

## *Safety While Gaming*

Over the past 6 months our Scouting program has changed as to how we do meetings, outside activities and recruitment. With some of these changes have come some really inventive and creative ways to engage and or reengage our members. One is gaming. "Gaming" is playing games online, by yourself or on your mobile device with friends.

The internet allows youth to play video games with friends around the block or strangers around the world. Youth and adults from all over the globe can now convene in cyberspace to compete in online martial arts matches or band together for a fantasy quest. As games become more realistic and playing partners can be anonymous strangers, risks have increased. Scout leaders and parents have concerns; tools are available to increase safety.

### Safety while Gaming in your Units

1. Block, report, and mute people who troll or bully in games
2. Take short breaks when gaming for extended times
3. Do not share personal information with others in games
4. Avoid in-game purchases like loot boxes
5. Check the age rating of games
6. Report unwanted messages (DM or Private Chats)
7. Provide adult supervision

If your pack, troop, crew, or ship is planning Gaming parties as part of your recruiting efforts or unit activities, use those techniques to ensure safety.

Visit <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/safety-moments/digital-safety-and-online-scouting-activities/> for Scouting guidelines on virtual and online platforms and keeping youth safe during online activities and meetings.