



everychild.one voice.™



WWW.ESRB.ORG

FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE

Video Games, Parental Controls and Online Safety

Our daily schedules have never been busier, but it's important for parents to make the time to talk with their kids about what's going on in their lives.

On the back of this page is a discussion guide that parents and their children should use to help structure a conversation about the computer and video games that are played in the household. We've provided a framework, but the goal is to have an honest dialogue through which parents learn more about their children's games, and children learn more about their parents' concerns with respect to playing games, particularly when playing them online.

Parental controls are a great tool, but no tool can replace an informed and involved parent. So set aside some time to talk, and do so regularly. Perhaps you'll even consider arranging a regular "Family Video Game Night" where the whole family plays together.

Video games can and should be fun for the entire family. After all, involvement and communication are vital to good parenting.

FAMILY **DISCUSSION** GUIDE

Video Games, Parental Controls and Online Safety

Favorite Games	ESRB Rating*	Content Descriptors*
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Games on the Wish List	ESRB Rating*	Content Descriptors*
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

* To find rating information for a specific game, visit www.esrb.org, or download the ESRB ratings search widget at www.esrb.org/widget to make access to ratings information that much easier.

Points for Discussion

- Why are these titles your child's favorites? What about them is especially fun, interesting or challenging?
- What's appealing about the games listed on the Wish List?
- Which rating categories are OK for your child to play, which ones require permission, and which ones are off-limits altogether? Are there specific content descriptors that are off-limits? (*Visit www.esrb.org for information on ESRB ratings and content descriptors.*)
- Are the parental controls set on your family's video game system(s)?
 - If so, what is the highest rating allowed? Are there other controls set up, such as restrictions on chat, Internet access, amount of time, or whom your child can play with online?
 - If not, are there house rules regarding which games are allowed and when and how long they can be played (i.e., number of hours each day, and/or only after homework and chores are done)?
- Are any of the games listed above online-enabled (able to be played over an Internet connection with other players)? If so:
 - Should your child receive your permission before playing a game online?
 - Are there rules regarding whom your child can play with online?
 - Do you know which of the above games (if any) allow for player chat and which type (text, audio, video)?
 - Has your child ever seen or heard inappropriate content from other players when playing a game online?
 - Does your child know what to do, and whom to contact, if being bullied online by another player?
 - Does your child know never to give out personal information to anyone online?