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# E-SAFETY UPDATE



LIONHEART  
EDUCATIONAL  
TRUST

## HALF TERMLY UPDATE

Welcome to our latest update! Lionheart Educational Trust is now sending out an e-safety update every half term, prior to the school holidays, in order to support parents and students.

This update will feature resources by the National Online Safety organization;

## WHAT PARENTS AND CARERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ONLINE DATING AND RELATIONSHIPS

Online dating has seen a sharp rise in popularity over the last few years – especially in 2020, when the boat was well and truly rocked for all of us. Apps like MyLOL and Wink have drawn a huge userbase of young people – and it's not hard to see why. With their sleek design and ease of use, the promise of finding love with but a swipe of your finger is an appealing one indeed.

It is not, however, all sunshine and rainbows. While these apps have helped bring together many couples who may never have met otherwise, lax security measures and bad actors can turn these apps into a hotbed of #OnlineSafety risks. This guide investigates these risks and makes sure you're equipped to keep your child safe in the world of online dating.

## WHAT PARENTS AND EDUCATORS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TEKKEN 8

Since they were first played in arcades on oversized machines, fighting games have found their way not only into our homes via consoles and PCs, but also – in the case of franchises like Street Fighter and Mortal Kombat – into the pop culture elite, with merchandise and movie adaptations. The most recent entrant to the arena is Tekken 8, which recently launched to critical acclaim.

With a cast of colourful combatants, Tekken offers an adrenalin hit of fast-paced fisticuffs and slick presentation. As with any fighting game, however, Tekken's competitive nature and focus on violence may not be ideal for the younger element of its user-base. This guide has some top tips for allowing fans of virtual martial arts to enjoy the action more safely.

## 10 TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS: HOW TO BE GREEN WITH YOUR TECH

Right now, humans aren't living sustainably: we're taking too many resources and not leaving the world in a fit state for future generations. Old tech products are a clear example: if we throw them away, the poisonous lead and mercury inside can get into the food chain through the soil. Recycling tech, though, has its own issues: it's often exported to countries where the law doesn't protect people from hazards. Whole villages (including children) sort through discarded devices to remove useful parts and substances like gold, silver and copper – often putting their health at risk. Finding ways to re-use tech is the greenest option.

In the guide, you'll find tips on a number of tips such as donating your old devices to charity, reusing your smartphones and recycling the batteries.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about ONLINE DATING & RELATIONSHIPS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Most online dating apps claim to be for over-18s only but, in some cases, relaxed age verification also allows children to access them. What's more, some popular social media platforms use similar design features to many dating sites – blurring the line between when a young person initially downloads an app and what they *actually* end up using it for.

## ONLINE GROOMING

Online grooming is when someone forms a connection with a child in the digital world and carefully cultivates this relationship with the intention of manipulating the child into doing something sexual or illegal. The process involves gaining the young person's confidence – which can make them far less likely to tell a trusted adult about their new online 'friend', or to recognise what is even happening.

## WEBCAM BLACKMAIL

Some young people have been coaxed into getting nude or semi-nude on a video chat with someone they met on a dating platform. They're then told that, unless they hand over a certain amount of money, a recording of the video will be posted online (or possibly sent to their contacts). This can be hugely traumatic for a young person and, in extreme cases, has resulted in self-harm and even suicide.

## DAMAGE TO SELF ESTEEM

Many dating platforms encourage users to rate the images that people upload; this has clear potential to negatively impact a young person's self esteem. On some apps, pictures of a user's face and body can be rated anonymously, with notifications informing them if someone has then declined to match with them. This form of rejection can feel extremely hurtful and degrading.

## CATFISHING AND SCAMS

Creating a false identity to deliberately lure people into a relationship (whether romantic or platonic) online is known as catfishing. Commonly, someone pretends to share interests or beliefs with their victim and gradually gains their trust. A young person's feelings for this fake 'friend' may cloud their judgement and can lead to them surrendering money, personal images, passwords and so on.

## STALKING AND HARASSMENT

Stalking is obsessive behaviour by a fixated individual which disrupts their victim's life; it can bring severe distress and even the fear of violence. There have been frequent reports of stalking cases that originated on dating apps, with perpetrators creating new accounts in response to being reported or blocked. It's a particular cause for concern if a young person has ever given out personal details (such as their street or school name) online.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Reassure your child that they can always talk to you about anything online that's worried them. Emphasise that if they're being sent unwanted images – or if they've shared images or video content themselves – they should tell you straight away. Discuss the potential risks of online dating and check in with them frequently to ensure that they're feeling comfortable about their online relationships.

