

Online gaming and screen time

December 2016

Christmas is just around the corner and at the top of many learners' wish lists are video and online games. With so many ways to play games online and so many games to choose from, it might be useful to have some additional sources of advice to help guide and advise you.

This year *Pokemon Go* encouraged learners to get out and about, and *Call of Duty* launched *Infinite Warfare*. *Roblox* became popular with primary-aged learners, who can now design and upload their own games, as well as play other games in a multiplayer environment, and *Minecraft* continued to lead many children towards Youtube to find out how to play it! Many of these games have built-in chat functions, which enable gamers to communicate with other players from all over the world.

An element for parents, carers and educators to consider is the age ratings of games. PEGI (the Pan European Games Information system) created an appropriate age rating system, similar to the film industry, which helps to determine what is suitable for your child.

So, how can gaming be more controlled and, where appropriate, be supervised? Firstly, parents could find out about the game itself. [Common Sense Media](#) provide independent age-based ratings and reviews for games, apps, movies, TV shows, websites, books and music to help families understand their content.

Another source of advice is [internetmatters.org](#) - an organisation which aims to help children keep safe in the digital world.

Screen time has become a significant concern and families are struggling to determine how much time is healthy for their children to spend in front of a screen. The information about screen time in this month's playlist might be helpful in considering this.

Schools and colleges are now teaching a generation of learners who are growing up in a digital world. It is essential that learning and teaching practice reflect this within the classroom and adapt to these skills, as well as the potential impacts of increased online social engagement upon their development.

Online safety resources are available on Hwb to support learners, teachers and parents and carers. The latest resources include targeted playlists for primary and secondary school teachers as well as information for parents.



Resources for teachers

You can access the **Online gaming and screen time playlist** for teachers below:

[Education practitioner - gaming and screen time](#)

[Primary educational practitioner – gaming and screen time](#)

[Secondary educational practitioner – gaming and screen time](#)

It is recommended that the primary and secondary playlists should be watched initially by the facilitator of any activities or lessons which might cover gaming. It is intended that learners can access these two playlists on their own or in a small group (or with parent/carer).

Resources for Parents

There are also links within Hwb to information that parents will find really useful:

[Parent resource - Online gaming and screen time](#)

These resources have been developed in partnership with South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL).