



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Epstein Islands and other violent crime recreations on Roblox

A Governing Immersive Tech
Exploratory Report

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Crime Recreation Content	2
Avatars.....	3
Experiences.....	5
Roleplay.....	7
The <i>Robloxification</i> Effect	10
Key Findings and Policy Implications	11
Contact.....	13

How to Cite This Report

Wenqi Tan, Sanika Vekhande, Ben Egliston, Marcus Carter, Milica Stilinovic, and Joanne E. Gray. (2026). *Epstein Islands and other violent crime recreations on Roblox*. The University of Sydney. <https://doi.org/10.25910/33x2-d056>

Available at: <https://hdl.handle.net/2123/35399>

Funding Statement

This research is funded by an Australian Research Council Discovery Project (DP250100343) on *Proactive harm prevention for virtual and augmented reality technologies*, awarded to Dr Joanne E. Gray, Professor Marcus Carter, and Dr Ben Egliston at The University of Sydney.

This research is also funded by an Australian Research Council Future Fellowship (FT220100076) on *The Monetisation of Children in the Digital Games Industry*, awarded to Professor Marcus Carter at The University of Sydney.

Introduction

Roblox is one of the world's largest digital platforms, with an average of 151 million daily active users. It is particularly popular among young people: 56% of users are under the age of 17, and 40% are under 13.¹ Young users engage with Roblox to play games, socialise, and participate in online communities.

The platform operates primarily as a user-generated content ecosystem in which third parties create and publish and sell games, virtual environments (referred to as “experiences”), avatars and other digital assets. These are developed using the free tool Roblox Studio, which enables users to build, script, and publish content directly to the platform. Content is produced by a diverse range of creators, including everyday users, hobbyists, and professional game development studios.

This report presents the results of an exploratory study of user-generated violent and sexual crime recreations on Roblox conducted in April 2026. Using keyword searches on Roblox and other social media platforms, we found evidence of avatars, digital environments, and role-play activities themed around real-world violent and sexual crimes. These include recreations modelled on:

- Jeffrey Epstein's child sexual exploitation and trafficking network;
- Sean 'Diddy' Combs's sexual abuse allegations;
- The assassination of Charlie Kirk;
- Mass shootings; and
- Violent deportation raids.

While Roblox formally prohibits this type of content under its community standards, a growing body of evidence suggests that virtual world crime recreations are part of a recurring pattern of content that is not fully addressed by existing moderation systems, reflecting an inherent problem with Roblox's user-generated content model.

The social and psychological impacts of engaging with virtual representations of real-world violent and sexual crimes remain poorly understood, particularly for children. For Roblox, this is a significant concern given the platform's young user base, including an estimated 1.7 million child users in Australia.²

The report concludes with a summary of the key content moderation, regulatory, and policy challenges raised by these findings.

Crime Recreation Content

In recent years, child safety on Roblox has come under increasing scrutiny, including allegations of harm, exploitation, and abuse occurring within user-generated games and environments. In 2024, the presence of crime recreations on the platform received mainstream media attention following an investigative report by Hindenburg Research.³ The report identified hundreds of game environments referencing Jeffrey

¹ Takeaway Reality, “Roblox Demographics Statistics 2026,” January 12, 2026. <https://www.takeaway-reality.com/post/roblox-demographics-statistics>

² Roy Morgan, 2026, An estimated 1.7 million Australian children aged 6 to 13 play Roblox. <https://www.roymorgan.com/findings/10136-yas-roblox-for-young-australians-survey-december-2025>

³ Hindenburg Research (2024) “Roblox: Inflated Key Metrics for Wall Street and a Pedophile Hellscape for Kids”

Epstein and Sean “Diddy” Combs, many of which were accessible within spaces frequented by younger users. Examples included games titled *Escape to Epstein Island* and *Run from Diddy Simulator*, as well as usernames such as “JeffEpsteinSupporter.” These findings have since been cited in child safety lawsuits, which allege that the platform has hosted content referencing these individuals, including themed game environments and related user-generated materials.

Roblox moderates and removes content that violates its community standards, including content depicting or referencing criminal activity. Keyword-based detection systems are used to target content associated with real-world crimes and individuals. However, the evidence provided in this report suggests certain recreations persist despite these measures. For example, keyword filtering alone does not prevent users from assembling avatars that resemble identifiable individuals through combinations of clothing, accessories, and other assets. Similarly, filters targeting specific terms (e.g. “Epstein”) may not capture the use of alternative or partial names (e.g. “Jeffrey”) which can be deployed without triggering content moderation.

