

MAKING GAMING SAFER

YOUR ULTIMATE POWER-UP GUIDE

"Gaming is one of the most popular activities for children and young people, with around 61% of children aged 3-17 partaking in it."
(Ofcom, 2025)









Gaming can be a great way for children and young people to:

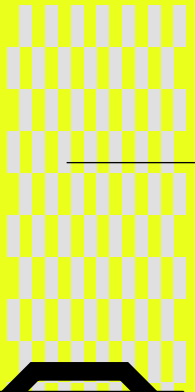
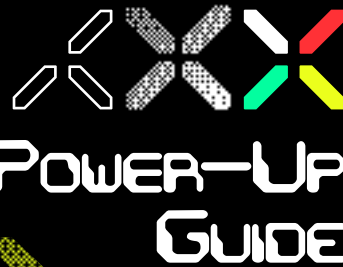
- ✕ Be creative.
- ✕ Be collaborative and work in a team.
- ✕ Improve social connections.
- ✕ Learn transferable skills like time management and problem solving.

It is evident that gaming has amazing benefits, but it also comes with risks for children and young people.






This might seem daunting, but there are plenty of steps you can take towards making gaming a safer experience for the children and young people in your care. Take a look at our top tips!

• TOP TIPS FOR SAFER GAMING •

-  **Have Open Conversations** – Speak non-confrontationally and frequently to the child in your care about their gaming habits. Ask them questions like, "what games do you like to play?" and "what makes that game so fun for you?". This will foster an environment of trust, allowing them to open up to you more.
-  **Check Game Content** – Although games come with an age rating, children and young people process themes differently, depending on their abilities. Take time to look at the games they're playing and assess if they are appropriate for the child in your care.
-  **Teach Suitable Online Behaviour** – Just like the real-world, how you act online matters! Let the child in your care know this, explaining that you shouldn't do anything online that you wouldn't offline.
-  **Utilise Parental Controls** – Most gaming consoles offer settings to restrict and tailor your child's gaming activity. Ensure you enable them effectively and monitor them.
-  **Discuss Safety Settings** – Have conversations with the child in your care about what they can do if another player makes them feel uncomfortable or upset. This includes blocking, reporting and muting other users. Also, you should ensure they know who their trusted adults are if they need to talk about something that has happened when gaming.
-  **Set Spending Limits** – Games will keep releasing new content, and children don't need to buy everything that comes out. Explain to the child in your care that they should always ask your permission when they want to buy something and should properly consider if it is really worth the money.
-  **Agree on Appropriate Screen Time** – Come to an agreement with the child in your care about how much time they should be spending gaming. This can differ on different days, and you should consider their personal needs. For example, some children feel more comfortable socialising through gaming than in person.
-  **Explain That Personal Information Should Stay Private** – Children and young people should be taught that their personal, identifiable information is very special and should not be shared online. They should always consider why a person or platform needs their details if they are asked to share them. If they are unsure of the answer, they should ask a trusted adult for advice. This includes their full name, age, school, address, birthday and phone number.



• WHAT ARE THE RISKS? •

-  **Online Communication** – Most games facilitate communication between users, whether it's using a headset to speak verbally or messaging via chat. This can leave children vulnerable to issues such as cyberbullying and grooming.
-  **Stranger Interaction** – Gaming is often more fun when playing with others, which can lead children and young people to play with strangers online if their friends don't play the same games.
-  **In-Game Purchases** – Extra content is often pushed as essential for maximising the gaming experience or for raising reputation amongst peers. However, these come with a price tag and children and young people are more prone to falling for these flashy items. They come in various forms, including loot boxes, battle passes and character cosmetics.
-  **Inappropriate Content** – Some games will have themes that are not age-appropriate for certain children or young people. Additionally, an age-rating for a game can be inaccurate due to user-generated content, such as Roblox.
-  **Sharing Personal Information** – Having a shared interest with others online can give children and young people a false sense of trust with strangers, making them think they have a real friendship. This can lead them to oversharing their personal details such as the usernames for their other gaming and social media accounts, their location or their school.



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