Five Top Tips …to keep your child safer while online

 1. Set the parental safeguards *before* they get the device. See the back page for full details. If you get this right, many later issues can be avoided.

2. Heed the age restrictions on video games. The most common age rating system for video games is the PEGI system: It's a **criminal offence** for a retailer to supply a 12-, 16- or 18-labelled product to any child below those ages. The ratings are there for a good reason – you risk your child being harmed if you allow them to use the orange or (particularly) red-rated products underage.

3. Be guided by the age ratings for other social media apps and games. You know your child. So when it comes to social media – where most products have a minimum age requirement of 13 – if you decide to allow their access, that's a matter for you. Just be sure you're making an informed choice, though, and not just caving in! To help you decide, the NSPCC has a great website with reviews and comments by other parents about the most popular apps and games. It's here: www.net-aware.org.uk

. **4. Install web filtering but don't rely on the network provider alone.** If your broadband provider has a family-friendly filter, it probably only goes so far. Check their website for the parental help section and see what other tools and advice may be available.

 For more options, consider

OpenDNS Family Shield at opendns.com/home-internet-security.

 Also consider Qustodio (qustodio.com).

5. Talk to your child about their online activity. Get to know their favourite activities online. Make sure they know you'll help if something happens online that worries or upsets them. Take a look at the great advice on internetmatters.org.

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