In the following section, we describe the types of crime recreation content observed on Roblox during this exploratory study, as well as examples previously reported by news media and other third parties.

Avatars

Avatars are the primary means through which users represent themselves on Roblox. They can be customised with a range of items, including clothing, accessories, and facial features.

We identified instances of users adopting avatars styled to resemble Jeffrey Epstein—specifically, avatars wearing the “Epstein quarter-zip” that became widely circulated since the paedophile’s death through online memes cultures (see Figures 1 and 2).⁴



Figure 1. Avatar styled in the Epstein Quarter zip top

https://hindenburgenresearch.com/roblox/?utm_campaign=lawsuit-alleges-roblox-hosted-digital-diddy-freak-off-themed-games

⁴ Lily Isaacs, “Epstein has become a meme, not a monster,” *The Observer*, February 2, 2026. <https://observer.co.uk/news/international/article/epstein-has-become-a-meme-not-a-monster>



Figure 2. Epstein Quarter zip top available for sale in the Roblox marketplace, accessed in April 2026

We also found a Charlie Kirk head asset titled “LONG LIVE CHARLIE” (see Figure 3), despite Roblox enforcing keyword restrictions on that name after assassination recreations were found on the platform, following his death.⁵

Other examples include an avatar modelled on the perpetrator of the Sandy Hook Elementary School (Figure 4)⁶ and ICE vests associated with violent deportation raids in the US (see Figure 5).

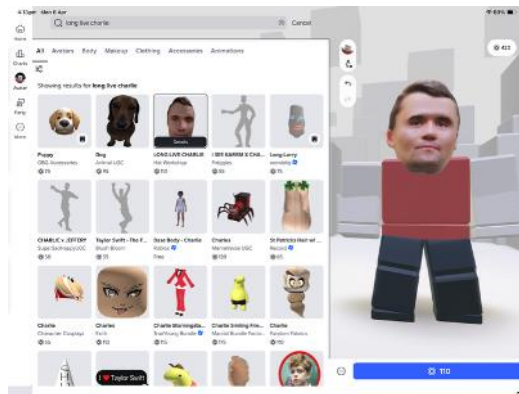


Figure 3. A Roblox avatar asset depicting a realistic Charlie Kirk head, accessed in April 2026

⁵ Nicole Carpenter, “Why Major Events Like Charlie Kirk’s Death End Up On Roblox,” *Aftermath*, September 22, 2025. <https://aftermath.site/roblox-charlie-kirk-recreations/>

⁶ “Roblox has people dressing up as school shooters for their avatars,” *GameFAQs*, April 15, 2026. <https://gamefaqs.gamespot.com/boards/264562-playstation-5/81135724>



Figure 4. An X user's report of a Roblox avatar dressed up as the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooter in March 2026

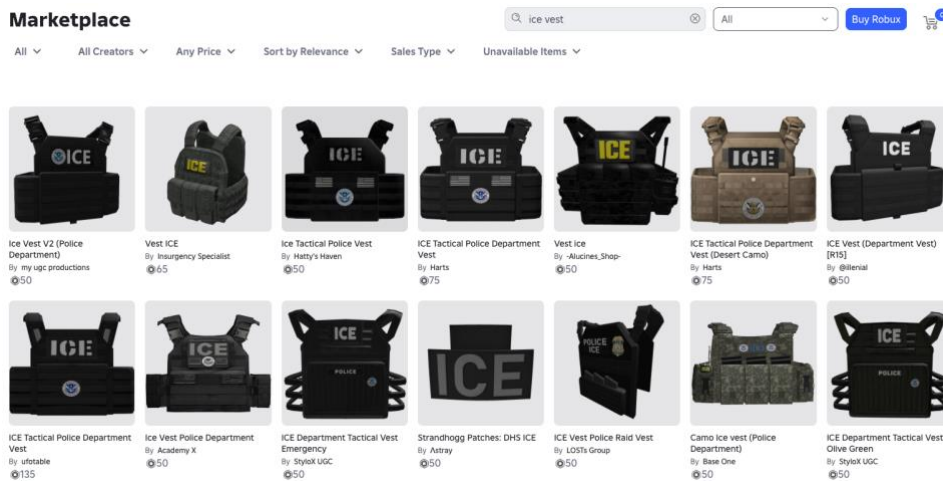


Figure 5. A wide range of ICE vests available for purchase in the Roblox marketplace

Experiences

Experiences are virtual spaces designed for social interaction on Roblox. During the period of this study, we did not identify explicit examples of crime recreation experiences. This likely reflects the platform's response to the findings of the Hindenburg report, discussed above, and suggests a level of efficacy for keyword-based content takedowns and blocks, in this context.

