

Young People's Charter 2022

The UK Safer Internet Centre has worked with young people and children to develop a Young People's Charter for Safer Internet Day 2022 on how parents and carers, online service providers and the government can play their part in helping to create a safe and fun online gaming environment for everyone.

We have produced this Charter from speaking to primary and secondary age children in focus groups, consulting Childnet Digital Leaders and Digital Champions, surveying young people, and reviewing the findings from our latest research. This charter of five key points comes directly from the young people we spoke to.

We deserve an internet where we can enjoy playing games safely, and we call on the government and online stakeholders to listen to our voice. We want to see:

► Every young person educated on online safety:

Our message is clear. Safer Internet Day 2022 research tells us that almost six in ten young people want to learn more about how to safely play games online.

Currently, a third of us teach ourselves how to play new online games safely, while one in five learn from friends. From an early age, children need regular online safety education, incorporating digital media literacy, as part of the school curriculum.

We call on the government to ensure we receive the education and support we need to safely navigate the online world. We also want gaming companies to ensure that users know how to stay safe on their services, so we can enjoy the interactive entertainment spaces that we use.

"More needs to be done in terms of teaching children how to be safe in online games because a lot of games require interacting with strangers."

Digital Champion



"The best thing would be educating young people more on the dangers and what to do if you feel cornered, scared or in any danger."

Digital Champion

"Schools should say more on how to protect yourself if there is online bullying going on or if somebody's trying to hack you and find out things about you."

Primary Pupil

"We want it to be more specific on the way you can report people, not just vague comments or vague ideas of what people have done. Make the users of the website know if they've done wrong and what rules they've broken."

Secondary Pupil



"We want you to teach kids to stop bullying online and to write letters to parents about letting kids play appropriate games."

Primary Pupil

► Young people knowing what actions to take:

We regularly see other online gamers being mean or nasty, cheating in games, and falling out with their peers. As young people, we have a responsibility to call out and report mean or nasty comments, but we also know from Safer Internet Day 2022 research that many children are likely to respond by blocking someone or simply leaving a game.

We want every young person in the UK to know exactly what to do when faced with harmful or offensive comments and how best to report negative interactions. We also want to know what action the platform, game or app will take and how people within online games are being encouraged to create a friendly, positive and welcoming environment.



"Gaming is just like social media in a sense that people have identities on these games and they are socialising with other people, so they need to be aware of how they can manage that."

Digital Champion

► Parents and carers learning about online gaming:

While 92% of parents report talking to their child about playing an online game safely – with 57% doing so at least once a week – we think parents and carers should learn more about the games we are playing and how we are interacting with others online.



Starting those conversations or picking up a controller will ensure parents and carers are better informed and equipped to help us safely navigate the online world.

Understanding the age ratings on games, how young people communicate with friends and strangers online, and how we can respond to negative interactions within games platform or streaming services will benefit both young people and their parents and carers.



"A good place to start for parents is being aware of what your kids are playing and the general gist of what those games consist of, so if they are having trouble you have an idea of what they're talking about and are equipped to help."

Digital Champion

"We want parents to talk to their children about what could happen, the bad things but also the good things, so they feel more comfortable telling them if anything has happened."

Secondary Pupil

"We want parents to play with us to see what kinds of games we are playing and to help us find the games that are better for our age."

Primary Pupil

► Gaming companies putting safety first:

We call on gaming companies and online service providers to take the lead and ensure that their platforms are safe for those using them. You have the power to create games and apps that are user friendly, transparent, safe and supportive environments for young people.

Ensuring that rules and settings within games and their chat features are clear and easily accessible is one way you can do that, but that is just the start.



We want you to listen to young people's views to help tackle issues on your platforms and ensure your games can be enjoyed by everyone.

"It's up to you guys, the developers and the platforms that you moderate, to listen to young people about what the issues are for the audiences of your games to really make an impact and improve your platform."

Secondary Pupil

"Gaming is no longer something restricted to teenagers in their rooms; people of all ages use these platforms, so filters and revised set ups need to be available for those younger audiences to be safe and aware in every aspect of their usage."

Digital Champion

"We want you to make sure people who are constantly being bad and being rude to other people get permanently banned or get a warning because if they keep on bullying, people are going to be upset."

Primary Pupil

► The government holding platforms to account:

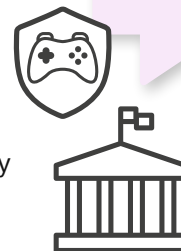
As Safer Internet Day 2022 research shows, young people are playing games virtually more than ever before. It is one of our favourite things to do, makes us feel good, and helps us to spend time with our friends.

We are calling on the government to ensure we can continue enjoying games and interacting with our friends online within a safe and positive environment.

"I think it is up to the government to be aware and take into account the ever-changing world that is the internet and all its denominations, not just social media."

Digital Champion

You can help to achieve this by holding games companies to account, ensuring that their platforms put safety first – and by providing high quality online safety education for all young people as part of the school curriculum.



"What I want for the government to do is to make gaming better for the community and for people, so they don't get fooled and have a fun time playing their games."

Secondary Pupil

"We want you to make sure that children aren't being treated unfairly by making it a law so that people can't be rude to other players."

Primary Pupil

"I want the government to check games before they get downloaded so they know they're all safe and so no one will get bullied or trolled."

Secondary Pupil

