



Online Gaming Safety



Although the world of gaming offers children numerous advantages, it can also present parents with a number of challenges.



Maureen Griffin from MGMS Training is sharing her tips regarding your child's gaming.

- Tip 1: Make sure it's age appropriate
- Tip 2: Play Together
- Tip 3: Keep the console in a family room
- Tip 4: Set Time Limits
- Tip 5: Talk to your child
- Tip 6: Parental Controls
- Tip 7: Take a break

Tip No.1

Make sure it's age appropriate

Make sure the game is age appropriate. Just as DVD's and Blue Rays have age ratings based on the content of the film, so do games. Check out the Pan European Game Information website (www.pegi.info/ie) which provides practical advice to parents in addition to game ratings and reviews.

Also bear in mind, that some online games offer the downloading of additional software which can alter the content of the game and ultimately its age rating.

Tip No.2

Play Together

You may not like this one –but I think it is important to play together!!!

This will give you a greater sense of the content of the game and what your child likes about it. Violent games can be conducive to role modelling as children learn that the perpetrators in the game are not punished, the targets of violence show little pain and there are few overall long term negative consequences.

It is therefore important to be involved and highlight real life consequences for in game activities.

Tip No.3

Keep the console in a family room

Keep the game console in a family room. This will enable you to keep a closer eye on what games are played and will also allow for family game activities to take place.

Tip No.4

Set Time Limits

Games typically create reward cycles making it difficult for players to leave the game.

I am sure you have all heard your child ask for **“5 more minutes”** when they are told it’s time for dinner!!!!

It is therefore important to set time limits –depending on the internet connection that you have you may be able to set time limits for specific devices from your control panel section. Ask your Internet Provider for more details.

Tip No.5

Talk to your child

If your child is playing online –talk to them about their friends, about what is okay and not okay to share online and show them how to block people/report issues in case they have to.

Tip No.6

Parental Controls

Access parental controls for your child's console –here you can set restrictions on the age rating of games that are played, time limits and who they can play with. Parental controls for the main gaming consoles can be accessed here.

Xbox 360 and Xbox Live

support.xbox.com/en-IE/xbox-360/security/xbox-live-parental-control

PlayStation PS4

https://support.us.playstation.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/5097/~/ps4-parental-controls

Wii and Wii Mini

en-americas-support.nintendo.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/3805/p/604/c/628/session/L3RpYWUvMTQwNzkzOTA1My9zaWQvQlBrWU9LX2w=

Nintendo DSi, Nintendo DSi XL

en-americas-support.nintendo.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/4193/p/696/c/184

Tip No.7

Take a break

Ironically, social media which is meant to make connecting with others easier all too often distances children from their families and parents in particular.

You may all be sitting in the one room but find that one child is on their phone, another is on a tablet, another is on a game console and although there is **quietness**, this impacts on quality family time.

Therefore balancing entertainment is important so that the whole family can engage in one activity together be it a movie night, a walk, or simply dinner –but making sure it is uninterrupted by technology.