

ISSUE 1 • JAN 2023

# SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

## ONLINE SAFETY UPDATE - ROBLOX



We have received reports of a viral post circulating on social media about an alleged self-harm 'game' being shared on popular gaming platform Roblox.

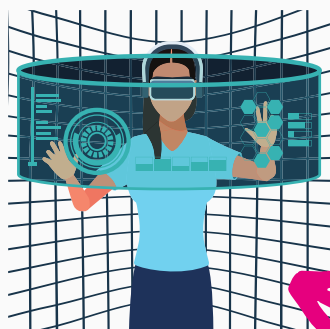
Known as 'The Game', the post claims that the game appears through private chats in an attached Word document that contains the rules and instructions. To read the full article, please click on the icon on the right.



**ROBLOX**  
ONLINE SAFETY UPDATE



## ARE YOU SAFE IN THE METAVERSE?



In science fiction, the "metaverse" is a hypothetical iteration of the Internet as a single, universal, and immersive virtual world that is facilitated by the use of virtual reality and augmented reality headsets. VR technology is increasing in popularity, and the NSPCC has published advice and guidance following the possibility of VR headsets being purchased for Christmas.

Click the icon on the left to access the article.



**SafeZone**

health assured



APP CODE - MHA 196 373

USERNAME - WELLBEING

PASSWORD - VINEPATHWORK

**FREE 24 HOUR CONFIDENTIAL HELPLINE**  
**0800 028 3766**

**WQE SAFEGUARDING TEAM**

**0800 061 4222**

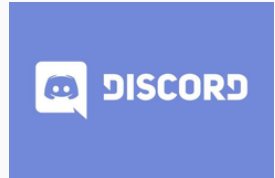
**SAFEGUARDING@WQE.AC.UK**

# A GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA - PART ONE

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS CONTINUE TO GROW IN POPULARITY, BUT HOW MANY DO YOU KNOW?



Gab is an American alt-tech microblogging and social networking service known for its far-right userbase. Gab claims to promote free speech, individual liberty, the "free flow of information online", and Christian values.



Discord started as a way for gamers to communicate. Today, it is a huge social network over 100 million users and allows users to share images, videos, and GIFs. These can be sent through texts or direct messages. The minimum age for users is 13 years, but there is no identification verification process. At WQE our safeguarding software is able to identify links sent to students from Discord in order to help us safeguard members of our community effectively.



4chan is for users aged 18 years or older due to the inappropriate content easily accessible on the site and the danger to children's online safety, but does not have any types of parental controls or privacy settings. 4chan is also a source for many internet memes as well as political movements, hacktivism and cyber attacks, and has had links to child pornography. Although the site has rules in place for each board, 'random', (the most popular board), has fewer rules. In fact, it allows hate speech such as racism and transphobia along with specific pornographic and grotesque content, and there are concerns regarding the concerns around the community's promotion of misogyny and violence across the site. Those who use 4chan do not need to sign up. All images and discussion can be shared anonymously, however, users' IP addresses are still tracked and can be banned if site rules are broken. These bans can be appealed.



8kun (formerly called 8chan) was created in response to some who believed 4chan had become too heavily moderated. Unlike 4chan, 8chan doesn't appear in Google search results. With fewer restrictions about what gets posted, violent and illegal material is left on the site - it even became a source of criminal activity. As a result, it was shut down in 2019 and replaced by 8kun with the same goal of little moderation. 16chan exists anonymously on the dark web and contains content that is illegal and unmoderated.



8kun, also called infinitechan, allows users to create their own boards on any topics. Many groups on 8chan/8kun are considered to be the source for violent crimes and hate groups, especially in America.







## CHICKEN SHOP GROOMING

**THERE'S NO SUCH THING  
AS FREE CHICKEN!**

Friends of friends who buy you things  
often want something in return.



Edtech charity LGfL has launched a new poster campaign to raise awareness of a disturbing trend known as 'chicken shop grooming'.

Recent evidence presented by the Youth Select Committee in a parliamentary enquiry has highlighted the worrying connection between fast food shops and grooming, where gangs based in chicken shops offer young people 'free' food in order to coerce them into drug trafficking or violent crime.

LGfL says 'Chicken shop grooming' is a form of child exploitation prevalent throughout the UK, which has not received widespread public attention until recently.

Young people on their way home from school are bought food by an acquaintance or stranger over a number of days and start to unknowingly accrue debt. The groomer informs the child that the only way to repay the debt is to begin trafficking drugs; however, the dealer might arrange for the young person to be robbed while carrying the substances. The original debt is not cleared and the sum will now include the cost of the lost stock, raising the bill to hundreds or thousands of pounds.

Groomers trap children in this cycle of drug dealing, with the situation sometimes escalating so severely that young people disappear from home to live in a 'cuckoo' house – a vulnerable person's home used by gangs to remain under the police radar.

Although commonly associated with drug dealing and gangs, chicken shop grooming can also lead to child sexual exploitation (CSE).

LGfL serves a community of 3,000 schools throughout the UK. Their poster campaign paired with the tagline 'There's no such thing as free chicken' highlights the dangers of this site-specific exploitation, raising awareness of the fact that 'Friends of friends who buy you things often want something in return' to prevent children unknowingly accumulating debt by accepting free food.

**CONTACT THE WQE SAFEGUARDING TEAM**



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**Freephone 0800 061 4222**

Monday-Thursday 08.30-16.30 & Friday 08.30 - 16.00

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