



Simon Roe  
Merchandise Controller  
Toys R Us  
Vanwall Business Park  
Maidenhead  
Berkshire  
SL6 4UB

6<sup>th</sup> March, 2005

Dear Simon,

Further to our brief conversation on the phone, I am writing simply confirm it is our long held view that all manufacturers and retailers of computers aimed at the domestic market should pre-install safety software that is set to a high level of security. In other words we think the current position, where PCs which are going to be sold to parents for their children to use on the internet, are sold with little or no thought being given to whether or not the persons buying the technology have any understanding of the risks attaching to its use, the risks they may be exposing their children to, or even if they do know about such things it does not necessarily mean they know how to make the experience as safe as possible.

The analogy we generally use is that of buying a new car: the showroom sales staff would never dream of saying "OK. The seat belts are in the boot. Fix them yourself later if you think you might need them." The same ought to be true for PCs and other devices that are going to be used by children to go online. The machine should come in the safest possible condition, ready to go from the moment Mum or Dad or the child first turns on the electrical power. The safety software can, of course, be removed, adjusted or disabled if that is what people want, but it should be there from the outset, and working from the off.

We do not prescribe any particular package, but there are several very reputable brands on the market, and they are a great deal more sophisticated than they were even two or three years ago. Such packages would also have the added advantage of ensuring that the experience of that child in one of your London stores would not be repeated anywhere.

The Government is also taking a keen interest in this area. I think I mentioned that I am chairing a Home Office Task Force sub group which is looking specifically at filtering, blocking and monitoring software that is intended to help keep children safe when they go online. It will be a few months before it reports.

If I can be of any further assistance, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

John Carr  
Secretary, CHIS