# PUNGGOL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Punggol Cyber News (September - October)

ONLINE GAMES CHILDREN PLAY

Our children, being digital natives, are engaging themselves through digital games. This is evidently so during this COVID period where the means of communication is mostly online instead of face-to-face. In a research done by [1]Statistica, Singaporean children first get their online devices at the age of eight, making them amongst the youngest in the world to go online. While it is inevitable to be connected to stay relevant, it is just as important to be concerned about what our children do online.

A [2]Straits Times report quoted the general parents' concern of their children going online but feel helpless. Our last issue talked about managing screen time. We hope the information had been useful to you. In this issue, we would like to highlight a few popular online games that many children play and some of the risks involved. We hope that in understanding these games and their features, parents will be able to provide a safer environment for their children.

Based on feedback from the students and a search on the popular games online, here are some of the currently popular games amongst students. These games are easily accessible as they are available on many popular platforms such as the following:
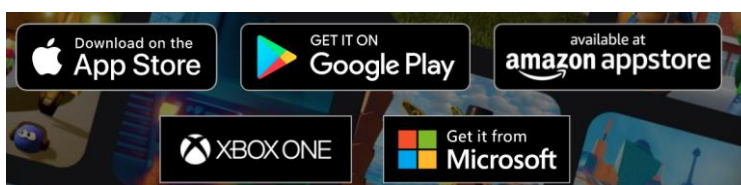
	Name of Application	Description
1.	**Roblox**	Roblox is an online game platform and game creation system that allows users to program games and play games with other users.

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[1] Internet usage in Singapore - Statistics & Facts. https://www.statista.com/topics/5852/internet-usage-in-singapore/?#dossierSummary__chapter2

[2] Children here spend more time online than global average: Poll https://www.straitstimes.com/tech/children-here-spend-more-time-online-than-global-average-poll

		Risks ● Free content. However customisation requires purchase with real money. ● Chat function allows children to talk to other gamers (e.g strangers) and sometimes may involve the use of crude language. ● List of curated games although recommended according to age, content may not be properly filtered. Age limit No age limit. However, to agree to the Terms and Conditions, one will need to be above 18 years old. Hence, a parent or guardian's consent is required for primary school children. Parental control Yes. Parents can limit or disable online chat capabilities and restrict access to a list of age appropriate games. There's a safety and parent guide under the parents page to refer to. For more details, refer to: https://www.getsafeonline.org/blog/roblox-what-is-it-and-how-safe-is-it/ https://corp.roblox.com/parents/
2.	**Fortnite** **Fortnite** **FORTNITE**	Fortnite is a role playing shooting game where players can create worlds and battle arenas. Players can form teams to battle zombie-like creatures on various missions. Risks ● Free content. However locked content requires purchase with real money. ● Violent game which might lead to anti-social behaviour and developmental issues ● Team tagged game which a child could feel left out if he/she is not part of the team

			Age limit
			Rated T for 13 years and above.
			Parental control
			Yes. Parents can limit what a player can see or do in the game. Parents can control purchases.
			For more details, refer to:
			https://www.epicgames.com/fortnite/en-US/parental-controls
			https://childmind.org/article/parents-guide-dealing-fortnite/
3.	**Minecraft**		Minecraft is an immersive building game whereby one makes uses of available resources to learn and create new environments. The player will encounter hostile creatures and one will need to defeat them to advance to the next level.
			Risks
			• Free content with scamming ads for older versions. Purchase price differs according to platform. In game purchases required for different skins and accessories. • Can be violent. • Some creatures can be scary. • Multiplayer version can be aggressive and may promote anti-social behaviour. • Can interact with strangers on the chat function.
			Age limit
			7 years and above.
			Parental control
			No parental control function. Parental control is done through settings on Xbox function.
			For more details, refer to:
			https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/pa

		rents-ultimate-guide-to-minecraft##whatis https://challengingboys.com/4-tips-to-keep-kids-safe-on-minecraft/#:~:text=Minecraft%20can%20expose%20kids%20to,have%20worked%20hard%20to%20build. https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/gaming-consoles/minecraft/#:~:text=Controls%20%26%20Settings%20guide,automatically%20filtered%20out%20in%20chats.
4.	**PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG)** PUBG	PUBG is a role playing game where up to 100 players parachute onto an island and scavenge for weapons to kill others while avoiding getting killed themselves. Currently banned in India, Iraq, Jordan, Pakistan, Nepal. Risks ● Free content. However some items require purchase with real money. ● Violent game which might adversely affect mental health of players ● Voice chat which allows one to talk with strangers Age limit Rated T for 18 years and above. Parental control Yes. Digital lock feature wherein players under the age of 13 require parents or guardians to unlock the game for them. For more details, refer to: https://www.bark.us/guides/gaming/pubg
5.	**Animal Crossing**	Animal Crossing is a simulation game whereby players help to complete tasks with characters on an island community. The game is seemingly harmless with cute animal characters as compared to shooting games.

		Risks
		● Free content. However some items require purchase with real money. ● Some slapstick comic mischief ● Interactivity with strangers which require approval Age limit Rated E for 3 years and above. Parental control Parental control is available through Nintendo Switch system settings. For more details, refer to: https://www.bark.us/guides/gaming/animal-crossing https://parentology.com/animal-crossing-new-horizons-parental-controls/

These are only a selection of some popular games that our children play. Parents are strongly encouraged to play an active role and be aware of the apps or games that our children might be engaged in to help safeguard our children's well-being.

Playing an active role may include having conversations with our children about the games they are playing, making our children aware of some of the risks involved in the games and deciding together which games our children might be allowed to play. Together, we can ensure our children are safer online.

Brought to you by the PPS Cyber Wellness Team.