

ONLINE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

MANAGING DIGITAL FRIENDSHIPS – ONLINE VS REAL-WORLD FRIENDSHIPS

ISSUE 11

ONLINE VS REAL-WORLD FRIENDSHIPS

Online games and apps make it easy for children to form friendships, especially when they share interests or enjoy playing together. For children, this can feel exciting and fun - but it's important to remind them that people online may not always be who they say they are. Unlike real-world friends, we can't truly know the person behind the screen.

Encourage your child to play and chat only with people they know in real life, and let them know that they should always come to you if someone online makes them feel unsure, upset, or uncomfortable. Keeping communication open helps children enjoy the benefits of online play while staying safe.



IMPERSONATION

One of the biggest dangers children face online is the threat of **impersonation**. When online friendships are formed that exclusively remain online, it becomes difficult to determine whether the person they're speaking to is genuine.

Children should be taught to watch out for signs that someone online may not be who they say they are – such as asking for personal information or giving incorrect details. As a parent, it's also a good idea to check in if your child starts talking about a 'new friend' they've met online.

Scan the QR code to find out more:



APP SPOTLIGHT - STEAM



This week's app spotlight is **Steam**.

Steam is a popular online platform where users can buy, download, and play games. While many games on Steam are aimed at older players, there are also child-friendly options available.

Parents should be aware that Steam also includes social features, allowing users to add friends and chat.

- Steam requires users to be at least 13 years old to create an account.
- Not all games on Steam are suitable for children. Check the age rating and read reviews before allowing your child to download or play any game.

Scan the QR code to learn more:

