

10 PARENTING TIPS

for dealing with video games at home.

KNOW THE GAME AND ITS CONTENT

You can check the classification on www.classification.gov.au and read about how suitable the game is for children on www.commonssensemedia.org. Have a play yourself or watch some YouTube footage of the game to get a good idea about the content that your child is exposed to.

SET APPROPRIATE LIMITS

Limits are different for every family. In general, children under 12 generally need consistent boundaries and rules. Children over 12 need to be involved in making the decision on what is appropriate for the family.

MONITOR THE START AND FINISH

These are key moments in terms of managing gaming. Discuss the type of behaviours you want to see in those moments. Discuss the consequences for not sticking to the agreed rules and boundaries.

EXPECT PROBLEMS

Children often don't have the skills yet to fully self-control and moderate their gaming. These skills need to be practiced and refined over time. Don't expect your child to be able to fully moderate their gaming. They will need your help and guidance.

AVOID FREE MOBILE GAMES

Free games usually force micro-transactions or uncontrolled advertisements. If you like a game, pay a few dollars to purchase the premium version.

PLAY WITH FRIENDS

Video games can be a wonderful 'add-on' to your child's friendships. Use video games to strengthen friendships, but be aware that they don't reduce the amount of real life, interpersonal connections your child is exposed to. Screen-based play is not as valuable as real life play.

KEEP GAMES OUT OF THE BEDROOM

Games in the bedroom may lead to reduced sleep which has a wide impact on most other aspects of life, including: wellbeing, academic performance and physical health. So keep the gaming consoles in the common areas of the house.

BE AWARE OF CYBERSAFETY RISKS

Online games allow children to play with others. In some games these others can be strangers who may not have the best interests of your child at heart. There is also the risk of foul language, bullying and identity theft.

SET PARENTAL CONTROLS

It's easy to set parental controls but we often forget or ignore it until it's too late. A quick google search will guide you on how to set these parental control on your device.

GET HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

Early intervention is proven to give you the best chance of successfully dealing with any issues. Seek help if you feel that gaming is causing conflicts in your family.