

# Why do people game?

Why do young people enjoy on-line gaming so much? There are many different reasons why people choose to game and what they feel they get from participating in this activity. Here we explore some of those reasons to help you understand why it is so popular and why your child enjoys spending so much time participating.

Gaming provides young people with an escape from reality, the chance to create a world where they can be in control, which may be better than the world they live in.

If your child has experienced a trauma, such as a bereavement, separation, parent divorce, school issues, bullying, moving to a new area they may use gaming as a comfort as well as a chance to take a break from what is happening in their off-line world.

Gaming can be a great stress release for young people, whether that is school stresses, a break from homework, a release from daily life stresses or issues over relationships, taking time out to not think or immerse in an activity can be helpful.

## “In the game I can be someone else”

For some children who find it difficult to interact socially or are being bullied, playing with others on-line can be their social activity, where they can feel safe and part of something, which they can't get in the real world.

Some children find making friends easier when it is not face to face, they feel less judged on looks or the way they are as other gamers are only interested in playing.

For others playing on-line provide them with a form of entertainment, they enjoy playing, winning and chatting to others. For them this provides what watching films does for others.

## “When I play it feels like real life”



Gaming can engage people mentally, by providing challenges, different levels and puzzles it is a brain simulant. People enjoy the challenges they provide and the thrill of working it out.

## **“I like playing with my mates”**

It provides an amazing adrenalin rush, a huge buzz which they can't seem to get from other forms of entertainment. Games allow the player opportunities to play with a number of people at the same time, to work together and create, basically, a virtual playdate.

## **“When I win I feel excited”**

Games can encourage friendly competition, where players can have fun and chat together and provide something for players which is stimulating and allows them to be creative.

It is good to think about what gaming and on-line play brings to your child/ren and why they choose to engage in this activity. Looking at it from their point of view can provide a different perspective and understanding and encouraging the positive aspects can help disperse issues with your child. Think about your own choices of activities you choose to do to relax, socialise or as a form of entertainment, are there similarities?

Gaming can be a positive thing. Ensuring that you set controls for lengths of play, who they can talk to, what they can access can ensure that gaming and on-line play can be a safe and enjoyable aspect.