



May, 2017



“The family is the nucleus of civilization.”

Keeping Children Safe During On-line Gaming

Summertime will surely provide our children with more time to engage in one of their favorite activities—on-line gaming. Children and young people love to play video games and with access to online gaming more obtainable, the risks posed are potentially far wider and greater. Below is some practical advice for parents and care givers on keeping children safe during online gaming.

But before the advice, did you know that:

34% of 3-4 year olds play games on a tablet device;

38% of parents are worried about aspects of their child’s game playing;

Almost 1/3 of children play online against people they haven’t met in person?

Parents have great cause to worry and therefore, need to monitor the child’s activity on-line.

Some Safety Tips to Enable your Child to be a **Safe Online Gamer:**

- 1) Make sure your computer has an activated security feature such as a firewall, anti-spyware software of anti-virus software. You may also want to switch your pop up blocker to “on”.
- 2) Tell your child to come to you if any messages or icons appear that make them feel uncomfortable or they are unsure where (or who) they came from.
- 3) Teach your child how to block or report cases of cyberbullying. Tell them not to engage with the bully.
- 4) Check that your child’s username does not give away any personal information—e.g. name, location, age, date of birth or any other personal information.
- 5) Encourage them not to send their personal details to fellow gamers.
- 6) Never let your child use a current picture of themselves—encourage them to use an animated avatar.
- 7) Read and understand the ratings for the games that your children are playing or involved in. Various game sites have multiple games with a variety of different ratings so check the ins and outs.
- 8) Try to have your child’s computer/console in a room that is used frequently by yourself and other family members. This will help you monitor your child’s online movements.

