



ThinkUKnow e-Newsletter - July 2016

Pokémon Go

Since its release only a few weeks ago, Pokémon Go has become the most popular smartphone application in history.

This augmented reality app allows users to go about their daily life, but in the company of Pokémon.

The basic aim of the game is to collect Pokémon characters, working towards ultimate battles in 'gyms' which are scattered around our towns and cities. In a nutshell, the aim of the game is to catch em all!

Contrary to the games slogan, you don't 'gotta catch em all' if it means putting yourself in a situation where you feel unsafe, both online and offline.

Why it's fun

It is integrated into our real world. In the past, when we thought of gaming we pictured sitting on the couch for hours in front of a screen. Pokémon Go encourages both adults and children to explore their surroundings.

'Pokestops' are often found at well-known landmarks around town, some of historical and cultural significance.

The Pokémon themselves can be found in a variety of locations. We've been testing out the app, and we found some in our local park, in the lift and in the local supermarket. We've even got a 'Pokestop' right outside the entrance to our building.

ThinkUKnow Top Tips

Time2Talk

- Why not download the app? Go catch Pokémon with your children so you can see what it's all about.
- Go for a walk catching Pokémon and have a conversation with your children about appropriate locations to catch them. Which do they think are safe and not safe?
- While walking, occasionally ask them what's around to draw their attention and focus back to their physical surroundings.
- Remind your child you don't have to walk to a Pokémon's exact location to capture it.

3. Talk to your child about the importance of always looking at what is around them before they start hunting Pokémon. Pokémon Go requires you to watch your avatar walking on a screen through GPS tracking. This can sometimes cause children to focus all their attention to that little screen in their hands.

4. Talk to your children about safe places to go while playing. Players can set off 'lures' which attract not only Pokémon, but people too. This can cause large numbers of people to flock to locations around town to stand at the lure which attracts Pokémon for 30 minutes. In these instances, it is important to be aware of who is around.

5. Be aware that apps may also have access to

1. Depending on your child's age, search for Pokémon with them, or ensure they have a friend with them at all times if you're comfortable with them being outside without parental supervision.

2. Make sure usernames don't contain any identifying information. While there is no built-in chat feature, usernames will appear if you are in a 'gym'. As you need to be physically near a gym to battle, its best those around you cannot identify you

your personal information and other applications on your phone, including your location and camera.

6. There are in-app purchases, so don't forget to chat to your children about the consequences of buying items through the app.

Helpful hint: You can track your child's activity on the app by clicking on the journal icon as it keeps a log of all activity.

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