There are, however, known limitations to current moderation processes, particularly in relation to the short-term availability of crime recreation experiences. For example, following the assassination of Charlie Kirk in September 2025, more than 100 related experiences were reportedly uploaded and removed within a 24-hour period but within that period of time, users had engaged with the experience.⁷ For example, an

⁷ Herb Scribner, "Roblox removes "over 100 experiences" tied to Charlie Kirk shooting," Axios, September 11, 2025. <https://www.axios.com/2025/09/11/charlie-kirk-shooting-roblox-game-removed>

experience titled *assassinate charlie kirk*, which depicted a looping recreation of the event, received 385 visits prior to its removal (see Figure 6).⁸

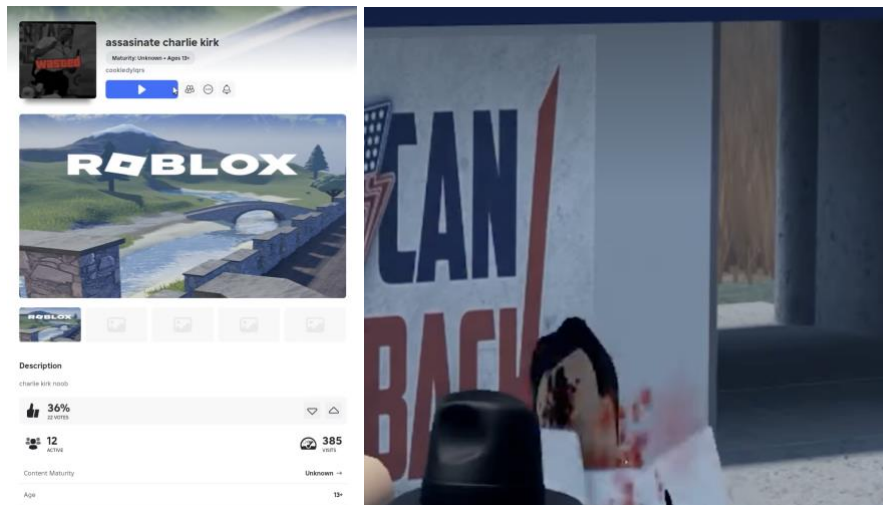


Figure 6. Recreation of Charlie Kirk being shot in the ‘assassinate charlie kirk’ Roblox experience

Current moderation processes may also be insufficient to prevent real-world crime recreations that are deliberately designed to circumvent keyword-based moderation systems. For example, content related to the Christchurch Mosque shooting is restricted by keywords like “Christchurch”, however, in February 2026, a Roblox experience titled *14* that recreated the attack was available on the platform (see Figure 7).⁹ The uploader of this experience was also alleged to be part of a Roblox user group that referenced “killing innocent people” in its description (see Figure 8).

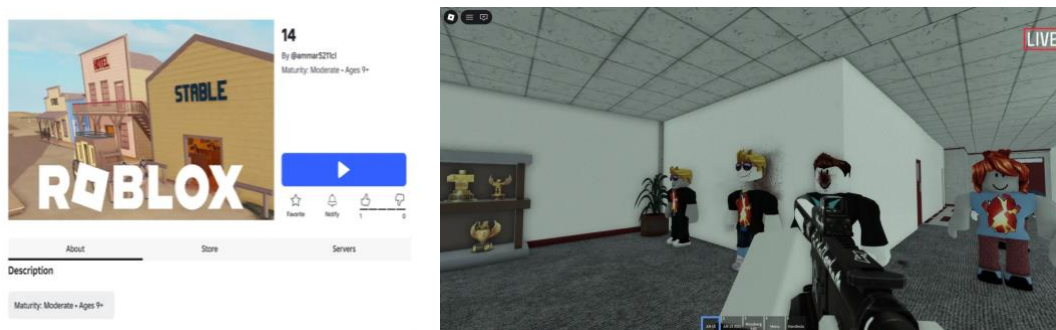


Figure 7. Landing page and in-game screenshots of “14”

