

## THE INTERNET OF TOYS: SAFETY GUIDE

Several years ago, the idea of having a conversation with a teddy bear seemed surreal, but as technology progresses, children are now able to communicate, learn and play with their connected toys and devices.

**The appeal of interactive toys is increasing but there are real security risks to anything that is connected to the internet.**

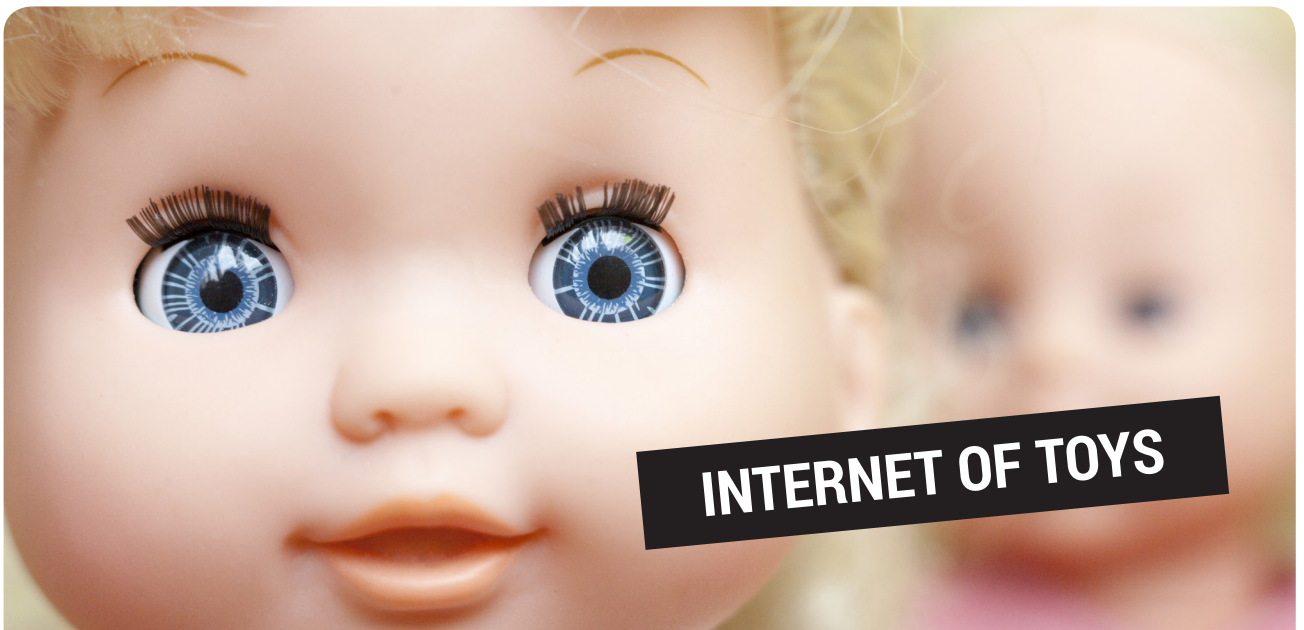
Recently, the FBI issued a warning encouraging consumers to “consider cyber security prior to introducing smart, interactive, internet-connected toys into their homes or trusted environments”. According to the public service announcement, “security safeguards for these toys are often overlooked into the rush to market them and make them easy to use”.

These are valid security concerns and as more toys enter the market with built-in sensors, GPS and cameras, the potential risk of a cybercriminal hacking into them is on the rise. In fact, we are constantly hearing on the news about a new internet connected device being compromised. For instance, in February, Germany’s Federal Network Agency, classified the smart doll, My Friend Cayla as an “illegal espionage apparatus”, warning it could be hacked by a Bluetooth connection to record and collect private conversations.



Not only  
children's  
toys expose

potential vulnerabilities,  
adult toys have also  
caused concerns related  
to privacy violations.  
To demonstrate these  
vulnerabilities, a security  
researcher at RightsCon  
Brussels hacked into a  
connected vibrator with  
a built in camera.



INTERNET OF TOYS

And back in 2015, Learning Lodge, an online store for VTech devices where users can download apps, games, videos, e-books and music was hacked. Hackers were able to retrieve personal information from more than five million users, putting both parents and children at risk.

Though owning a smart toy entails potential threats, they also come with a lot of benefits for your kids. Before buying any connected toy, **BrandProtect guides you through the steps to take in order to make the toys safer once they're of the box.**



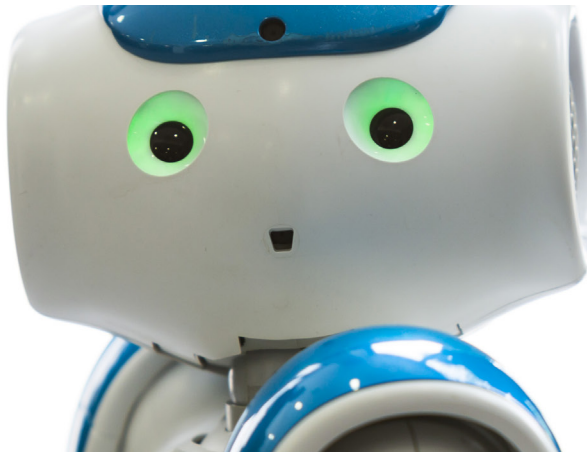
## How Do Internet Connected Toys Work?

As the internet of things takes off, manufacturers are rushing to make products that can talk and listen. The capabilities and functions of the toys varies: some contain microphones, sensors, cameras and others are tailored to understand children's behavioral activity, their location and even their heartbeat.

The collection of voice recordings and information including: names, dates of birth, gender, passwords and IP address are in-turn stored on either the manufacturer or developer's server.



# SMART GUIDE TO PLAY



## **FIRST AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, EDUCATE YOUR KIDS ON POTENTIAL RISKS ON THE**

**INTERNET:** talk to your child about never giving out information without your previous consent. Make sure they understand how to use their internet connected toys without compromising their safety.



## **RESEARCH THE TOY'S SECURITY MEASURES: FOR EXAMPLE, DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR**

**DATA IS STORED?** Has the toy ever been reported of posing a cybersecurity risk? Does the manufacturer offer the latest firmware software? What happens if your data is exposed? What are the manufacturer policies on using and disclosing personal information?



## **IF YOU NEED TO REGISTER AN ACCOUNT IN AN ONLINE SERVICE, DON'T SHARE YOUR**

**REAL DATA:** this way you are making sure that if the information gets into a hackers hands it won't be used against you.



**ONLY FILL IN THE REQUIRED FIELDS IN THE REGISTRATION FORM:** the more information you disclose the easier it is to become a potential target to cyber criminals.

**Once you have finished doing your cybersecurity homework and your child is playing with the toy, make sure you keep a close eye on your children's interaction with it and always remember to turn it off when it isn't in use.**

# brandprotect™

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