

Make the Most of the Online World This Christmas

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they need it. This guide focuses on one issue of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

When parents and carers finally have the chance to spend some quality time with their child over Christmas, many face a familiar struggle to prise their young one's attention away from their phone, console, tablet or computer. Fun family bonding over the festive period, however, doesn't have to exclude devices. There are sacksful of Christmas activities and ideas online which grown-ups and children can enjoy together. We've compiled our own 'nice list' of seasonal suggestions for how to...

MAKE THE MOST OF THE ONLINE WORLD THIS CHRISTMAS

1 EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY
Budding bakers will relish helping out in the kitchen with some tasty festive treats. Spend some time together researching child-friendly Christmas recipes online (the BBC Good Food site is an excellent place to start), and then you and your little elves can rustle up gingerbread houses, marshmallow snowmen or reindeer shortbread. The only thing that's more fun is eating your creations afterwards!

2 THE OLD SONGS ARE THE BEST?
We've all had that Christmas compilation CD that was almost perfect, if it wasn't inexplicably missing one of your best-loved tracks. In this era of music streaming, however, your little helpers can assist you in compiling a definitive playlist of all your favourite seasonal songs – no more playing for The Freelanders or wishing for Wizard.

3 DECK THE HALLS
There's no such thing as 'too many' Christmas trimmings! Let your child channel their excitement into some creative crafting, and you'll make memories as well as your own DIY decorations. There are loads of step-by-step guides online (including video walkthroughs on YouTube) for seasonal showpieces like paper plate angels, handprint wreaths and cupcake wrapper Christmas trees.

4 A WORLD OUTSIDE YOUR WINDOW
From bonkey on the beach in Australia to roller-skating to church in Venezuela, Christmas is celebrated in a variety of ways worldwide – curious youngsters might enjoy discovering other nations' festive traditions online. Google's Santa Tracker is a brilliant (and free!) starting point, with games, activities and animations to help children enjoy learning as they count down to the big day!

5 THE NEAR AND THE DEAR ONES
Between time constraints, distance, the weather and Covid precautions (or a combination of all four) for many families it just won't be possible to physically spend time with everyone they'd ideally like to this Christmas. Video calling technology, of course, takes some of the sting out of the disappointment by virtually transporting loved ones into your living room.

6 KIDS FROM ONE TO 92
If Santa's brought your young ones a console this year (or they already had one), it's a perfect excuse for some quality time while they gleefully bounce you at FIFA or Mario Kart. Digital versions of traditional board games like Monopoly and Cluedo are available on most platforms, too; get the whole household together for a modern take on some old-school family fun.

7 A WINTER'S TALE
Everyone enjoys a story at this time of year; after all, the whole celebration is based on an engrossing yarn. Sites such as Audible are an excellent way of entertaining excited young ones, with classics like Dickens' A Christmas Carol and seasonal short stories by Enid Blyton alongside more contemporary Christmas tales by the likes of Tom Fitcher, JK Rowling and Ben Miller.

8 CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THOSE FACES
People used to express their gratitude for a thoughtful Christmas gift with a thank you card or a dutiful phone call. Not in the digital age: now your relations can see first-hand on video calls how delighted the children are with their presents – and even how they look in that slightly questionable hand-knitted pullover.

9 BROUGHT ME SOME CORN FOR POPPIN'
Smuggling up against the winter weather with the family (and a generous helping of chocolates) to enjoy a well-loved movie is a delightful Christmas tradition. The usual streaming services have some classic candidates on offer: Home Alone and The Santa Clause are on Disney+, while Amazon Prime has Elf and The Grinch, and Netflix goes with The Princess Switch and The Christmas Chronicles.

10 GUESS WHAT I FORGOT?
Friends and family pitting their wits against each other on Zoom, Teams or Skype really took off during lockdown, so why not revive the tradition over the holidays? Your questions could be on the biggest news, sport and showbiz stories of 2021, or be Christmas themed, or you could stick to classic general knowledge. Ideal for those days between Christmas and New Year.

Thank you

National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday

www.nationalonlinesafety.com @natonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 15.12.2021

From streaming classic family movies to video calling friends and relations, and from some good-natured competition (or cooperation) on video games to collaborating on your ultimate Christmas playlist, there are plenty of ways that your child's devices can provide an embellishment – as opposed to a distraction – this festive season.

This #WakeUpWednesday, we've got ideas for how adults can spend time online with their child this holiday – without needing to crowbar devices out of young hands first. Eagle-eyed readers will notice that the title of each panel is taken from the lyrics of well-known Christmas hits: how many can you name? We hope the guide comes in handy ... and, of course, that you have a merry Christmas!