

Dear Parent,

Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Children Board would like to alert you to the risk of your child playing age-restricted video games designed for adults.

Social media and games provide excellent opportunities for children to play and learn while engaging with their family and friends.

While many video games are entirely appropriate for children, studies into the effects of the violence and sexual content frequently associated with games rated 18 show increases in aggressive and sexualized behaviour by children. Children in local schools are known to replicate the language and behaviour learnt from age-restricted video games in their play and interactions with other children.

Some parents and carers might not be aware that video games are age-rated under the Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) system which rates games at one or other of the following age levels:



More information about age ratings can be found on the PEGI website (see below)

It is illegal for a retailer to supply any game rated 12, 16 or 18 to anyone below the specified age. The PEGI age ratings enable parents and carers to make an informed choice when buying a game for their child. As an additional aid to parents and carers video games rated under the PEGI system will usually display information to explain why a game has been rated at a particular age level.

It is not appropriate for children to play, or to watch others playing, games rated 18 and therefore suitable only for adults aged eighteen or over as they contain content that is unsuitable for children, including blood and gore, extreme and intense violence (torture, multiple motiveless killing and violence towards defenceless people), mature humor, nudity, strong sexual content, strong language and use of drugs and alcohol.

Parents and carers might like to consider using free online resources to help decide whether a particular video game is suitable for their child. For example, Common Sense Media (<https://www.commonsensemedia.org>) provides *Kids Media App*, available for Android, iPhone, and iPad. *Kids Media App*, helps parents and carers decide what to let their children play, watch and download. The App can be downloaded free from <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/mobile>



If you have concerns about your child's access to age-restricted video games, Cardiff and Vale RSCB recommends that access advice sites such as:

<http://www.pegi.info/en/index/id/24>

<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/parents-and-carers/parents-guide-to-technology/gaming-devices>

Yours faithfully



Tony Young

**Co-Chair Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding
Children Board**