⁸ “people are already making a assassinate charlie kirk world in roblox wtf is this shit its disgusting,” X, September 12, 2025. <https://x.com/RealCrispyDrums/status/1966289140473016497>

⁹ “This is Disgusting,” Reddit, February 19, 2026. https://www.reddit.com/r/antiroblox/comments/1r9brzd/this_is_disgusting/?c=pbs8sl27iai



Dogpoop Studios
By DogHoldrr

Join Community

18 Members

HERE IS THE CHURCH, HERE IS THE STEEPLE, ONLY SATISFIED KILLING INNOCENT PEOPLE.

Figure 8. Roblox community group 'Dogpoop Studios'

Roleplay

Roleplaying constitutes a significant component of user activity on Roblox. Many of the platform's most popular experiences are roleplay-based, including for example *Brookhaven*, which has consistently ranked among the most widely used Roblox games.¹⁰ Roblox describes these as "lifesim" (life simulation) experiences, a genre aligned with a broader focus on real-time social interaction and co-experience.¹¹

In the context of moderating violent and sexual crime recreations, roleplay presents particular challenges. Keyword-based restrictions and age gating can limit the visibility of specific avatars or experiences on the platform, but they are less effective at addressing user behaviour within interactive environments that enable freeform interaction between users.

We know Roblox hosts a number of roleplaying experiences that incorporate dark or controversial themes. For example, the experience *Psychotic Containment Facility* is set in an asylum environment in which users assume roles as patients attempting escape or staff responsible for containment. The experience carries a "Moderate" content maturity label and is accessible to users aged 13 and above.¹²

Psychotic Containment Facility also appears to host crime reenactments. For example, between February and March 2026, users reported a roleplay event themed around Jeffrey Epstein, allegedly including simulated trafficking scenarios and "auction"-style interactions, some of which were promoted on the *Psychotic Containment Facility* Discord server with more than 19,000 members (see Figure 9).¹³

¹⁰ "Most-played Roblox games worldwide as of January 2026, by all-time visits (in billions)," Statista, February 13, 2026. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1220905/roblox-most-visited-games/?srsltid=AfmBOoqY9UDNlf-Q1YmhkK6WOUyuSowe-P9z3401Pb3rgAYjOgjjvOrr>

¹¹ Tian Lim, "Roblox Genre Insights: What Will You Create Next?," Roblox, July 18, 2024. <https://about.roblox.com/newsroom/2024/07/roblox-genre-insights-what-will-you-create-next>

¹² "Psychotic Containment Facility," Roblox. <https://www.roblox.com/games/116900614682254/Psychotic-Containment-Facility>

¹³ The Gamin' Corner, "The DISTURBING Truth of Psychotic Containment Facility," YouTube, February 13, 2026. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsXUeABMiJo>

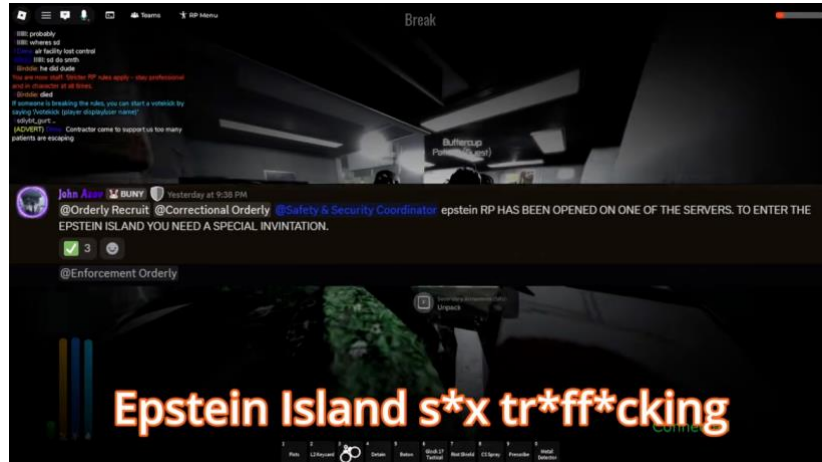


Figure 9. A message on the Psychotic Containment Facility Discord server announcing the opening of an Epstein-themed roleplay event¹⁴

In a post on the Roblox Developer Forum, a community member further noted that, despite repeated takedowns, new versions of the experience were uploaded under different names.¹⁴ As of April 2026, previously removed versions remained accessible, suggesting that content removal processes may not consistently result in full deletion (see Figure 10).

