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A viral post is circulating on social media about a child accidentally stumbling across a video called 'Evil Santa' on YouTube Kids. The video allegedly features Santa telling the child to harm themselves and others to get more presents. The post has been shared widely on social media, worrying parents, carers, and safeguarding professionals alike.

Whilst the video itself cannot be sourced or found; it appears that a concerned parent may have shared a post outlining the child's description of what they said, they saw.

We have not been able to find evidence of these videos online and assess that the greatest risk at present is driven by people re-sharing this post with others.

We know from viral hoaxes that when they are reshared, they tend to amplify anxiety and influence search algorithms. Our researchers found this to be the case; the term 'Evil Santa' has indeed begun to spike on Google Trends.

Our online safety experts will continue to monitor this situation and keep you informed of any developments.



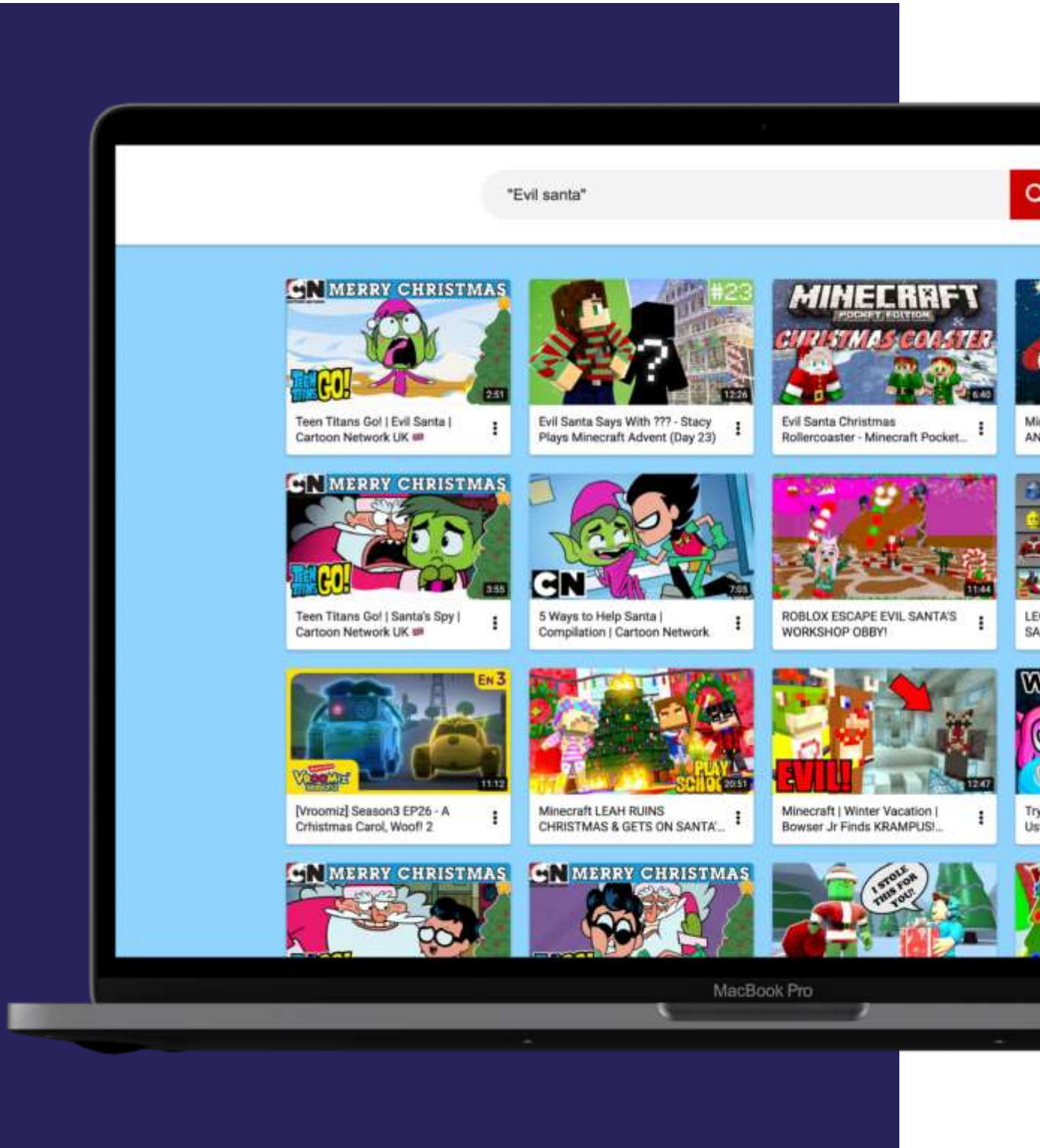
What is Evil Santa?

- Users on Facebook are copying, pasting, screenshotting, and sharing the original post.
- It begins as a warning for “anyone with YouTube Kids.” The post goes on to detail a parent’s interaction with their 5-year-old child.
- The child allegedly claimed ‘Evil Santa’ told him to hurt himself and others to get his Christmas presents. ‘Evil Santa’ also threatened to come and get him in his sleep.
- The parent expresses shock and disgust with YouTube Kids, claiming their child saw this in a video on the platform despite parental controls being on.

What Our Experts Found

- We searched the term ‘Evil Santa’ on YouTube Kids (in the 5-8 age range and the older 9-12 age range) and found no references or videos relating to the hoax Facebook post.

- We also searched this on YouTube (with restricted mode and without) and found nothing relating to the post. The only 'Evil Santa' videos we found involved a Minecraft exploration video, but there was no mention of threats or violence.
- When we searched this term on TikTok and Instagram, we found no mention of this viral post.



What you can do

We advise against sharing the original post on Facebook, and instead recommend sharing this advice.

Talking to your Child

Remember to pause, think, and plan before having a conversation about online safety with your child.

We recommend not directly mentioning 'Evil Santa' unless your child brings it up. Mentioning the name might make them curious and could encourage them to seek it out or ask their friends about it.

Instead, take this opportunity to talk to the children or young people in your care about the risks of harmful online content. This is about choosing the right time and place to talk to your child and introducing the subject matter indirectly.

Remind them that they should talk to you or another trusted adult if they see something upsetting or distressing online.

Further Resources

- Use our helpful one pager [Safety Cards](#) on a range of different social media apps & platforms including YouTube & YouTube Kids.
- For information on a range of different video streaming sites, check out the [Stream Safe](#) section of our Online Safety Centre.
- Discuss the importance of privacy settings with those in your care. Together, ensure devices are set up with the appropriate safety settings. Use [our Safety Centre](#) to walk and talk them through options such as blocking, muting, and reporting.