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# ONLINE GAMING TIP CARD

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For children and young adults, online games can be educational and provide interaction with others. However, it is important to recognize the risks associated with online games and take steps to make sure your kids are staying safe online.

## DID YOU KNOW

- Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of teens play video games online or on their phone.<sup>1</sup>
- 16 percent of Internet users who have experienced online harassment said their most recent incident occurred on an online game.<sup>2</sup>
- 91 percent of boys and 70 percent of girls have access to a gaming console.<sup>3</sup>

## SIMPLE TIPS

- **Keep a clean machine.** Gaming systems are simply computers with software that needs to be kept up-to-date. Take time to make sure all the online gaming devices in your house have the latest security software, web browser, and operating system.
- **Protect your personal information.** Keep your and your child's full name, Social Security numbers, account numbers, and passwords private, as well as specific information about yourself, such as your full name, address, birthday, and even vacation plans.
- **Protect your privacy.** Some online games offer geo-tagging functionality that can reveal your or your child's exact location. If possible, disable these geo-tagging features. Do not use a web cam or voice chat option when playing an online game.
- **Make passwords long and strong.** Be sure your kids have strong passwords for their gaming accounts. Passwords should be at least eight characters long and a mix of upper and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols. Parents should know their children's passwords.
- **Empower your children to handle problems.** Many gaming systems allow players to interact with other people across the globe. Make sure your children know how to block or report a cyberbully. Tell them to keep a record of the conversation if they are being harassed and encourage them not to engage the bully. You can also notify a game's publisher or online service about the offender.

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<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Center, "[Mobile Access Shifts Social Media Use and Other Online Activities](#)", April 2015. <sup>2</sup> Pew Research Center, "[Online Harassment](#)", October 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Pew Research Center, "[Teens, Social Media & Technology Overview 2015](#)", April 2015.

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Stop.Think.Connect. is a national public awareness campaign aimed at empowering the American public to be safer and more secure online. The Campaign's main objective is to help you become more aware of growing cyber threats and arm you with the tools to protect yourself, your family and your community. For more information visit [www.dhs.gov/stopthinkconnect](http://www.dhs.gov/stopthinkconnect).



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Security

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