### TAKE A 'SAFETY FIRST' STANDPOINT

Encourage young people to be careful about who they send invitations to – and accept them from – on dating sites and apps. Familiarise yourself with how to adjust the privacy settings on your child's devices and apps to help them control who can access their profiles and information. Talk to your child about why it's unwise to share any sensitive, private or confidential information in their profile.

### PROTECT CONTACT DETAILS

If a young person is interested in using online dating sites or apps, strongly encourage them to choose one that offers the facility to conceal both parties' email addresses when messaging prospective dates. If that's not possible, ensure that the young person sets up a separate email address which doesn't include their real name. This is easy to do via providers like Hotmail, Yahoo! Mail or gmail.

### HIGHLIGHT COMMON DANGER SIGNS

Talk to your child about some of the obvious red flags in online dating: requests for money, for instance, should always ring alarm bells. Likewise, if a young person is in contact with someone who they feel is pressuring them into providing personal or financial information – or who they suspect is trying to trick them into it – they should end communication immediately and contact the dating service provider.

## Meet Our Expert

Rebecca Jennings has more than 20 years' experience in the field of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). As well as delivering workshops and training for young people, parents and schools, she is also a subject matter expert on RSHE for the Department of Education.



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# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# TEKKEN 8



Thirty years after its debut on the original PlayStation, the Tekken franchise is back with its eighth mainstream instalment. A one-on-one fighting game series in the same vein as Street Fighter and Mortal Kombat, Tekken 8 can be commended for its relative lack of in-game purchases – but there's still plenty to consider in keeping young players safe from potential hazards.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### FUTURE SPENDING?

Tekken 8 carries a PEGI 16 rating, with the assessors noting its violence, occasional profanity and in-game purchase options. The latter issue, however, is a little different to what you may expect from a modern game: unlike many high-profile releases, Tekken 8's content is all accessible without spending any extra money. The exceptions are new characters, which will become available to purchase separately in the future.

### COPYCAT RISK

With characters flying across the screen using a mixture of authentic and fantastical fighting styles, younger children and impressionable teens may find themselves tempted to copy their favourite characters or act out their epic fights in real life. This could simply amount to harmless fun – but could also easily lead to accidents, injury and distress if young gamers start actually landing blows.

### VIOLENT GAMEPLAY

As a fighting game, Tekken 8's gameplay is heavily based on punching, kicking and throwing opponents around – while some characters' attacks occasionally involve weapons. Most of the violence is comparatively cartoonish in its execution and lacking in gore, but the fact remains that the action still revolves entirely around intense combat and inflicting damage on an opponent.

### FAMILY CONFLICT

Tekken 8's story mode, 'The Dark Awakens', focuses on two of the series' most important characters – Kazuya and Jin, a father and son who have been warring for years. The sight of two family members physically fighting each other may be hard to understand (and difficult to deal with) for some children – causing confusion and concern over why relatives would want to hurt one another.

### RANKED ONLINE PLAY

Tekken 8 features an array of online modes – most notably its 'Ranked' section, where players battle to reach the top spot of a worldwide leaderboard. Many players will dedicate significant amounts of time to practising and – while the challenge can be fun – some of these matches can get extremely competitive. Children could become obsessed with climbing the rankings and dedicate an unhealthy amount of time to the game or grow angry if they wind up on a losing streak.

### ONLINE CONTACT

Tekken 8 doesn't offer voice chat by default, but a player's platform ID is visible (such as their PlayStation Network ID, Steam account or Xbox gamertag). Rival players can, therefore, reach out via messages if they wish. Given the game's fiercely competitive nature, these communications can potentially put children at risk of online abuse if their opponent is a particularly sore loser.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### TRY IT OUT YOURSELF

As with many popular games, we'd recommend checking it out for yourself in advance if you have any concerns. In the case of Tekken 8, there's a free demo version available (for all platforms) which lets you experience fights with a handful of the characters: a useful way of establishing first-hand whether some children might find the game's violence to be too intense.

### EXERCISE YOUR JUDGEMENT

While Tekken 8 features a sort of 'spray' impact effect when attacks land, it's not the kind of game that most observers would describe as gory (unlike, for instance, the Mortal Kombat franchise). Of course, any fighting game worthy of the name will include a significant degree of violence – but the level at which the battles in Tekken are pitched may not be an issue for some children.

