



## NSPCC WARNING!

### Welcome

Many children in the academy have become actively involved in the new online game Fortnite. The Online Safety Council would like to bring to your attention concerns that have been highlighted from research by the NSPCC and reported this month by the BBC news.



### New Online Game 'Fortnite' raises concerns.

The children's charity, NSPCC, has issued a report stating that the popular new online game Fortnite is leaving children exposed to the danger of communicating with strangers. The NSPCC has issued a 'stranger danger' warning. Research by the charity has suggested that 25% of children playing have been contacted by strangers.

The game uses actual voice and chat room systems. The NSPCC has advised parents to turn off these systems to avoid children being contacted inappropriately by strangers playing the game. The game also uses a text messaging system but unfortunately this is not able to be turned off in the game's settings.

The game also has an online store where players can buy skins and other items to personalise their online avatar. The charity is also urging parents to closely monitor the amount of money children may be spending in the store.

Fortnite has about 45 million registered players with up to 3 million playing at the same time.

It is thought to have surpassed Minecraft in its popularity. It is vital that parents communicate with their children about what games they are playing online and how they can stay safe.

#### Advice from the NSPCC is;

- parents should reassure children that they can talk to them if anything is upsetting them online.
- parents should familiarise themselves with what their children do online and why they like particular apps or games.
- families should agree family rules on how to use apps, sites and games.
- privacy settings and parental controls should be used to keep children safe.

#### Parents' Guide to Fortnite (PEGI 12+)

"Fortnite leapt to greater popularity with its Battle Royale mode that can be played for free and pits up to 100 players against each other while a mysterious cloud steadily reduces the size of the war zone, creating knife edge and climatic gun fights."

(Ref: [www.askaboutgames.com](http://www.askaboutgames.com))

In the UK the Video Standards Council rate Fortnite as PEGI 12 for frequent scenes of mild violence. It is unsuitable for persons under 12. Interactions with other players online are not covered by the game's rating. Although the game isn't rated for profanity, its online nature could expose younger players to offensive language from random strangers via the voice or on-screen text chat.

The game is fiercely competitive, unlike other games such as FIFA and Rocket League, players only have one life, and when they lose children can find it hard to control how cross and angry they become.

Parents looking for alternative game-making options without masses of online strangers can find a list on,

<http://www.askaboutgames.com/parents-guide-to-fortnite-peg1-12/>