Moderation actions targeting individual experiences may also not capture associated Roblox accounts or communities. At the time of this study, a community group related to *Psychotic Containment Facility*, with more than 47,000 members, remain active. The creator's profile suggests long-term platform participation, use of paid features, and possession of exclusive digital assets (see Figure 11). While this does not in itself demonstrate intent or platform incentives, it highlights the persistence of creator-led ecosystems associated with problematic content.



Figure 10. User profile of the creator of Psychotic Containment Facility showing four available versions of the game as of April 2026

¹⁴ "Roblox Game Hosting Epstein Island Roleplays Deleted but Owner Reuploaded," DevForum, March 19, 2026. <https://devforum.roblox.com/t/urgent-roblox-game-hosting-epstein-island-roleplays-deleted-but-owner-reuploaded/4526893>

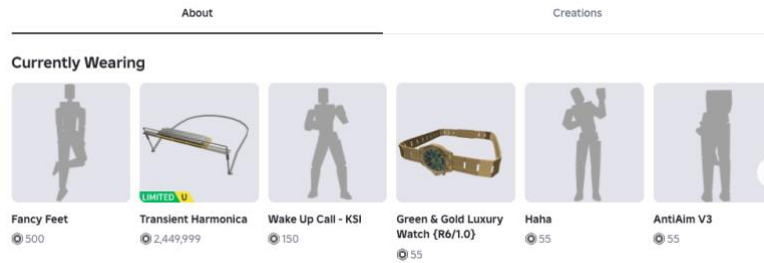


Figure 11. User profile of the creator of *Psychotic Containment Facility* showing their Limited 'Transient Harmonia' asset worth 2,449,999 Robux

We also identified roleplay scenarios involving users wearing uniforms resembling those of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and enacting deportation raids and related protests (see Figure 12). Some of this activity has taken place within popular lifesim environments such as Brookhaven, which simulate suburban settings and provide tools for everyday roleplay. Roblox has acknowledged that certain forms of this behaviour violate its community standards.¹⁵



Figure 12. TikTok clips of Roblox ICE raids and protests in Brookhaven

The cross-platform dissemination of Roblox content is a difficult content moderation problem. For instance, despite Roblox's removal of Diddy-related content after the publication of the Hindenburg Report, during this study we found on YouTube, tutorials demonstrating how to create Roblox avatars resembling Sean 'Diddy' Combs (Figure 13).¹⁶

¹⁵ Associated Press, "Young People Are Protesting ICE and Reenacting Immigration Raids in Online Gaming Platform Roblox," U.S. News, January 30, 2026. <https://www.usnews.com/news/business/articles/2026-01-30/young-people-are-protesting-ice-and-reenacting-immigration-raids-in-online-gaming-platform-roblox>

¹⁶ "How to make Diddy in roblox," YouTube, July 25, 2024. <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/aWvcA0hqksk>

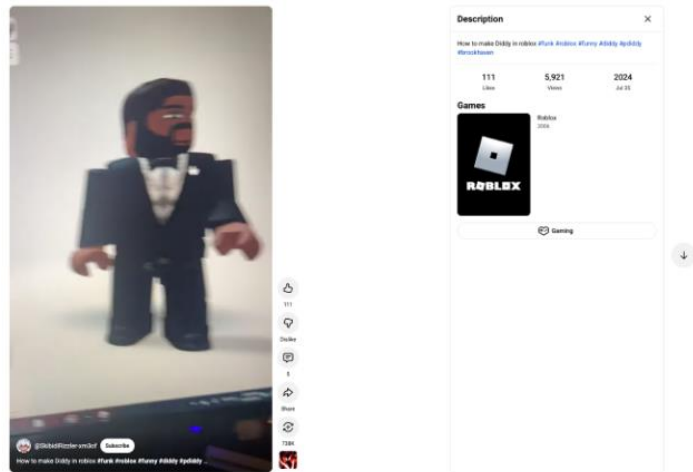


Figure 13. A YouTube video explaining how to make a Diddy avatar on Roblox, accessed in April 2026

