

Parents' guide:

Gaming advice to support pre-teens

internet
matters.org



What to think about:



Ways games can benefit children

If your child is a keen gamer, **steer them towards games that will help them to develop life skills** like problem-solving or supplement their learning.



Be aware of game content and themes

It's important to **stay on top of what themes are featured in the games** they play so that you can be aware of how these might influence their view of the real world.

What to talk about

Discuss what they enjoy playing

Have regular conversations about the games they play so you can create an environment where they feel they can come to you if something goes wrong.

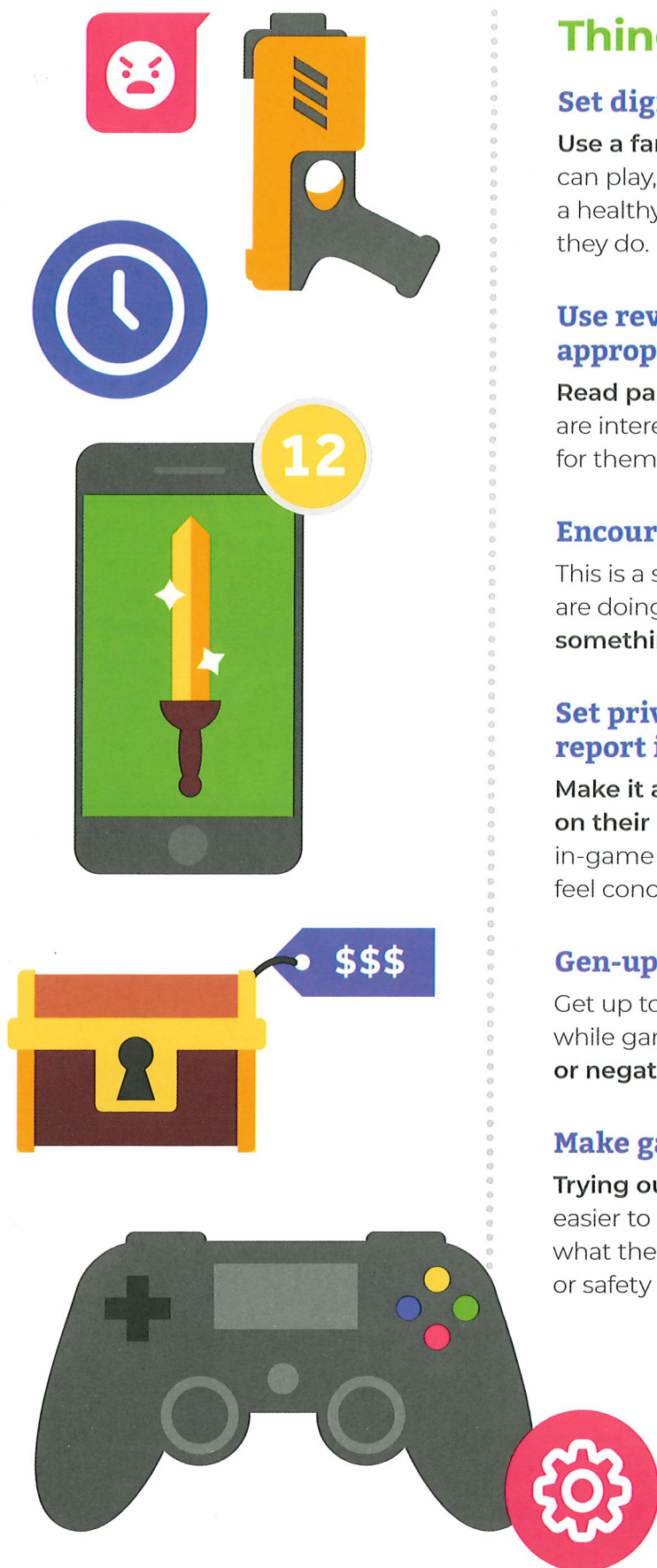
Talk about potential risks

Help them understand the **importance of keeping personal details private** and tell them that not everyone online is who they say they are.

How to cope when things go wrong

If they see something that upsets them or are targeted by another player in a game, it's important to talk about how to handle this situation. **Advise them to come and talk to you or a trusted adult for support.**





Things to do

Set digital boundaries

Use a **family agreement to set rules** on what they can play, when and how long for to help them strike a healthy balance between gaming other activities they do.

Use reviews and sites to pick appropriate games

Read **parents and expert reviews of games** they are interested in to help you choose the right games for them to play.

Encourage them to play in shared spaces

This is a simple way to stay engaged in what they are doing while gaming and **step in if you feel something's not quite right**.

Set privacy settings and learn how to report in-game abuse

Make it a habit to **review their privacy settings on their account** and teach them where to report in-game abuse so they can take action if they feel concerned.

Gen-up on the lingo

Get up to speed on how players communicate while gaming to **spot the signs of cyberbullying or negative behaviour**.

Make gaming a family affair

Trying out new games with children makes it easier to relate and can give you a better sense of what the game is about and prompt conversation or safety measures to help them stay safe.