### MARTIAL ARTS MOTIVATION?

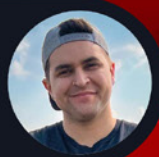
With characters utilising real-world fighting styles such as jiu-jitsu, boxing and kickboxing, Tekken could represent an opportunity to channel a child's fondness for the game into a beneficial interest in real-world martial arts. Classes can help to build young people's confidence and physical fitness, as well as providing avenues for making new friends.

### CONTROL COMMUNICATIONS

If a child plays Tekken online with anyone apart from their friends, then parents and carers could consider restricting communications – such as shutting off the facility to be messaged by other players (although the child's profile name will still be displayed) – to reduce the chance of contact from strangers. This can be done via the console's account settings or through the child's Steam account (if playing on PC).

## Meet Our Expert

Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGRecon, Lloyd Coombes has worked in the games media industry for five years. He's played every Tekken title since the series began and, as a parent, also values the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.



# 10 tips for parents and carers

## HOW TO BE GREEN WITH YOUR TECH

Right now, humans aren't living sustainably: we're taking too many resources and not leaving the world in a fit state for future generations. Old tech products are a clear example: if we throw them away, the poisonous lead and mercury inside can get into the food chain through the soil. Recycling tech, though, has its own issues: it's often exported to countries where the law doesn't protect people from hazards. Whole villages (including children) sort through discarded devices to remove useful parts and substances like gold, silver and copper – often putting their health at risk. Finding ways to re-use tech is the greenest option.

So what can we do with those cupboards and drawers full of old phones and unwanted computers?  
**Reuse, recycle, donate or sell them!**

### 1 DONATE THEM TO CHARITY

There are lots of charities that redistribute unwanted tech to worthy causes, either in the UK or in developing nations. If your old products are still working, this is a great option – as it means that new products don't have to be made. Search online for your nearest place that does this.

### 2 REMEMBER THE BATTERIES

Almost all batteries can be recycled – even the little 'button' ones from smaller gadgets. You could choose a box at home or school to keep used batteries in, and then take them to a designated place that collects them. Be very careful, though – button cells can be deadly if eaten by small children or pets.

### 3 USE YOUR ONLINE SAFETY KNOWLEDGE

If you're recycling, selling or repurposing any of your devices, make sure that all your personal data, private photos and so on have been deleted before the tech leaves your hands or is connected online.

### 4 REUSE THEM

Old smartphones can be used as webcams, security cameras, baby monitors or pet cams: there are apps that will configure them to do this. You can also turn an outdated phone into a TV remote control, an alarm clock that wakes you up with your favourite track, or a media centre you can take to places where you wouldn't risk your new phone.

### 5 TURN IT INTO SOMETHING NEW

Smartphones are more powerful than most older computers. If you have an unwanted android phone, it's quite easy to create a new computer – you could use an old TV as a monitor, meaning you just need a mouse and keyboard. There are also small devices you can buy which let you do the same with iPhones.

### 6 RETURN THEM

Return devices to the manufacturer or retailer you bought them from. Some manufacturers take responsibility for their products and accept them back, to refurbish and redistribute. If they don't, you could contact them and ask why: the more consumer pressure there is on shops and manufacturers, the more likely they are to act in a greener way.

### 7 SUPPORT SCIENCE

Let your old devices help modern research. Scientists currently investigating topics like far-off star systems, cancer treatment and earthquakes need enormous computing power. If your unwanted device is WiFi enabled, for example, you can connect it to a network so that it can boost scientists' research.

### 8 SELL THEM

This is also a green option as it means that fewer devices have to be produced. On top of that, you could also donate some of the money you make to an environmental charity.

### 9 RESEARCH DISPOSAL METHODS

If your device is beyond repair and no one wants it, get rid of it safely through a specialist tech disposal company. Check that your device won't be shipped off to another country for processing.

### 10 KEEP THINKING

There's no such thing as 'too many' ways to help our planet! If you come up with a better idea than ours, contact National Online Safety and tell us.

## Meet Our Expert

Neil Atkin teaches scientific literacy through his non-profit organisation, Rubbish Science, which engages people in working together to live more sustainably and creatively uses waste to help address real-life problems. There are a range of environmental activities you may like to try on their website: [www.rubbishscience.com](http://www.rubbishscience.com).



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