



Gooseberry Alert 29

Online Gaming – How can you play online responsibly?

Please share your Gooseberry Alert content with students, staff and parents.



All that we ask in return and in the spirit of modelling positive digital citizenship: when sharing our content, please acknowledge 'Gooseberry Planet Limited' as the source of your advice. Thank you.

Gooseberry Student 'Discussion' of the week

Online games allow us to connect, create and communicate with each other like never before.

When played responsibly, **online games can be an enjoyable way to spend time online with trusted friends.** There are some awesome online games but playing them can also lead us to behave and react to things, in ways that might upset or offend others. It is important to be aware of the types of online games **you** play and how **you** connect, create and communicate with others when you play them.

Playing online games should be fun but it must be safe.



The Big Question: How can you make online gaming an enjoyable and safer experience for yourself and for others?

Discuss the following to help reach your conclusion:

- How do you know if a game is suitable for you to play?
- What can tempt you to play online games that you know you shouldn't?
- Suggest 3 risks of playing online games that are not meant for you?
- How can people upset others when playing online games?
- Explain why you think some people might want to upset or create trouble in online games?
- What do you do if you begin to get upset or angry, playing online games?
- How can you help make the time spent playing online games enjoyable?
- Suggest 5 ways to help stay safer when playing online games.

Key Messages: Playing online games that are suitable for your age can help make your gaming experiences more enjoyable. If you start to feel angry, upset or frustrated it is ok to take a break and give yourself time to calm down. Playing in a group, made up of trusted friends that you know in real life, can help you stay safer online.

Please share with students.

Gooseberry Teacher 'Dilemma' of the week



Perhaps one of the biggest dilemmas of modern teaching arises when colleagues are making decisions about the **level of their personal and professional presence online.** This includes: social networking, online gaming and connecting with people online. The internet is a community and, like any environment where people interact with each other, **situations can arise that may leave school staff particularly vulnerable.**

What do you think? Should school staff have a personal presence online?



Taking time to **raise awareness amongst staff about their personal and professional responsibilities,** can help colleagues make better decisions about their presence online. It can also help them manage and protect their information online. Having a 'Social Networking Policy' or similar guidelines/expectations can help colleagues navigate their life online and may reduce the risk of problems.



Key Messages: Share practical tips with staff about protecting and creating a positive presence and identity online. Share good practice and demonstrate how colleagues can secure online accounts. Offer advice about managing personal information online. Take time to review the policies and expectations shared with staff about their online presence, relating to their professional responsibilities. Be positive about how staff use online communities for their professional development.

Please share with staff.

Gooseberry Parent 'Tips' of the week

It can be difficult to manage and understand your child's life online, including the types of online games they are playing. Amongst other things, the **most popular online games often contain inappropriate content, have features that tempt players to keep playing or that allow players to communicate and connect freely with anyone** who might be playing at the time.

As a parent, you have a responsibility to help **manage and monitor your child's online gaming and promote a healthy balance between time on and offline**. Online games **should be fun and can be a great way for you and your child to interact with each other and with trusted friends, but they must be played safely**.

Some important things to ask yourself...

What online games is my child playing?

Who are they playing the games with?

When and **where** are the games being played and for **how** long?

Is playing online interfering with daily life?

Am I happy for my child to be playing the games?

Our Top Tips for making informed and safer decisions with your child when online gaming:

- Ensure that your child plays games that are appropriate for them. Using age guidelines can be helpful when making your decision.
- If the game requires an online profile, check what personal information is required and how this is shared. When creating a gaming profile, create usernames and avatars to help protect your child's identity online.
- Manage or consider disabling in-game chat; unplug headphones and microphones.
- Take time, with your child, to secure and manage privacy settings within the game or on the device.
- Take time to read the reviews and play the games for yourself to see what they are about.

In the news... In the news... In the news... In the news... In the news...

App Alert: Fortnite – Battle Royale (PEGI Rating 12, App store 12+)

Fortnite? an interactive, multiplayer military themed, online game where players go PvP (Player vs Player) to compete and battle against each other for ultimate survival and victory.

It's no surprise that this 'free', downloadable, online, 'survival of the fittest' adventure game is the current favourite amongst younger gamers. It is available for all popular consoles and mobile devices and if your child is not playing it, then their friends probably are.

Problems are emerging with **inappropriate in-game chat and contact, costly in-app purchases, wellbeing issues and its addictive game play**. These are common concerns for many online games.

Stay alert for our helpful advice, including tips for safer game play.

Want to know more? Visit us as www.gooseberryplanet.com

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