Cross-platform pollination of violent crime reenactments is also a complex online safety problem, particularly when it feeds into communities and subcultures dedicated to harmful content and ideas.¹⁷ The Roblox experience *Blood Debt*,¹⁸ for example, has been associated with the so-called “True Crime Community” (TCC), an online subculture characterised by interest in mass violence. According to reports, the “Juggernaut” game mode in *Blood Debt* featured shooter-based gameplay that some users interpreted as simulating mass violence, contributing to the formation of fan communities around these scenarios.¹⁹

The Robloxification Effect

Content moderation approaches that focus on the removal of discrete instances of violative content may not fully address the role of platform design and recommendation systems in shaping the production and circulation of this material. In our exploratory study, we observed a broader pattern, which we term “Robloxification.” This describes how creators of real-world violent crime reenactment content frequently draw on gameplay templates that are already popular with younger users (e.g. Escape X, Survive X, X Simulator, X Obby; see Figures 14 and 15). These formats are widely used on Roblox and appear to align with the platform’s recommendation and engagement systems. As a result, creators may be incentivised to incorporate trending or sensational topics into familiar, repeatable game structures that are more likely to be surfaced and engaged with.

This gives rise to several potential effects. First, it allows for rapid transformation of real-world crimes into gamified entertainment. Second, crime recreation content may be formatted in ways that are optimise for visibility and interaction. Third, it may contribute to the normalisation and trivialisation of real-world violence.

¹⁷ Anti-Defamation League, “The Dark Side of Roblox: ‘Active Shooter Studios’ Create Maps Based on Real-Life Mass Shootings,” April 21, 2025. <https://www.adl.org/resources/article/dark-side-roblox-active-shooter-studios-create-maps-based-real-life-mass>

¹⁸ “Blood Debt,” Roblox. <https://www.roblox.com/games/78041891124723/Blood-Debt>

¹⁹ “More statements and answers regarding Juggernaut mode,” Reddit, September 11, 2025.

https://www.reddit.com/r/Blooddebt/comments/1ne21aj/more_statements_and_answers_regarding_juggernaut/ Blood Debt carries a “Moderate” content maturity label, limiting access to users aged 13 and above or younger users who have parental approval.

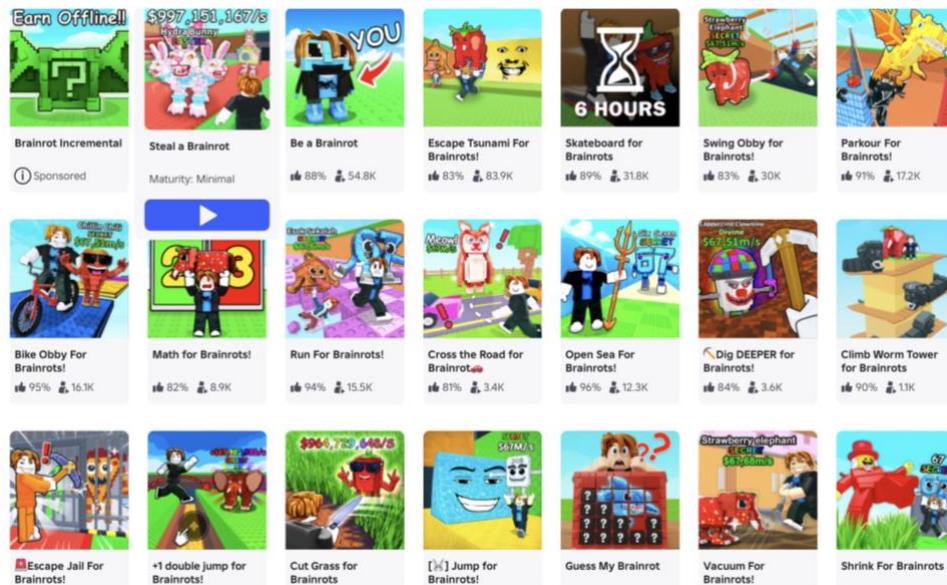


Figure 14. Roblox simulators, obbys, and escape games referencing brainrots, following popular Roblox game 'Steal a Brainrot'

