

Providing Healthy Alternatives

We have looked at different activities for teens to do as an alternative to spending most of their time on-line. This document looks at combining why they engage in on-line play with alternative activities to stimulate the same senses and rewards. We know it is good to establish a health balance between on-line and off-line activities but it can be hard to identify the right activity for your child.

**Ask your child why they engage in on-line gaming. What do they get from it?
Why do they enjoy it?**

The main reasons tend to be the following:



**Stress
release**



For fun



A way to relax



Social



Boredom



Escapism

Once you know your child's reasons you can link their reason to an alternative off-line activity.



Reasons for Gaming

Alternative inside activities

Alternative outside activities



For fun

Board games, baking
getting creative

Playing Sports, watching live sports
attending an event, going with
friends to a theme park/activity
centre, visiting a relative
volunteering



A way to relax

Reading a book, listening to music,
cooking, having a bath, getting creative,
drawing/colouring, meditation

Running, cycling, gardening
climbing



Social

Board games
Card games

Meet up with friends
Join a sports team or local club
Volunteer



Boredom

Learning a new skill, taking a course,
playing board games, getting creative,
making something

Joining a club, taking lessons in
something, making up challenges
to do, taking up a form of exercise.
volunteering in the community



Form of escapism

Art, listening to music, doing something
creative, reading, playing an instrument

Taking part in a sporting activity,
running, cycling, hiking, climbing
gardening, doing yoga



Creative

Drawing cartoons or pictures,
constructing something, designing and/
or making something, writing, learning
a new skill, playing chess, cooking

Learning a new skill – taking a class,
doing outside art

Substituting online play for offline alternatives.

Often the games young people play can easily be played offline too.

- If your child enjoys FIFA, introduce them to Subbuteo or table football
- If they enjoy solitaire, introduce them to card games
- If they enjoy challenges, take them to an adventure park or indoor obstacle course
- If they like character games get them to create their own character or make a super cape and react their own version
- If they like shooting games, set up a shooting range using nerf guns outside or take them paintballing
- If they enjoy sports style games, get them involved in clubs, a local sports team. Teach them golf or pool.



In-app purchases.

Rather than buy a virtual character or item, get them earning their rewards.
Complete a task for money and they can save up for a new game or reward.
This makes the effort of tasks worthwhile AND teaches them the value of money.

