

Factsheet

Five things to understand: Children playing online games

- 1. So Many Games:** There are so many online games designed for specific audiences and purposes (including entertainment, education, and commercial gain).
- 2. Suitability of Games:** Games are classified and regulated based on perceived risks and age appropriateness, primarily due to concerns about exposure to violence and adult content. Adults should evaluate the suitability of games for children by reviewing recommendations, accessing reviews, examining data collection practices, and using privacy settings.
- 3. Game Environments:** Games can be played solo, against computer-generated players, within controlled networks with known players, or in uncontrolled networks with unknown players. Know and be comfortable with how children are playing.
- 4. Online Safety:** Children should be as cautious online as they are with strangers in the physical world. Young children may lack the awareness to identify safe and unsafe situations online. Talk with your child about who they're playing with.
- 5. Digital Identity:** Children's gameplay contributes to their digital identity. Children should be aware of how identities can be constructed online, how to verify the authenticity of invitations, and what personal information is okay to share.



Consider:

- Do you know what games your child is playing online?
- Do you know which friends your child is playing with online?
- Can you play online games with your child to help them learn about online safety?

Want to know more? Look out for the chapter from Lisa Kervin, Jessica Mantei, Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett, Dylan Cliff and Rebecca Ng entitled “Children’s Digital Literacy: Interdisciplinary insights for informed, productive, and safe practices” in the *International Handbook of Research in Digital Literacies*.