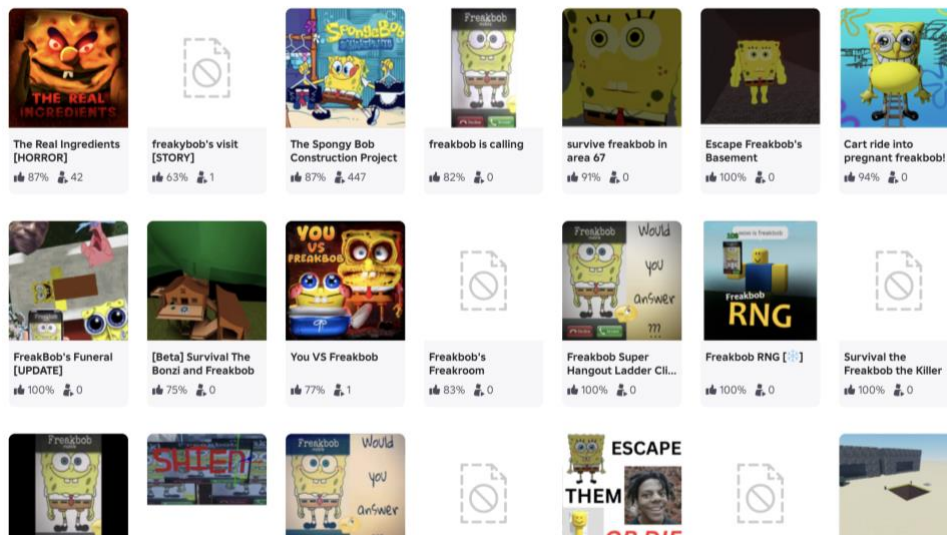


Figure 15. Roblox game experiences referencing FreakBob, a meme version of SpongeBob

Key Findings and Policy Implications

Play involving recreations of real-world events is not inherently harmful. Research suggests that such activities can support learning and help young people process complex social issues.²⁰ However, the findings in this report raise the question of whether Roblox contributes to online cultures in which real-world violence is

²⁰ Bessy Gomez, "Psychology professor explains how youth use Roblox to cope with ICE raids," UC Berkeley, March 6, 2026. <https://ls.berkeley.edu/news/psychology-professor-explains-how-youth-use-roblox-cope-ice-raids>

trivialised, normalised or sensationalised, and to what effect. We do not know what the impact engagement with real-world issues is when it is mediated through Roblox's platform systems—including gameplay mechanics and monetised assets.

Roblox's Community Standards explicitly prohibit the types of content documented in this report, including the recreation of real-world violent events and the glorification of perpetrators.²¹ The platform also states that it complies with Australia's Online Safety Act 2021 and employs a multilayered moderation system combining automated detection, human review, and user reporting. However, the recurring accessibility of this content—across avatars, experiences, and roleplay—suggests that existing moderation approaches may not fully address these issues. Even when content is removed quickly, its ability to appear and be accessed, however briefly, indicates a persistent gap.

Platform design may further contribute to these dynamics. Recommendation systems, gameplay conventions, and monetization models appear to incentivise the production of referential and sensational content. The expansion of private servers – which may escape keyword moderation – may be making these practices less visible. The content moderation challenge is further complicated by the transient, real-time nature of interaction on Roblox.

If Australia's *Online Safety Act* is primarily oriented toward explicit, exploitative, or instructional harm, it may not capture crime recreation content of the kind documented in this report. It may not address harms that operate through immersion, embodiment, and social interaction. This is problematic given Roblox, in its Terms of Use states it is not responsible for user-generated content unless it is explicitly covered by an applicable law.²²

From the findings in this report, we offer four key questions for consideration by Australian regulators and policymakers:

1. **Scope of the Online Safety Act:** Does the Act adequately cover harms to young people that can arise through virtual world reenactments and interactions?
2. **Platform accountability:** Are current content moderation approaches sufficient for enforcing stated rules?
3. **Parental supervision:** Do parents and caregivers have meaningful insight into children's experiences in virtual world environments?
4. **Research gaps:** What are the psychological, social and developmental impacts of encountering real world violent and sexual crimes themed content and reenactments?

²¹ "Community Standards," Roblox. <https://about.roblox.com/community-standards>

²² "Terms of Use," Roblox. <https://en.help.roblox.com/hc/en-us/articles/115004647846-Roblox-Terms-of-Use#appendix-f-australia>

Contact

This report was authored by the Governing Immersive Tech Project which includes Joanne E. Gray, Ben Egliston, Marcus Carter, Milica Stilinovic, Wenqi Tan and Sanika Vekhande from Media & Communication, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Sydney School of Architecture, Design and Planning at the University of Sydney.

Projectgit.com.au

sydney.edu.au

CRICOS 0026A

