

VENTURE MAT ONLINE



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Year 6 Digital Amnesty at TLA

For this year's digital amnesty we focused on finding a screen time balance, 'sticky tech' and Digital Consent.



During the morning we talked about:

- The tricks that devices and apps use to encourage us to pick them up.
- Why companies want you to use their devices and apps.
- Why too much screen time can be a problem.
- How we can help build better screen time habits and improve our digital wellbeing.
- Digital consent, what it is and why it's important.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and our data.
- The new Online Safety Bill 2023 and what it might mean for how children access the internet.

The children were encouraged to bring in their own devices and were given access to the internet. They were then allowed to use apps and play games. This gave us the opportunity to talk to them about what they like to use their devices for, the apps, social media and games they use. It also allowed us to check that their privacy settings were set up correctly.

A copy of the slide presentation can be found on the school's website [here](#). It contains all the information shared with the children as well as lots of helpful, informative videos.



'Sticky' Technology

Have you ever found yourself just reaching for your phone and then forgetting why you wanted to look at it? Or find yourself spending hours just scrolling social media?



If your answer is yes, this is probably because you have developed a habit of constantly looking at your phone without any real purpose. But once you look, you could be stuck scrolling, scrolling and scrolling...

Devices like your phone and tablet are designed to keep you interested. They are designed to be 'sticky', hard to put down. This is because the more you use your phone, the more data companies can gather about you and make money from. The data collected is then used by advertisers to target you with specific products at the right time, so you are more likely to click and buy them.

There are many tricks and methods that devices and apps employ to encourage you to use them. Some are incredibly simple like being colourful, attractive and interesting to look at. Others are tricks you might not have even thought about such as auto-playing videos, so you get caught up watching funny videos of cats for hours!



Below is a list of some of the tricks used by companies to keep you interested:

- Using bright colours
- Notifications
- Endless newsfeed -scrolling and scrolling
- Auto-play videos
- Changing content and adding new features



Too much screen time can cause: sleep problems, make you more anti-social when around others, prevent you from doing something more productive, keep you distracted and make it harder for you to

concentrate for a long period of time, make you feel pressured to always be available to others, leave you with a sense of FOMO (fear of missing out).

There are things you can do to help cut down your screen time and promote better digital wellbeing.

Digital Wellbeing

The best way to improve your digital wellbeing is to use your phone/devices less. There are a few things you can try to break yourself of the habit of constantly looking at your phone/ device.



1. Turn off push notifications and only allow those where someone is directly trying to contact you.
2. Greyscale your phone, this turns your phone into black and white, it makes it quite unpleasant to use!
3. Move the 'time wasting' apps (those with endless scrolling and videos!) and put them on a different home screen, so you have to search for them on your phone/ device.
4. Use the digital wellbeing tools on your phone/ device and set a screen time limit.
5. Don't use your phone/ device in the hour before bed (if you can't manage an hour, how about starting with just 15 minutes?)
6. Try to think before you pick up your phone/ device and decide if it is really worth your attention - are you going to do something productive?
7. Find something else to do instead! - Go outside and play, go for a walk, read a book, write something, do some drawing, play a board game, complete a puzzle, grow something, bake something - and anything else that doesn't require a screen!



Online Gaming

We know for a lot of children that online gaming is a favourite pastime, they



enjoy playing on different consoles as well as PCs. Over the past few years 'in-game' chat has become an important part of online gaming and it's important to make sure children are as safe as possible when participating.

[Saferinternet.org.uk/](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/) has a really informative blog about online gaming and in-game chat.



Parents should be aware that there are **always** risks when children are chatting to others over the internet as we can never trust that the people they are talking to are who they say they are. However, there are some simple things we can do to help keep children safer when communicating online.

1. Young children should have the in-game chat turned off in the settings or restricted to friends only (make sure that the friends are actually real life friends and not friends they have made online).
2. Never share private information (name, address, birth date etc).
3. Never leave the in-game chat and move to a private chat - this leaves the children more vulnerable as there are no moderators or safety tools available.
4. Don't click on links others add to the chat as you don't know where they will take you.
5. Remind children of the reporting and blocking tools games should have (if the game doesn't have them then it's not a safe space for children!)
6. Remind children that they have control when chatting online, if someone asks them for information, pictures, or makes them feel uncomfortable they can leave the chat and report them.



The most important tool for keeping children safe is you! Make sure you have regular discussions with your children about what they like to do online, the friends they've made and what they like to talk about when chatting with

others. Having those conversations will help ensure that children know they can talk to you if they encounter a problem.

Smartphones Safety Advice

Are you looking to get your child a phone or has your child already got a phone that you're not sure you set up properly?

If so, [Internet Matters](https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/moving-to-secondary-school-online-safety-guide/) has lots of information on setting up a smartphone for children as well as a checklist to ensure the device is set up safely.

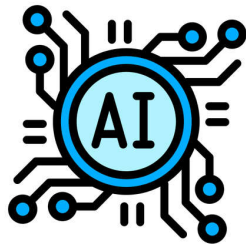
If you are a parent of a child in Year 6, they also have lots of information about moving to secondary school and what to expect from children's online lives and how these might change as children get older..

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/moving-to-secondary-school-online-safety-guide/>



What is Generative AI?

Children are now beginning to explore and try generative AI tools, creating images and writing ideas. It's important that they understand that AI is only as good as the information it learns from.



Roblox has recently released a guide for Tween and Teens about GenAI.

<https://civility.roblox.com/resources/pdfs/genai-teens>

It contains a brief explanation of what GenAI is able to do as well as a breakdown of what both children and parents need to be aware of.

- Content generated by GenAI can be misleading, incorrect and biased. (Check the information for accuracy.)
- Not everyone that is using GenAI is using it for good. (Keep an eye out for bad actors and scams.)

Here are some questions that you should ask when using GenAI:

- Where have the ideas or information come from?
- How reliable is this? (And how do you know?)
- What is left out that might be important to know?
- Was your prompt effective? Did you get the information you needed?
- What other prompts could you enter to give you even more information?
- How can I determine the bias in the information?
- For images/videos, did the generative AI output look like what you expected it to look like?
- Did you learn something new about the limitations or possibilities of GenAI?

BBC OwnIt

BBC OwnIt is a fantastic resource, full of engaging videos, quizzes and advice. It's perfect for children from year 4 up, and will support them through their teenage years too. BBC OwnIt gives advice about social media, gaming, digital wellbeing, friendship, mental health and loads more!

<https://www.bbc.com/ownit>



How to report an incident

If your child tells you or shows you something inappropriate that they have seen online please report it. It could help prevent this from happening to someone else.

The first place it needs reporting is to the APP/ Website/Game it happened on.

If you are worried about online abuse or the way someone has been communicating online let CEOP know. You can report it by visiting www.ceop.police.uk/ or by clicking the button on our website. The website will guide you through how to make a report.



For further advice visit the School's website, visit the [Childline](http://www.childline.co.uk/) website or call 0800 1111