MINECRAFT EDUCATION

BAD CONNECTION?



Parent & Caregiver

GUIDE



CyberSafe: Bad Connection?

Parent & Caregiver Guide

A 10-minute guide to the online safety skills your child is learning and how you can keep the conversation going at home.

We know online safety can feel like a big, scary topic. That's exactly why this lesson exists. Young people are empowered when they can practice online safety skills in a safe space before they face these situations in real life. You don't need to be a tech expert or know the game. You just need to keep the door open.

CyberSafe: Bad Connection? is a free, story-driven lesson in Minecraft Education designed for learners ages 11–15. Developed in partnership with Xbox Trust & Safety, it walks students through a realistic three-day scenario where an online stranger gradually tries to gain their trust and access their personal information.

Your Family Resources

Your child is learning to recognize online manipulation and know when to ask for help. Here's how to use the materials you've received.

What You Have

Resource	What It's For	Time
Parent Guide	Full overview of the lesson, conversation starters, warning signs	10 min read
Conversation Cards	Discussion prompts to use one at a time at dinner, in the car, whenever	5 min each
Parent Toolkit	Visual slides with key messages. A quick refresher or share with co-parent	2–3 min scan
Info Card	A to share with your child's school or other caregivers to support their learning	2 min read

© 2026. Microsoft. All Rights Reserved

Quick Start

Got 10 minutes? Read the Parent Guide. It tells you what your child experienced and how to talk about it.

Ready for a conversation? Pick one Conversation Card. Read the scenario together, ask the questions, listen.

Sharing with others? Hand off the Info Card to anyone else who supervises your child online.

The One Thing to Remember

Your child is more likely to come to you when something goes wrong if they know they won't be in trouble, you'll listen first, and you're on their side. That's the message these materials reinforce. Keep the door open.

What Your Child Is Experiencing

Through gameplay, your child practices recognizing warning signs, setting boundaries, using safety tools (like block and report), and, most importantly, knowing when and how to tell a trusted adult.

Content Heads-Up

To help learners recognize unsafe behavior, the game includes fictional examples of:

- Requests for personal information (age, email, school, home address)
- Manipulation tactics (flattery, gifts-for-info, urgency, secrecy)
- Peer pressure and fear of missing out (FOMO)
- Cyberbullying, including a sexist comment
- Threatening messages and an attempted real-life meetup

All examples are presented as unsafe behaviors to identify and respond to. Students always have opt-out options if they feel uncomfortable.

© 2026. Microsoft. All Rights Reserved

Family Conversation Cards

After you play together, use the Family Conversation Cards Activity to make your own scenarios based on the games, apps, and group chats your family actually uses. Kids who help write the questions own the conversation and becomes something you built together. The best cards come from real life.

The Story (So You Know What They Experienced)

Your child doesn't need to explain the game for you to have a great conversation. But here's a quick summary of what happens:

Day	What Happens
Friday	Your child's character meets school friends (Rene, Charlie, Dale) and joins a group chat for a game called Lunar Smash. A tutorial introduces Minecraft controls.
Saturday	**An online stranger called Stray3r** joins the game and starts asking for personal information—age, email, school name, location. Stray3r offers "exclusive skins" as a reward. A griefer (xX_elite_Xx) also disrupts the chat. Players practice using the Report tool.
Sunday	**Pressure increases.** Dale makes untoward comments toward another player. Stray3r invites everyone to a new group ("South Side Smashers"), asks for home addresses to "send t-shirts," and privately messages the player about meeting up in real life.
Monday	**Stray3r says they're coming to the school.** Players must decide: tell their teacher, go along with friends, or stay silent. The story has multiple endings based on their choices—the safest outcome happens when they tell a trusted adult.

© 2026. Microsoft. All Rights Reserved

The Characters

Charlie	The cautious friend. Pushes back on sharing info, encourages telling an adult.
Rene	Overshares personal information. Eager to impress Stray3r. Represents risky choices.
Dale	Invited Stray3r to the group. Makes inappropriate comments. Shows poor judgment.
Stray3r	The online stranger. Uses flattery, gifts, secrecy, and threats to gain access to personal info.

What Your Child Is Learning

The lesson builds three core online safety skills:

PROTECT	USE TOOLS	TELL EARLY
Recognize red flags. Keep personal information private. Trust your instincts when something feels off.	Block, report, and leave when something isn't right. Know that every platform has safety features and practice using them.	Talk to a trusted adult before things escalate. Asking for help is always the right move. No matter what.

