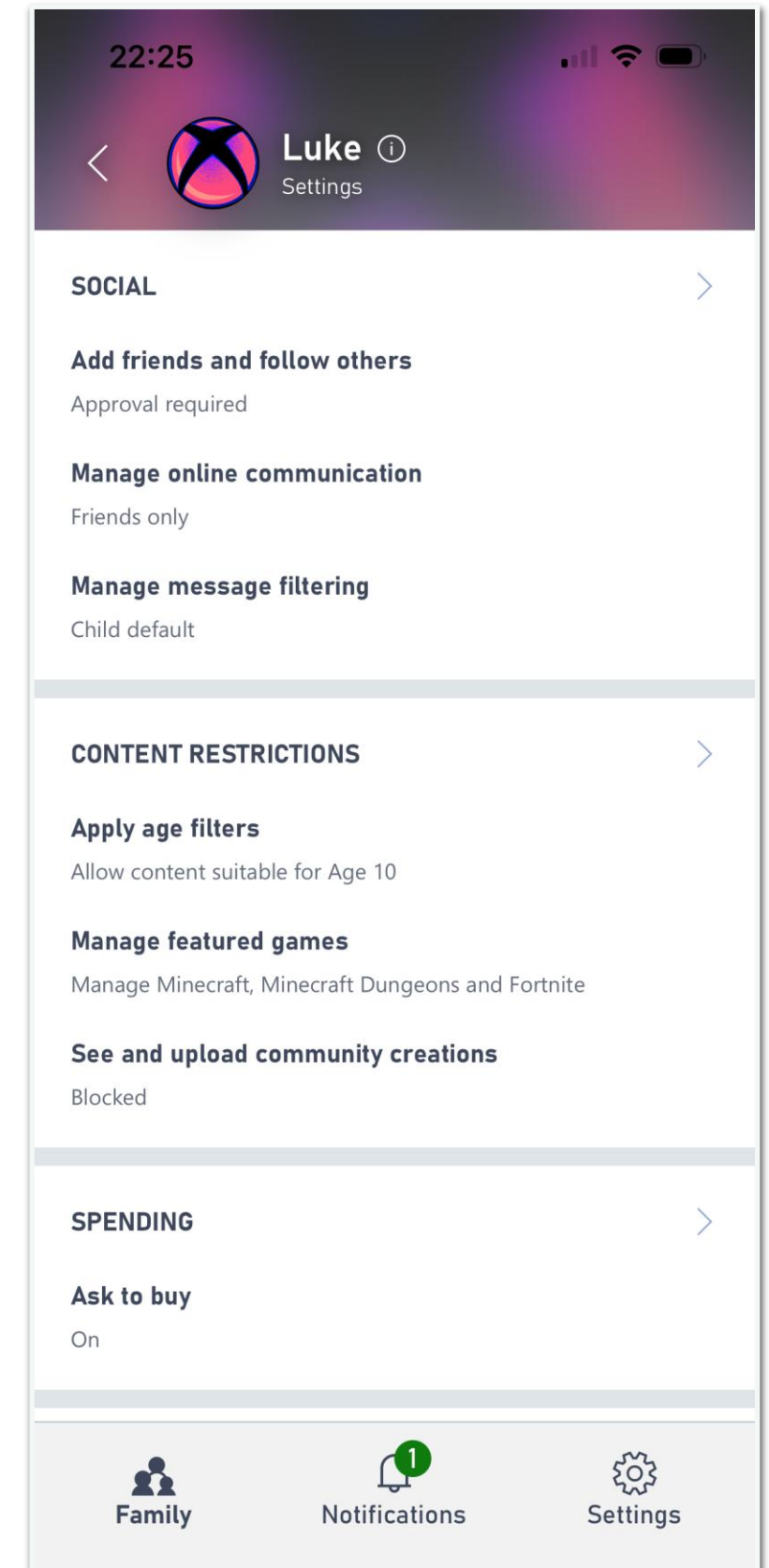
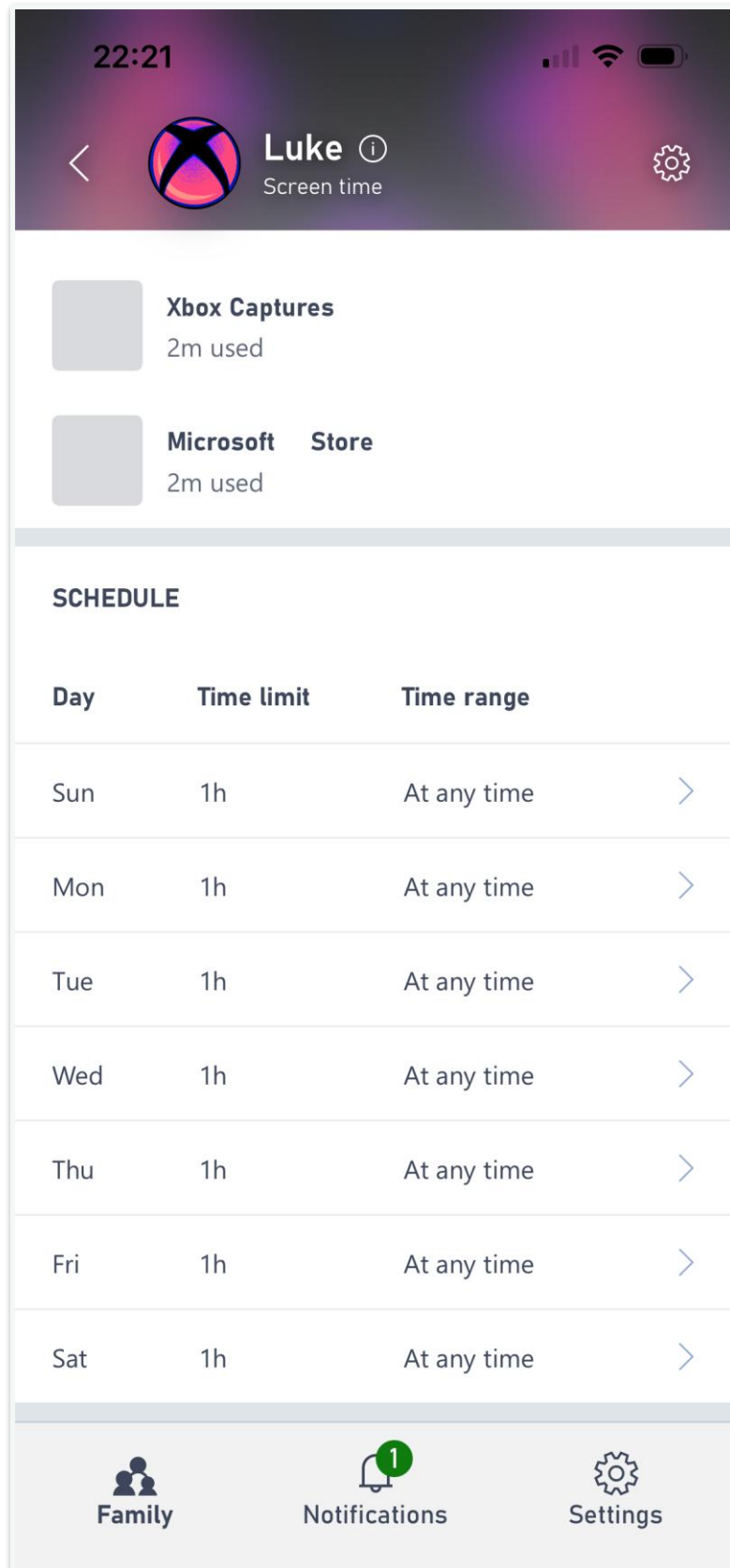
Reassure them they won't be in trouble for this. You and your child can also use safety tools to block and report users who might be abusive.

