Cotham School

Online Safety Newsletter

Academic Year: 2026/2027
Term: 2
Date: 16/11/2026

Newsletter Topics: Grand Theft Auto VI | Playstation and Xbox Parental Controls

What Parents Need to Know About GTA 6

Grand Theft Auto 6 (VI)

Grand Theft Auto VI launches on **19 November 2026** for PlayStation 5 and Xbox Series X/S. It is one of the most anticipated games of the decade, and its release will dominate conversations, streaming platforms, and social media. With a PEGI 18 / ESRB Mature rating, it is intended for adults only. Here is what you need to know before your child encounters it.

The Risks: What Makes GTA 6 Inappropriate for Children

- **Extreme Violence**: PEGI describes the violence as "bloody with a high degree of realism," including detailed decapitation. Players can harm civilians, criminals, and police.
- **Drug Use**: Drug use is "frequent and prominent". Players can carry and snort cocaine directly from their inventory at any time.
- **Sexual Content**: The game includes nudity, scenes of a strong sexual nature. Players can visit strip clubs and pay for private dances with interactive touching.
- **Online Contact with Strangers**: While GTA 6 launches without online mode, GTA Online will arrive later. It allows players to interact with up to 30 strangers via voice chat and text, exposing children to offensive language, harassment ("griefing"), and unwanted contact.
- **Microtransactions**: The game carries an "In-Game Purchases" notice. When GTA Online launches, it is expected to include microtransactions similar to GTA V's (5) Shark Cards.





Advice for Parents & Carers

- **Set Console-Level Restrictions**: GTA 6 has no in-game parental controls. Use your console's family settings instead. On PS5, child accounts automatically block PEGI 18 games. On Xbox, enable "Needs adult approval to buy things".
- **Use the "Allowed Games" Exception Carefully**: If you decide to permit GTA 6 for an older teen, PS5 and Xbox allow you to approve a single game without unlocking the entire 18+ catalogue.
- **Disable Chat and Messaging**: On PS5, set Communication and User-Generated Content to "Restrict" to disable voice chat and text with strangers. When GTA Online launches, this setting will be critical.
- **Consider Co-Playing or Co-Viewing**: If your teen plays, sit with them sometimes. Psychologists suggest watching together lets you add context in the moment ("That's satire", "That's not how relationships work") rather than leaving them to process it alone.
- **Watch for Streaming Content**: Even if your child does not play GTA 6, they will likely encounter it through YouTube, Twitch, and TikTok. Streamers and content creators will feature it heavily, and younger gamers may want to play because of what they see online .

Source: National Online Safety | internetmatters.org | BBC | IGN.com | PEGI | PlayStation | Xbox

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Playstation 5 Console Restrictions

PlayStation 5: Official Setup Steps

Method 1: Via the PlayStation Family App (Recommended for convenience)

1. Open the PlayStation Family app on your smartphone.
2. Select your child from the top of the home screen.
3. Tap the Settings icon next to the child's name.
4. Select Parental Controls > Games and Apps.
5. Here you can manage the age level for games and apps. If your child tries to play a restricted game on PS5, the game is blocked. Your child can send a request to you, and you can choose to allow or deny it from the app .

Method 2: On the PS5 Console Directly

1. Go to Settings > Family Management.
2. Select your child's account and adjust Parental Controls for games and apps.

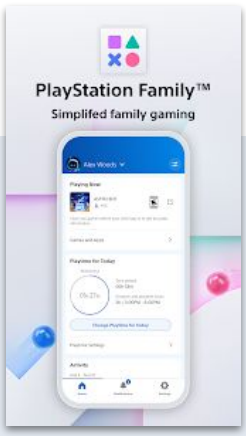
Xbox Series X|S Console Restrictions

Xbox Series X|S: Official Setup Steps

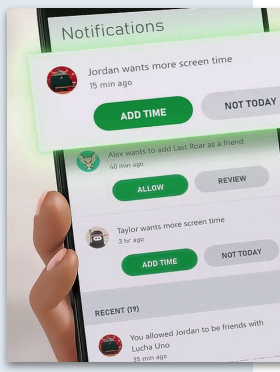
Key Requirement: You must first create an Xbox family group in your Microsoft account to apply age limits to a child's account.

Setup Steps (via Microsoft Account / Xbox Console):

1. Sign in to your Microsoft account and go to the Family page.
2. Select the child's account.
3. Go to Content filters (or Privacy & online safety).
4. Toggle "Block inappropriate apps, games & media" to On.
5. Under "All apps and games rated for", select the appropriate age rating. For GTA 6 (rated Mature/18+), ensure the setting is below that threshold to block it .
6. Restart the console for changes to take effect.







Official Links and Guides:

PlayStation Parental Controls Overview:
https://www.playstation.com/en-us/parental-controls/

PlayStation Family App Support:
https://www.playstation.com/en-sg/support/account/ps-family-app/

Xbox Family & Online Safety Support:
https://support.xbox.com/en-US/help/family-online-safety/online-safety/set-age-limit

internetmatters.org guides:
https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/gaming-consoles/playstation-parental-controls/
https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/gaming-consoles/xbox-series-x-s-parental-controls/

Source: National Online Safety | internetmatters.org | BBC | IGN.com | PEGI | PlayStation | Xbox