

ChildrenOnline

Devoted to the safety of children and teens online

Phone: 413-214-1225

A Division of Web Safe Consulting

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There are several websites where children can play games online and parents can be reasonably certain that the games are age-appropriate and do not contain vulgar, extremely violent or sexualized content. Here are several such sites:

Poptropica.com

Funbrain.com

Both were developed by the [Family Education Network](#).

FEN has other games on their website as well. Select the age of your child from the choices at the top of the screen and then the word "Entertainment."

Also visit:

Kids.Yahoo.com

SurfNetKids.com

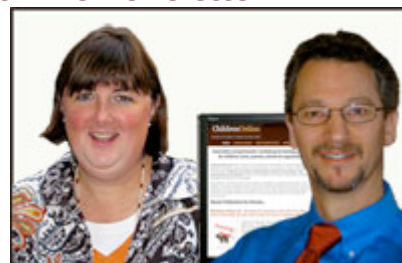
[Shooting Games at](#)

Issue: #34

March 2010

34th Edition of the Children Online Newsletter.

First of all we would like to welcome the 100-plus new subscribers to our monthly newsletter! We have conducted many parent workshops in the last few weeks at schools in several states and we're thrilled that so many parents have joined us. Many of our readers have also found us on the Internet and come from countries as close as Canada and as far as India and Australia. We all share a wish for our children to grow up in a safe and age-appropriate manner using the Internet.



In this issue of our newsletter we turn our attention to children's popular online game sites to expose the reality that some of the games on these sites are not suitable for children though, overall, the site appears to be fine. We've learned about these game sites from children and young teens at schools we've visited during the last few years. To make it easier for parents and educators to see the graphic examples long after this month's newsletter becomes a pdf file, we've written the complete web addresses below to the graphics we've saved on our website.

As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions. Our telephone number for Children Online is 413-214-1225.

Best wishes,
 Marje Monroe and Doug Fodeman

Contact Marje or Doug via email at marjem@childrenonline.org or dougf@childrenonline.org for information about our programs or consulting services.

[SurfNetKids.com](#)
[Arcade Games at](#)
[SurfNetKids.com](#)

Katia Somerville has created a game site called [SafeKidGames](#) where she groups and rates games by grade level from Kindergarten through grade 7.

How Safe are Dress-Up Games?

A very popular game and social site for young girls is [Stardoll.com](#). Girls in fourth grade through seventh grade will often tell us that they have accounts on this site.

Though Stardoll, and others like it, make an effort to keep their content safe and appropriate, we have found offensive screen names and posts on Stardoll every time we've visited. The offensive content usually takes the form of very sexual or sexually vulgar postings. Fortunately they are few but parents need to be aware that sites like these rarely police their community with "human eyes". Typically software is employed to look for offending words. It is easy, however, for users to hide or mask their offensive selections by substituting characters, such as in a user name such as "mipu55y."

When is a Kid's Game Site Not for Kids?

One of the primary reasons that kids flock to the Internet, especially children under fourteen, is to play games. The two most popular game sites that kids talk about wherever we go is [Miniclip](#) and [AddictingGames](#). However, kids visit a wide range of game sites such as [Rebubbled](#), [ArmorGames](#), [MaxGames](#), [Y8](#), [ActionFlash](#) and [XGenStudios](#). AddictingGames is owned by a familiar name, [Nickelodeon](#), the same company that created Sponge Bob and the Penguins of Madagascar. If you visit any of these game sites you get the impression that they are designed to appeal to tween-age children, ages ten to thirteen. But children as young as six and seven visit these popular game sites.

While the great majority of games on these sites are harmless, parents are often unaware that some games found on these sites are for mature audiences and very inappropriate for children because of their sexual, violent or vulgar content. Also, many games reinforce negative stereotypes and routinely sexualize girls. In addition, just like the idea of "six degrees of separation", some children's game sites are just two or three clicks away from content and websites designed for adults. Two popular games that have appeared on several of the above games sites, including Addicting Games, are "Don't Whack Your Boss" and "Whack Your Ex." Both were created by Doodie.com. (As in feces.) A link is provided from the games to Doodie.com where the visitor will find ads for online casinos, sex surveys, and an ad to a very risky and inappropriate site called Chat Roulette. [It has recently been reported that about 20% of the random video chats that appear through Chat Roulette connect visitors to men who are exposing their genitals. Since Chat Roulette appeared last November, there are now at least three copycat websites.]

Cartoon violence has been around for as long as there have been cartoons. However, we all know that the graphic display of violence covers a wide range of content and, at one end of the spectrum, can be extreme and gorey. Also some violent graphic media can be offensive because it is perpetrated against women and with sexual qualities. Here are a few examples of these points from "Don't What Your Boss" and a game called "Spank the Booty", found on Rebubbled, where the object of the game is to spank a woman's bare bottom as

Bottom line: Though the risks are small, there are no guarantees for parents that their children won't come in contact with sexually offensive material or the people who create it on Stardoll.com.

Book for Parents:

[Racing to Keep Up: Talking with your kids about technology use and strategies to protect the home computer](#)



Strategies for parents to talk with their kids about technology use and ways to keep the home computer safe.

