

# 7 Steps to Help You Decide What Apps to Allow

Below is a series of questions to help parents decide, in collaboration with kids, when to allow or prevent apps and games. Let them know it is not a checklist resulting in only "yes" or "no", but that there may be settings and parameters that need to be in place before proceeding.

- If you are familiar with the genre or characters, you may get some information just by learning the name of the game.
- Game ratings can help you know what to look out for/ask.

- Gauge the level of violence, interaction with strangers, etc.
- Does this app encourage children to seek "likes"?
- Does it claim to have anonymity or secrecy (e.g. messages self-destruct)?

- Can players/users track where your child is while using the game/app?
- If yes, can this function be disabled?

- There may be no better way to understand a game/app than using it alongside your child.
- Ask your child to teach you how to play. Be curious: "What happens if I go there? Can you do \_\_\_\_\_?"

**1.  
WHAT IS THE NAME  
AND RATING OF THE  
GAME/APP?**

**2.  
HOW DID YOU LEARN  
ABOUT IT?**

**3.  
HOW DO YOU PLAY?  
WHAT IS THE  
OBJECTIVE?**

**4.  
CAN YOU CHAT WITH  
ANYONE? WHO?  
WHAT? HOW?**

**5.  
ARE THERE LOCATION  
SERVICES?**

**6.  
ARE THERE IN-APP  
PURCHASES?**

**7.  
CAN YOU WALK ME  
THROUGH HOW TO  
PLAY/USE THIS APP?**

- Visit [ERSB](#) for game details & ratings.
- Visit [Common Sense Media](#) for honest reviews from kids & parents

- Knowing if friends are using a game/app can be helpful if you know that friend's parent's safety standards.
- If the game was advertised, what does that advertisement highlight?

Basic tiers of chatting:

- No chat function
- Limited chat w/ pre-written messages
- Full chat function w/ friends/approved users
- Full chat function w/ strangers

- Does your child know how to use in-app purchases?
- Do they have access to payment information?
- Do purchases increase risk? (e.g., can you chat on the premium version?)

