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 feel it is needed. This guide focuses on onegame of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know About CYBERPUNK 2077

PEGI 18

Cyberpunk 2077 is a first-person action RPG (role-playing game) with multiple storylines. It's set in a dystopian future where the line between humans and machines has blurred, with cybernetic implants commonplace. Eight years in the making by Polish developers CD Projekt RED, the game has already garnered quite a reputation – partly because of its adult themes and graphic content.

Adult Themes

18+

Violence, sexual content, profanity and drug use are all present from the opening moments of the game. We cannot emphasise enough that this game is for adults. It has a PEGI rating of 18+ for good reason. The gritty, grimy atmosphere is akin to movies like Blade Runner, and characters face many unsettling, adult situations.

Extreme Violence

Violence is a key component of the game. Players frequently engage in shootouts with enemies, causing dismemberment, gore, blood-spatter effects and characters screaming in agony. Cyberpunk 2077 also allows for stealth-based or peaceful resolutions, so you *can* avoid these situations – but as in the Grand Theft Auto series, for example, the violence is synonymous with the game's reputation.

Drug Abuse

Throughout the game, characters are seen to take futuristic versions of drugs. The player character is also able to take stimulants that affect their in-game abilities for a time. On top of this, the player is able to drink alcohol in bars and then drive their vehicle while under the influence.

Online Multiplayer

Cyberpunk 2077 was released as a single-player game. There *are* plans to add a multiplayer option, but currently nobody playing the game can interact with one another. It's unclear what a multiplayer extension of the game might look like – but it's a likely assumption that when it's added, players (both friends and strangers) will be able to game together and chat.

Sex and Body Representation

This is a first-person game: all actions are viewed through the eyes of the player's character, including full-frontal nudity and graphic sex. It's possible to hire sex workers, and there's the now-infamous 'genital customisation' – with options to choose from a variety of reproductive organs. The game has also come under fire for its approach to trans rights and concepts of 'improving' your natural body with cybernetic implants.

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Advice for Parents & Carers

Parental Controls

Parental controls let you monitor what children are playing and what they can access. On PlayStation, find 'Account Management', go to the account you want to create rules for, and follow the menus. On Xbox, set up a family group (via 'Settings') to filter out adult-rated games. On PC, Steam's parental controls are accessed through 'Steam Support', and on Epic Games Store, they're under 'Account Settings'.

Switch Off Nudity

Cyberpunk 2077 has a built-in nudity censor. From the main title menu, go into to 'Options', scroll down to 'Nudity Censor' and enable it. You can't do this while the game is in play – so make sure you find it before a session is started. It's worth noting that if you've already set up parental controls on a console, the game may detect that and switch the nudity censor on automatically.

Disable Card Purchases

This prevents young ones from buying games or game add-ons without permission. If you have cards or other payment methods linked to shared accounts or children's accounts, remove them. You can still buy games or add-ons occasionally as a gift or part of an allowance, but disabling card purchases from shared accounts gives you peace of mind when children are gaming unsupervised.

Talk It through

Cyberpunk 2077 is extremely popular right now: many children (especially teens) will be playing it and talking about it with each other. Use this as an opportunity to open a dialogue about the game, find out what your children's thoughts on it are and discuss why it might not be appropriate for them to play it themselves.

Research the Game

The best piece of advice is to research Cyberpunk 2077 yourself. There are lots of videos of people playing it on YouTube and Twitch that give a good indication of what to expect. If you're still unsure whether the game is suitable for your children, avoid it – and be clear with them as to why.

Meet our expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for five years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGbible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.

SOURCES: https://www.gamerevolution.com/guides/669369-cyberpunk-2077-parents-guide-is-it-safe-for-kids-children, https://www.taminggaming.com/game/Cyberpunk+2077 ,https://safe.becausefamily.org/cyberpunk-2077-a-parents-guide/#:~:text=This%20video%20game%20is%20filled,should%20be%20playing%20this%20game. ,https://gamerjournalist.com/how-to-change-nudity-settings-in-cyberpunk-2077/ , https://www.xbox.com/en-GB/community/for-everyone/responsible-gaming , https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps4-parental-controls-and-spending-limits/, https://support.steampowered.com/kb_article.php?ref=5149-eopc-9918

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