Doug Fodeman
Marje Monroe

About Children Online

Children Online offers innovative and comprehensive workshops on Internet safety and online education to students, parents, faculty and administrators. Our approach, unique in the field of Internet safety, combines a thorough understanding of Internet technologies, child development and counseling, to focus on the impact of the internet on the social, emotional and language development of young people.

Doug Fodeman and Marje Monroe, experts in technology,

hard as possible.

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/Rebubbled-Spank.jpg

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/spank1.gif

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/Spank2.gif

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images

[/DontWhackBoss1.gif](http://www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/DontWhackBoss1.gif)

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images

[/DontWhackBoss2.gif](http://www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/DontWhackBoss2.gif)

Nickelodeon, the owner of Addicting Games, has been castigated for offering games such as "Perry the Perv" where the object of the game is to catch women undressing without getting caught. The prize for winning is to jump into bed with a woman (off screen), while her panties fly off and the bed makes a violent rocking motion as hearts rise. Addicting Games also offers a game called "Candy the Naughty Cheerleader." The object of the game is to drive away all your classmates so that you can have private time alone with Candy because she "looks so hot." Both games sexually objectify women.

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/PerryPerv1.gif

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/PerryPerv2.gif

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/PerryPerv3.gif

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/PerryPerv4.gif

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/PerryPerv5.gif

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/cheerleader1.gif

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/cheerleader2.jpg

Other similar games that parents may find offensive are "Paparazzi" where the object of the game is to catch the "wardrobe malfunctions" [www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/CatchWardrobeMalfunctions.gif] or the casino and poker games, including games rated for teens, mature and adults only audiences at Action Flash such as "PedoPriest" and the "Orgasm Simulator." Please be forewarned that "Orgasm Simulator" is pornographic and found on Action Flash.

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/os1.gif

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/os2.gif

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/priest.gif

The [Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood](#) has been trying to advocate on behalf of children for the removal of this type of content. Sadly, our voices are a whisper compared to

counseling and education, work together to provide invaluable research and tools for parents and schools with practical real-life solutions to the issues faced by young people online. Since 1997, Marje and Doug have spoken to thousands of students, teachers and parents. They have several publications in the area of Internet safety and offer a free online newsletter. More detailed information can be found at ChildrenOnline.org.

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Monroe.
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the cacophony of sound from the multi-billion dollar media industry. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't try. For example, we recently contacted both the webmaster at Rebubbled and the Attorney General in Colorado (where the server resides that hosts Rebubbled) to have the content removed. Representatives of our government need to be informed as well. The louder our collective voices are, the greater the chance that we can make a difference.

Some games aren't cartoons at all but actually flash animation of real people, such as Sweet Tickle Girl. Players of Sweet Tickle Girl find themselves looking down upon a young woman lying in bed wearing a skimpy set of pajamas. The player's mouse becomes a feather and the game is to tickle the young woman. Her response is to pull up or down her pajamas suggesting that she might reveal much more of herself. [www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/tickle.jpg]

Other games, besides employing violence in their game play, are extremely vulgar. This typically takes the form of characters urinating or defecating on others such as these examples from Hobo Prison Brawl (found on ArmorGames and Y8.com) and Whack Your Ex, which is found on many game sites like Rebubbled.

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/WhackYourEx1.gif

www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/WhackYourEx2.gif

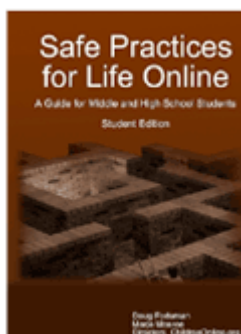
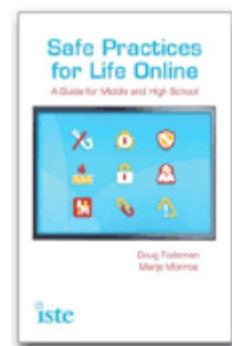
www.childrenonline.org/newsletters/images/hobo.gif

The message here is simple. Parents shouldn't assume that all of the content on a kid's game site is for kids. Nor should they assume that the content is consistent with their family values or free of negative stereotypes or media messages. The Internet is a "moving target" with websites and their content changing constantly. This makes it even harder for parents to keep a watchful eye on what their children are doing. Also, most parents understand that if, for example, a fifth grade boy is presented with a set of games ranging from "E" for Everyone to "M" for Mature, that fifth grader's natural curiosity is likely to lead him to select the "M" game.

INTERNET SAFETY CURRICULUM

Safe Practices for Life Online

Children Online has a curriculum on Internet Safety that includes nearly 100 student exercises and lots of information on many topics including social networks, instant messaging, cyberbullying, online marketing, scams directed at kids, protecting privacy online, avoiding identity theft and impersonation, creating strong passwords and more.



There is also a student edition which includes cartoons and "Did you know" sections of interesting facts for students.

To learn more or place an order visit our [publications page at ChildrenOnline.org](#) or go directly to our publisher's pages: [Teacher's Edition at ISTE](#) [Student Edition at Lulu.com](#)

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