GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY DELHI
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION: SCHOOL BRANCH
OLD SECRETARIAT: DELHI-110054

No. DE. 23(564)/Sch.Br./2021/525

Dated: 29/09/2021

CIRCULAR

Sub: Advisory to Parents and Teachers on Children's Safe Online Gaming.

In the new era of technology, online gaming is very popular with children because of the challenges it brings to the players which excite them and making them play more which can lead to addiction. Online games can either be played on the internet itself or from another computer network. Online games can almost be found anywhere on any gaming platforms such as PC's, consoles, and mobile devices. Online gaming can be accessed with the use of a phone or a tablet which is a common factor in online game addiction because children can easily play games anywhere anytime affecting their time for their school and social life. Furthermore, the closure of schools due to pandemic has increased use of mobile and internet by children.

However, online gaming has many downsides. Playing online games leads to a serious gaming addiction which has been considered as a gaming disorder. The game is designed in a way that each level is more complicated and complex than the previous one. This causes a player to push themselves to the limit in order to progress in the game. Therefore, playing online games with no restriction and self-limits leads many players to become addicted and are eventually diagnosed with gaming disorder. The gaming companies also emotionally compel the child to buy more levels and almost force in-app purchases.

In this regard, Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education has recommended an advisory to parents and teachers for wider circulation and educating them for necessary action ensuring effective use in overcoming all online gaming downsides with the associated mental and physical stress to children. The advisory is enclosed herewith for compliance.

Therefore, all the Heads of Schools under Directorate of Education are hereby directed to circulate the above mentioned advisory among all the parents and teachers

to safeguard the students from downsides of online gaming.

This issues with the approval of the competent authority.

Encl: As above.

DDE (School)

Heads of all categories of schools of Delhi through DEL-E.

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Copy to:-

1. PS to Pr. Secretary (Education).
2. PA to Director (Education).
3. All RDEs/DDEs (District/Zonal) through DEL-E.
4. DDE (ASB/PSB).
5. System Analyst for uploading on the website.
6. Guard File.

OSD (School)

स्कूल शिक्षा और साक्षरता विभाग
Department of School Education & Literacy

Advisory to Parents and Teachers on Children's Safe Online Gaming

Don'ts:

- Do not allow in-game purchases without parental consent. To avoid in app purchases; OTP based payment methods may be adopted as per RBI's guidelines.
- Avoid credit/debit cards registration on apps for subscriptions. Place an upper limit on expenditure per transaction.
- Do not let children buy directly from the laptop or mobile they use for gaming.
- Advise children not to download software and games from unknown websites.
- Tell them to be beware of clicking links, images and pop-ups in the websites as they may contain a virus and harm the computer, and may contain age-inappropriate content.
- Advise them not to give personal information over the Internet while downloading games.
- They should never share personal information with people in games and on gaming profile.
- Advise them not to communicate with strangers, including adults, through web cam, private messaging or online chat, as it increases the risk of contact from online abusers, or bullying from other players.
- Advise them against engaging in game for long hours without taking a break considering health aspects and addiction.

Do's:

- While playing online games, if something wrong happened, stop immediately and take a screenshot (using the "print screen" button on the keyboard) and report it.
- Help your child to protect their privacy online, get them to use a screen name (avatar) that does not reveal their real name.
- Use antivirus/spyware programs and configure web browsers securely using firewall.
- Activate parental controls and safety features on the device or in the app or browser as it helps restrict access to certain content and limit spending on in-game purchases.
- Notify if a stranger tries to start a conversation about something inappropriate or requests personal information.
- Check the age rating of any games your child is playing.
- In case of a bullying, encourage not to respond and keep a record of the harassing messages and report the behaviour to the game site administrator/block, mute or 'unfriend' that person from their players list, or turn off the in-game chat function.
- Play alongside your child to get a better sense of how they are handling their personal information and who they are communicating with.
- Help your child understand that some features in online games are used to encourage more play and spending. Talk to them about gambling, what it is and its consequences both online and in the physical world.
- Always ensure that your child accesses internet from a computer placed in the family space.
- Keep your eyes open for:
    - Unusually secretive behaviour, mostly related to their online activity
    - A sudden increase in the time they spend online, especially social media
    - They seem to change screens on their device when approached
    - They become withdrawn or angry, after using the internet or sending text messages
    - Their device suddenly has many new phone numbers and email contacts.
- Install internet gateway at home which has features like monitoring, logging and controlling the types of content that the children can access.
- Teachers need to keep an eye on falling grades and social behaviour of the students.
- If teachers observe something that may seem suspicious or alarming, they should inform the school authorities immediately.
- Teachers should ensure that children are sensitized about the pros and cons of the internet from time to time.
- Teachers should train students for secure configuration of web browsers & web applications.

TO REPORT ANY UNTOWARD INCIDENT, USE THE FOLLOWING LINKS:

National Helpline- https://cybercrime.gov.in/Webform/Helpline.aspx
Statewise Nodal Officers- https://cybercrime.gov.in/Webform/Crime_NodalGrivanceList.aspx
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