

Online Safety Newsletter: July 2018

Doki Doki

You may have recently heard about Doki Doki in the media as the Manchester coroner's office are currently investigating the death of a 15 year old boy and evidence has suggested he played this game.

Doki Doki Literature Club was developed in 2017 and is free to play although they do accept contributions which gives access to a fan pack. **The game does state that "this game is not suitable for children or those who are easily disturbed" however the graphics used may appeal to younger children.** It features graphic references and images of violence, suicide and self-harm.



According to Wikipedia, "the story follows a male high school student who joins the school's Literature Club and interacts with its four female members. The game features a mostly linear story, with some alternate scenes and endings depending on the choices the player makes. While it appears at first glance to be a lighthearted dating simulator, it is in fact a psychological horror game. One of the possible endings to this story concludes with an image of Sayori hanging herself revealing a message — "Now everyone can be happy."" (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doki_Doki_Literature_Club!)

It's really important to talk to your child regularly and make sure that they know that you're always there to talk to if they have any concerns. Discuss which games and apps are suitable for them to use and help them to understand why others are inappropriate. NSPCC have lots of helpful information and further contacts: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>



Twitch

For non-gamers, the idea of watching other people play video games doesn't make much sense, but each month, more than 100 million people do just that on Twitch. Twitch, owned by Amazon, also features gaming news, product announcements and events. Alternatives to Twitch include YouTube Gaming and Microsoft Mixer.

Hundreds of games are listed in the main directory. A user clicks on one game they would like to see more of and will then be able to see dozens **of live videos** of people playing the game. While Twitch is a gamer's paradise, and the overall tone is kept in line by the site's usage rules, there's plenty of age-inappropriate content. Here's some more of what you need to know about Twitch:

- **Most of the games are pretty violent.** While Twitch has milder games such as Minecraft, many are mature, including Fallout and Call of Duty.
- **Many of the commentators use mature language.** Twitch has rules against getting too graphic, but children are likely to hear and see swear words.
- **The site runs a lot of advertising.** You'll see mature movie and game ads as well as fast-food commercials.
- **Live-streaming is risky.** There's no time delay with live-streaming so what gamers say and do goes out immediately, making the content unpredictable.
- **Twitch costs can add up.** You can watch for free or sign up for a free account with features such as chatting.

Source: <https://www.common sense media.org/facebook-instagram-and-social/what-should-parents-know-about-twitch>
www.knowsleyclcs.org.uk

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What's App (age: 16+)

WhatsApp Messenger is a free messaging app that uses your phone's Internet connection to let you message and call friends and family. You can send and receive messages, calls, photos, videos and Voice Messages as well as participate in group chats and share your location.

What's App have recently changed the age requirement to access to 16 for those living in the EU.

Check your child's settings

What's App has the following settings so a user can control who sees their information

- **Everyone:** Your last seen, profile photo and/or status will be available to all WhatsApp users.
- **My Contacts:** Your last seen, profile photo and/or status will be available to your contacts from your address book only.
- **Nobody:** Your last seen, profile photo and/or status will not be available to anyone.
- If you uncheck **Read receipts**, you will not send read receipts. You will also not be able to see other users' read receipts. **Note:** Read Receipts are always sent for group chats, even if you turn off the option in your privacy settings.

Other What's App settings

Report spam

When you receive a message from an unknown number for the first time, you'll have the option to report the number as spam directly inside the chat.

Report issues to WhatsApp

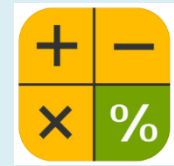
You can send reports to WhatsApp by contacting them from inside the app.

- **Android:** Menu Button > Settings > About and help > Contact Us.
- **iPhone:** Settings > About and Help > Contact Us.

Location Sharing

The **Live Location** feature allows users to share their real-time location with a contact or group for a specific amount of time (15 mins, 1 hour or 8 hours). *Location must be turned on and you have to give WhatsApp location permission in your phone's settings for this function to work. We recommend that location sharing is switched off.* If this setting is switched on, any images and videos shared will also show the location of where they were taken on a map. **Talk to your children about the importance of keeping their location private.**

It's really important to talk to your child regularly and make sure that they know that you're always there to talk to if they have any concerns. This is a really useful guide to provide you with further information: <https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/guidance/whatsapp-safety-a-how-to-guide-for-parents/>



Private Photo Apps (e.g. Calculator%)

Some children are using Private Photo Apps such as 'Calculator%' to keep hidden photos and videos. The private photos and videos are hidden behind a functioning calculator so anyone who starts this application just sees a calculator, but if you put in a passcode it will open up a private area/vault.

Parental controls in both iOS and Android allow parents to see the apps that your children have downloaded.