

# National KE-CIRT/CC Information Security Tip of the Week

## ONLINE GAMING



## Online Gaming

### Definitions

Online gaming refers to the act or process of playing a game over some form of computer network, most often the Internet.

Due to the infamous Blue Whale game also known as Silent House or Sea of Whales, trending both locally and internationally, this security tip will apprise you on the risks involved, the most secure way of protecting your data, risks involved and self while gaming online.

Players often communicate via integrated chat or verbally with microphone or a headset.



## Risks Associated & How to Protect Yourself

The following are risks that occur while gaming online:

- ✚ Downloading or obtaining in another way, pirated copies of games, which can lead to penalties including account suspension, blocking of consoles from accessing the manufacturer's server or prosecution.
- ✚ Disposing of game consoles, PCs and mobile devices without having deleted your personal information and account details.
- ✚ Playing games for many hours at a time with the danger of becoming addicted.
- ✚ Downloading 'cheats' which claim to help you but which, in fact, may contain viruses/spyware.
- ✚ Many games are linked to other social media websites that publicly reveal the customers' activity, fact which could lead to information theft and invasion of privacy.

Parents play a very critical protective role that can minimise the negative effects of such exposure

by:

- ✚ Helping our children discern and avoid online gaming or social communities that could present risks of suicide contagion
- ✚ Teaching our children media literacy to discern between fake and real events
- ✚ Encourage our children to post sensitively on social media so that they do not contribute to rumors or reports that sensationalise suicide
- ✚ Taking stock of the media influences that our children are exposed to
- ✚ Engaging in conversation with our children to find out what they have been watching or playing online
- ✚ Don't be afraid to ask your child a direct question about suicide

Although online gaming poses many risks, there are a number of simple steps you can take to ensure you are protected:

- ✚ Choose a user name that does not reveal any personal information. Similarly, if your game includes the ability to create a personal profile, make sure you don't give away any personal information.
- ✚ Don't reveal any personal information like phone numbers and addresses to other players
- ✚ Play only with authorised versions of games which you have purchased from the correct sources and for which you have a license.
- ✚ Play online games only when you have effective and updated antivirus/antispyware software and firewall running.
- ✚ Hit the Mute Button; in games with voice chat components, make sure that your game setting is set to mute conversations. When playing a game online, people may say things that could hurt one another. It's best to prevent the risk of bullying or trash talking online.
- ✚ Block the Player; If a situation makes you uncomfortable, you can always block the person playing with you.
- ✚ Verify the authenticity and security of downloaded files and new software by buying from reputable sources.
- ✚ Use strong passwords. Gamers need to regularly change log-ins and avoid using the same password for other online accounts.
- ✚ Watch out for scams and cons when buying or selling 'property' that exists inside a computer game, in the real world.
- ✚ Read the manufacturer or hosting company's terms and conditions to make sure there will not be any immediate or future hidden charges.
- ✚ When disposing of your gaming device either by selling, scrapping, giving away or donating, ensure all of your personal information has been deleted.
- ✚ Set guidelines and ground rules for your children when playing online.

Always remember "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure - Benjamin Franklin"

Have the above security tips in mind when securing your computer system. Report any cybercrime incident/activity to [incidents@kecirt.go.ke](mailto:incidents@kecirt.go.ke). [www.ke-cirt.go.ke](http://www.ke-cirt.go.ke)