Change

Now you know more about the games your kids play and how they use their preferred platforms, **change the system settings and parental controls to help your child be safer.**

The options vary depending on the console or platform but can include restriction certain types of content, controls on friend requests and messages, playing time limits, privacy and spend caps.

Parental Controls



Parental Controls



Xbox Family Settings App



The Playstation Family App



Nintendo Switch Parental Controls

How to apply Parental Controls

Social Media

- **Instagram:** Go to Settings > Privacy > Account Privacy > Switch to Private Account.
- **TikTok:** Settings > Family Pairing > Choose Safety and Privacy Settings.
- **Snapchat:** Settings > Who Can > Contact Me/See My Story > My Friends.
- **WhatsApp:** Settings > Privacy > Last Seen/Profile Photo/Status > My Contacts.

Bedtime rule & where devices live matters

Simple house rules that help

- No screens in bedrooms
- No TVs in bedrooms
- Devices stay in shared spaces
- No devices one hour before bed
(Stimulate the brain, delay sleep and reduce emotional regulation)
- Replace screens at bedtime with stories, talking and calm routines (This is one of the strongest protective habits you can build)



Family Gaming Database

<https://www.familygamingdatabase.com/home>



Game Finder

Sign-In

[Home](#) / [GAMES](#) / [FORTNITE](#) / [FORTNITE](#)

Games For You



Fortnite

Game Review

BAFTA Award

Content Rating



Mild Violence

Our Notes

Bad Language Bodily Organs Fighting Guns Monsters Weapons

Skill Level

8+

Ambitious Communication Competition Geographic Good Challenge Popular Choice Social Play Low Pressure

Costs

Free

In-Game Purchases User-Generated Content

Android PC PS4 PS5 Switch Xbox One iOS

Online Play

100 Players Online

Online Interactions Competitive Online 100 Online

Accessibility

25 Features

Large Subtitles Large Text Control Assists No Repeated Pressing Strongest In Controls Visual

Parent Comment

304 Likes

Tweet

Content Rating

Rated **PEGI 12** for frequent mild violence. Violence consists of you using whatever weapons you can find or make to defeat the other players with damage being dealt by numbers and life bars. The players disappear in a blue light when defeated.



User-Generated Content: This game includes content created by other players, such as maps, outfits and items, that are not reflected in the game rating.

Users Interact: The game enables players to interact and communicate with each other, so may expose players to language usually associated with older rated games.

Fortnite provides [Parental Controls](#) in the game in addition to those on the console you are playing on. They enable you to filter swear words in text chat, disable friend requests, require a password to make in-game purchases and turn off voice or text chat. You can also turn on Playtime Reporting for the game, which provides weekly play reports via email. These settings are protected by a PIN code.

Skill Level

8+ year-olds usually have the required skill to enjoy this game. Still, it's important for parents and guardians to consider the maturity required to process the game content. It's also important to ensure children understand in-game purchases and have spending limits set-up. Although you need good reactions and aiming skills to do well, the game aims to match you against players of the same ability. When you first start as a newcomer there are often easy-to-beat computer players in the matches to help you get started.

Our Game Pathways reveal how 9 - 12 year-olds play this game:

Fortnite

	Xbox One	Free	—
	PS5	Free	—
	PS4	Free	—
	PC	Free	—
	Switch	Free	—
	iOS	Free	—
	Android	Free	—

This game is free to play, but there are other costs associated with this game:

- In-Game Purchases:** Additional in-game purchases are offered for items that enhance the experience.
- In-Game Pass:** Purchase a season/battle pass to gain access to limited in-game purchases, reward items and other aspects of the game.

You can buy Loot Llamas using V-Bucks, these offer unseen items when opened. Recently these have been changed to show players what is inside them before purchase. However, if you earn the Llamas by playing the game rather than purchasing you can't see inside beforehand.

You can purchase the Fortnite Crew subscription for £9.99/\$11.99 a month. This provides a Battle Pass for the full season, 1,000 V-Bucks each month and an exclusive "outfit bundle" each month.

REPORT REMOVE

Report Remove is here to help young people under 18 in the UK to confidentially report sexual images and videos of themselves and remove them from the internet.

On this page

How Report Remove works
Make your report
Help with your report
Who are the IWF?



Nude image of you online?
We can help take it down.

HOW REPORT REMOVE WORKS

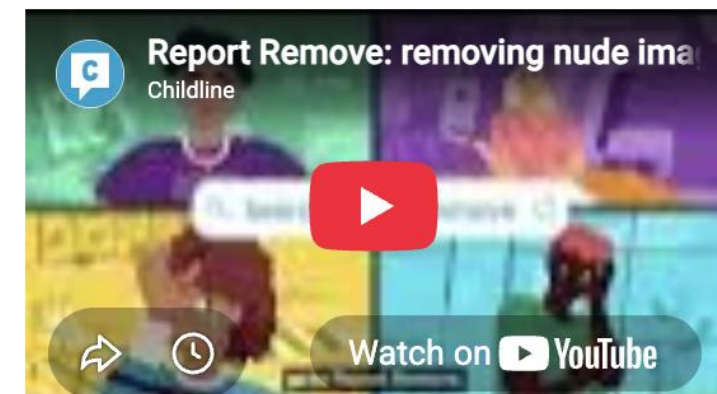
Having your nudes shared can feel scary, and it can leave you feeling worried or even ashamed. But it's not your fault.

It's against the law for anyone to share a sexual image or video of someone who's under 18, and we're working with the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) and Yoti to help you remove any sexual image or video of you that's online.

Report Remove is safe, easy and free – all you need to do is follow these steps:

- press [Start your report](#)
- sign in or create a Childline account so we can send you updates on your report
- report your image or video to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)
- talk to a Childline counsellor if you want any extra support, or access support on the Childline website

Watch: How Report Remove works



<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/report-remove/>