

# E-Safety



**1** What is Virtual Reality (VR)?

**2** How can you keep your family safe with VR?



*Virtual reality (VR) headsets have become popular over recent years and you may have one already or be considering one as a gift for your child. A VR headset is a device that you wear over your eyes, like a pair of goggles. It is used to give you a 3D experience, meaning that you can see all around you in virtual reality. But what is virtual reality?*

**1**

Virtual reality is a computer-generated 3D world. In this world you can experience different environments like exploring an underwater world or visiting a different country, all from your own home. When you put on a VR headset, you can enter one of these environments and become part of what is happening.

You enter this virtual world by putting on the headset. This blocks out the real world and replaces it with the virtual reality world by creating life-like images and video. Everything you can see in VR moves with you to make you feel like part of the action.

There are different types of VR headset, ranging from simpler, cheaper models to more expensive, high-tech versions. These headsets all work in slightly different ways, but most come with controllers to help you guide what is happening.

**2**

### **Make sure a VR headset is right for your family**

Do some research into the kind of games and apps you can use in VR. Think carefully about whether these would be suitable for your children. Most headsets have an age restriction of 12+ and all games in VR have age (PEGI) ratings. Don't forget that you know your child best, and you might decide that they need to be a little bit older before it's suitable for them.

### **Take some time to explore**

Make sure you try out the headset before your child has a go and check whether the device or game allows chatting with others. Using VR can be quite a disorientating experience and using it yourself will help you understand how your child might feel when they are wearing the headset.

Make sure you check out which games and apps your child wants to use and whether they are suitable by choosing them together. Remember, 3D experiences in VR are designed to be very realistic. This means they could have a greater impact on your child than 2D games they play or films they watch



### **Get to know safety features**

Check out the parental controls available on the device and research the safety features available in-game. Make sure your location is set to private and that other privacy settings are switched on.

If your child is using VR to chat or play with others, make sure they know about blocking, muting and reporting tools they can use. Some VR headsets allow you to set up a personal boundary around your in-game character. This will stop other players being able to come too close.

