

# Talking to your child

**It is important to keep open and honest conversations with your child. We often talk about the potential harms of smoking, drinking etc but we do not always cover gaming and gambling.**

Here we have identified some useful tips and reminders to help you have these conversations.

## Chatting to your child

**Listen to your child's opinions without judging -**  
 Understanding what gaming means to your child can help you to view it in a different perspective. In our research young people felt their parents didn't understand gaming and what it meant to them so ask them to tell you to help you understand.

### Come to a joint agreement over gaming

- Share your opinions and listen to their opinions. Young people want to feel heard and, as they are striving for independence want to feel they have some control. Look to come to an agreement everybody is happy with.

**Remember young people aren't prepared to balance emotion and logic to make healthy choices** The rational side of their brain is still not fully developed, they lead with their emotional

side of the brain which means their arguments may not seem rational.

**Establish general safety measures** and set general ground rules for ALL the family to keep to.

**Speak openly about the dangers** and talk about the topics just as you would with sex, alcohol, and online safety issues. Ask them what they feel the dangers are so they can self identify.

**Set boundaries** – Do they need to complete chores/homework/work before they can game. Should they enjoy time with their families at weekends as well as game.



## Topics

**Joint agreements over gaming** – To create a happy harmonious household agree on how long they can game for, what needs to be done before gaming, how much they can spend on in-app purchases etc. As they start to earn their own money, they may feel they can decide what they should spend so look to educate them on the value of money.

**Look into their interests** – What provides the same emotions as gaming? What else can they do to socialise with their friends or enjoy some down time without having to think?

**Teach them about the odds of gambling**  
– Young people can be dazzled by the prospect of winning, with adverts for gambling showing better lifestyles, however the odds for this are slim. Have discussions and look at the odds of winning a game or of getting what they want from a loot box. Look into the odds of winning the lottery vs being struck by lightning etc to help them to put odds into perspective.

**Look at what else they could spend their money on**

– Rather than spending money on online gaming purchases, look at other alternatives; a day out, new clothes, attending a sporting event, saving for driving lessons etc. Sometimes showing them other alternatives can help them make rational choices.

**Talk to your kids about their digital footprint**

– how everything is permanent, what they say, what they post etc. Don't use it as a scare tactic but helping them to understand that future employers may look at their social sites before interviewing them can educate them with lecturing them.

## Helpful hints

- Work with your child to help them to understand online activities without going too far
- Understand their technology, the apps and websites they visit. It's ok to ask them to tell you but it helps if you know what you are talking about.
- Use settings to turn off the Wi-Fi at certain times so your children can't play/go online
- Set rules with agreed consequences and be consistent enforcing them.
- Punish the behaviour you don't like seeing but remember to reward the behaviour you do like to see.
- **REMEMBER** they want independence but also guidance, keep them engaged and encourage them to think of consequences and establishing a healthy balance.

