



[News] RNLI creates Minecraft beach survival game to teach water safety to children

Description

This Summer, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) is launching year two of the charity's Beach Builder Challenge using the interactive video game, Minecraft, which allows children to create and build virtual worlds.

The Beach Builder Challenge, available to play from 1 August, has been created by the RNLI to teach children about beach and water safety at a time when many young people will be visiting the coast during school summer holidays.

New for this year, the RNLI has expanded the virtual world to include a Beach Island Adventure, which means as well as being able to create epic beaches, this year creative youngsters are also tasked with completing four levels in the Beach Island Adventure. The four levels are based on the charity's Stay SAFE acronym: Spot the dangers, Take Advice, Stay close to a Friend or family member, Learn what to do in an Emergency.

The RNLI's Community Safety Product Manager, Bridie Appleby-Gunnill says: 'This is a fun and interactive game for 7–14 year olds to play during the summer holidays. We really hope the challenges will help Minecraft users visiting the beach this summer put their newly acquired beach safety knowledge into reality, and have fun while staying SAFE.'

Last year's Beach Builder Challenge was a huge success with more than 8,000 children participating from all over the world, including Canada, Australia and the USA. It also proved successful in helping to reach a high number of children living in inland communities across the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Feedback from 2015 suggests the game is an excellent education platform particularly as results found that 97% of participants, after playing the game, knew to go to a lifeguarded beach; and there was a 20% increase in the number of children who knew to dial 999 and ask for the coastguard if they saw someone in trouble at the beach.

Bridie adds: 'We've created a fun, educational experience where a young person can engage and

learn about water safety in a self-organised way and where academic ability does not limit learning. Research suggests that children learn and retain more when they can organise their own learning. Last year's feedback has shown Minecraft to be a fantastic enabler in allowing this to happen.

'I'm really hopeful the results of this year's challenge will be just as encouraging. We'll be looking for participants to take part in research, to help us further develop ways to enable water safety learning in this age group.'

This year, children using different platforms will be able to talk to one another while taking part in the challenge, to register your child's involvement email gaming@rnli.org.uk.

The RNLI (in conjunction with ASA) runs an annual programme of outdoor swimming and water safety sessions for all 7–14 year olds at beaches and lakes across UK locations during the summer holidays. Participants of the RNLI's Beach Builder Challenge will be able to put their learning into practice by signing up to Swim Safe. To book your free Swim Safe session visit [L](#).

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1. minecraft
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