The #1 Message Your Child Heard Today

"You will never be in trouble for asking for help. Even if you shared something you shouldn't have, even if it feels embarrassing, a trusted adult can help.

It's never too late to tell someone."

© 2026. Microsoft. All Rights Reserved

Your Role as a Caregiver

You don't need to know the game. You don't need to be a tech expert. You just need to keep the door open.

The Pause → Protect → Tell Framework

This is the same framework your child practiced in the game. You can reinforce it at home:

1. PAUSE	2. PROTECT	3. TELL
Something feels off? Stop responding. Don't click, don't reply, don't share.	Block the person. Report the behavior. Leave the chat or server. Save evidence if possible.	Talk to a trusted adult right away. You won't be in trouble. Adults can help figure out the next steps.

Having the Conversation at Home

You don't need a long talk. Even a 10-minute check-in makes a difference. Here's how to start:

Before or After the Lesson

Try Asking...	Why It Helps
"What happened in the game today? Who were the characters?"	Gets them talking without pressure. Lets you learn what stood out.
"What were the red flags? How did you know something was wrong?"	Reinforces pattern recognition. Builds confidence in their instincts.
"Who would you talk to if something like that happened to you?"	Opens the door to real conversation. Establishes you as a safe person.
"What would you do if a friend was in Rene's situation?"	Builds upstander skills. Takes the pressure off "me" and puts it on helping others.

© 2026. Microsoft. All Rights Reserved

“Is there anything online that’s ever made you feel weird or uncomfortable?”	The most important question. Treat it as practice, not a confession.

Red Flags to Know

These are the manipulation tactics your child learned to spot in the game. They’re also the tactics used in real life:

Red Flag	What It Sounds Like	Why It’s Risky
Asking for personal info	“How old are you? What school do you go to?”	Collects details that can be used to locate or identify your child
Gifts for info	“I can get you exclusive skins if you share your email”	Creates a sense of obligation; trades trust for personal data
Secrecy	“Don’t tell anyone I messaged you”	Isolates your child from people who can help
Pressure & FOMO	“Cool people deserve cool stuff” “If you want Smasher status…”	Uses social pressure to override good judgment
Moving to private messages	“Let’s talk in DMs”	Removes witnesses and adult oversight
Threats	“I know where your school is” “I’d hate for your parents to find out”	Uses fear and guilt to prevent your child from getting help

© 2026. Microsoft. All Rights Reserved

Warning Signs to Watch For at Home

These behaviors don't necessarily mean something is wrong, but they're worth a gentle check-in:

- Quickly switching screens or closing apps when you walk by
- Receiving gifts, game credits, or items from unknown sources
- Becoming secretive about online friendships or conversations
- Using a new app or platform you haven't discussed together
- Mood changes after being online (anxious, withdrawn, upset)
- Mentioning a new "friend" who is older or whom they've never met in person

If Your Child Shares a Concern

This Helps
"Thank you for telling me. I'm glad you trust me."
Stay calm and listen without judgment.
Save or screenshot any messages or evidence.
Contact your school counselor or administrator for guidance.
Reassure your child: "This is not your fault."

6 Family Tips for Everyday Online Safety

- Create a simple family rule: "If we wouldn't share it with a stranger, we don't share it online."
- Review privacy settings together before your child starts using a new app or game.
- Keep devices in shared spaces when possible and check in regularly.
- Practice boundary phrases together: "I don't share that online. That's just a rule I have."
- Model healthy digital habits yourself. Talk about how you decide what to share.
- Make it clear: "You will never be in trouble for coming to me."

© 2026. Microsoft. All Rights Reserved

Want to Know More About Minecraft and Player Safety?

Everything your child just experienced in *CyberSafe: Bad Connection?* takes place inside Minecraft, a game that millions of kids around the world already know and love. If you're not as familiar with it, or if your child plays Minecraft at home and you want to understand what safety tools are already built in, the next page is for you.

The **Minecraft Player Safety Tips** sheet on the following page covers the basics: what the game is, how multiplayer works, what safety features are built into the platform, and what you can do as a parent or caregiver to set up a safer play experience. Think of it as the companion to everything in this guide, where this guide focuses on the online safety skills your child is building, the one-pager focuses on the platform where they're building them.

