

1. Online overtakes TV as kids' top pastime **February 2017**

Ofcom's report on Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes, published recently, reveals that children's internet use has reached record highs, with youngsters aged 5-15 spending around 15 hours each week online – overtaking time spent watching a TV set for the first time.

YouTube is one of the most popular online destinations for children to watch content, with around three quarters (73%) of those aged 5-15 using the video site. It is also a hit with pre-schoolers with 37% regularly watching YouTube videos, who typically pick 'TV content' such as cartoons and mini-movies.

And older children are beginning to show a preference for YouTube with four in ten 8-11s and 12-15s saying they prefer watching YouTube than the TV set.

Despite this, Ofcom's research shows that TV still plays an important role in children's lives with nine in 10 still watching, generally every day, and the largest number of children watching at peak family viewing time, 6 – 9pm.

Link: <https://www.e-safetysupport.com/stories/245/online-overtakes-tv-as-kids-top-pastime#.WJNevNKLSUI>

2. MyLOL app warning over concerns it's used by sexual predators

Parents are being warned of the dangers of a popular teenage dating app.

A school in Manchester raised the alarm that the MyLOL app was being used by sinister predators earlier this week, the MEN reports. On further investigation, school bosses said "the app is being used for inappropriate activities against young people".

The Facebook message states: "We strongly advise that you talk to your child about this and our advice would be to delete the app and block the website."

On its website, MyLOL bills itself as the '#1 teen dating site in the US, Australia, UK and Canada' and claims to have more than 300,000 members around the world.

It invites users to meet 'thousands of teenagers like you' and then goes on to describe how users can 'chat with members or privately with someone.' Teenagers are encouraged to update a profile and share pictures.

It's not the first time concerns have been raised about dating apps aimed at young people. Back in November, the NSPCC warned against new app Yellow, labelled 'Tinder for teens', which could be used by predators to groom youngsters. Like Tinder, Yellow allows its users to swipe right and left to either 'like' or 'pass' another user, and if there's a match, they can begin chatting.

A spokesman for NSPCC said: "Any app that allows strangers to send photos to children or vice versa is troubling – particularly where the images being exchanged are of a sexual nature.

Link: <http://www.coventrytelegraph.net/incoming/mylol-app-warning-over-concerns-12515013>

3. Lego launches 'safe' social network for under-13s

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Lego's launched a "safe" social network for under-13s on a new app, called Lego Life. Basically it's a child-friendly Lego-themed Instagram.

It'll let children post photos of their creations and comment on other people's but with strict restrictions on what they can say.

Text comments aren't allowed but users can either use prewritten responses or custom Lego emoji and stickers.

Although it's aimed at children, who have to use a parent's details to sign up, there is no restriction on adults also joining the network.

To keep kids safe, they won't be asked for any personal information or photographs and the app doesn't have tracking enabled.

Instead, avatars are Lego mini-figures and account names are random words.

The company says the app is heavily moderated through automated filters and employees filtering content.

The app also offers building challenges to try to encourage creativity.

All the adverts on the network are for Lego products.

Lego hopes in future the app will expand to become a central hub for all its services, including games and instructions.

Link: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/38806540/lego-launches-safe-social-network-for-under-13s>

4. NSPCC warns of the return of the 'salt and ice challenge' that sees teenagers hospitalised with third degree burns

Parents have been warned over the resurgence of a social media craze that has seen children across the country burning themselves with salt and ice.

The so-called 'salt and ice challenge' involves youngsters placing salt and ice on their skin, causing a chemical reaction that reduces the temperature of the ice to as low as -17C (1.4F).

Participants then see who can withstand the searing pain longest before sharing photos of the resulting burns, similar to frostbite, online.

Some teenagers have reportedly been taken to hospital with third degree burns, and the NSPCC has now issued a warning over the craze, urging parents and teachers to remain vigilant.

Link: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-4152220/NSPCC-issues-warning-salt-ice-challenge.html#ixzz4XY94I0WV>

For more information about e safety :

- go to <http://www.blackpoolaspireacademy.co.uk>
- come into school and talk to a member of Student Services