Here's What You'll Find

- **What Minecraft actually is** and the different ways kids can play (Creative Mode, Survival Mode, Peaceful Mode)
- **Single Player vs. Multiplayer** including how Realms, Partner Servers, and community servers differ in terms of safety
- **Minecraft's built-in safety features** like abuse reporting, parental controls, chat filtering, and proactive moderation
- **Three actions you can take right now:** set up parental controls, talk with your child about their online activity, and establish household rules
- **The different Minecraft versions** (Bedrock, Java, and Minecraft Education) so you know which one your child is using

Connecting the Dots

Your child practiced the **Pause** → **Protect** → **Tell** framework inside the game. The safety features on the next page, including parental controls, chat filters, and abuse reporting, are the real-world versions of the same tools. When your child uses the Report button in the lesson, they're practicing a skill they can use in actual Minecraft gameplay and on any platform.

Kids who talk to their parents about online safety are better protected—not because of rules, but because of trust. You're building that trust right now.

Find the game: aka.ms/cybersafe

Free download at education.minecraft.net |

© 2026. Microsoft. All Rights Reserved

PLAYER SAFETY TIPS

What is Minecraft?

- A game about breaking, collecting, and placing blocks, where players build individually or together to create imaginative worlds.
- Enjoyed by millions of players worldwide—including in Antarctica and Vatican City!
- Emphasizes creativity, exploration, and collaboration, allowing players to craft their own stories.



Gameplay Modes

Creative Mode
Build freely with unlimited resources, fly, and destroy blocks instantly—ideal for limitless creativity.

Peaceful Mode
Relax with no hostile mobs and fast health regeneration, perfect for low-stress building and exploring.

Survival Mode
Gather resources, build, and survive while fending off mobs like zombies and skeletons at night.

Our ongoing commitment to player safety



Microsoft is dedicated to creating safe and enjoyable online experiences, ensuring Minecraft is a space where everyone can play freely, without fear or intimidation.



Minecraft protects players through safety features such as abuse reporting, parental controls, community standards enforcement, proactive moderation, human oversight, and server-level reporting.



Minecraft uses an automated chat filtering system in Bedrock and Java Realms, as well as Partner Servers, to detect and escalate harmful content for human review, ensuring safe and welcoming interactions.

Single Player vs. Multiplayer

Single Player
Play solo and play the way you prefer. Great for personal projects and uninterrupted gameplay.

Multiplayer
Collaborate with others to build, explore, and create: You can set up a Minecraft Realm, a secure, private server that lets you decide which players you'd like to invite to your Realm. Or you can search for Partner Servers within Minecraft: Bedrock Edition that implement chat filters and in-game reporting.

You can also join a Minecraft Server, a public online world created by the Minecraft community. Before joining a server, we encourage you to search for options that suit your preferences.

Guidance for parents and caregivers

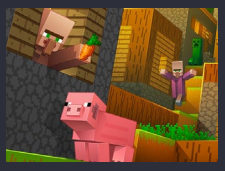
Parents and caregivers can play an active role in their children's online activities, and we encourage them to take three important actions:



Use advanced parental control settings available on devices and gaming platforms.

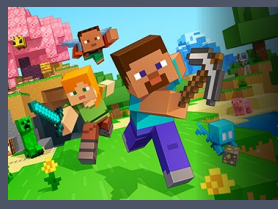


Talk with kids about their online activities.

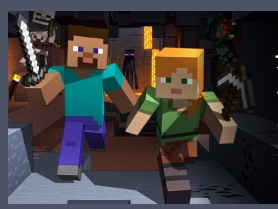


Set clear household online rules for their families.

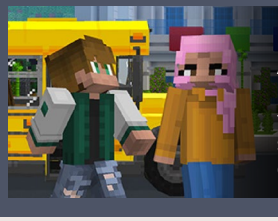
Minecraft versions



Bedrock Edition
Designed for cross-platform play on Windows, consoles, mobile devices, and more. Includes the Minecraft Marketplace for curated, community-made content.



Java Edition
The original PC version for Windows, macOS, and Linux, offering mod support, update snapshots, and a strong multiplayer community.



Minecraft Education
A safe, fun learning platform used in schools around the world that encourages skill-building, creativity, and collaboration.

Learn more

Explore safety tips, gameplay details, and resources on the official Minecraft website.

What parents and caregivers need to know about Minecraft

All about Minecraft servers

Cyber Safety