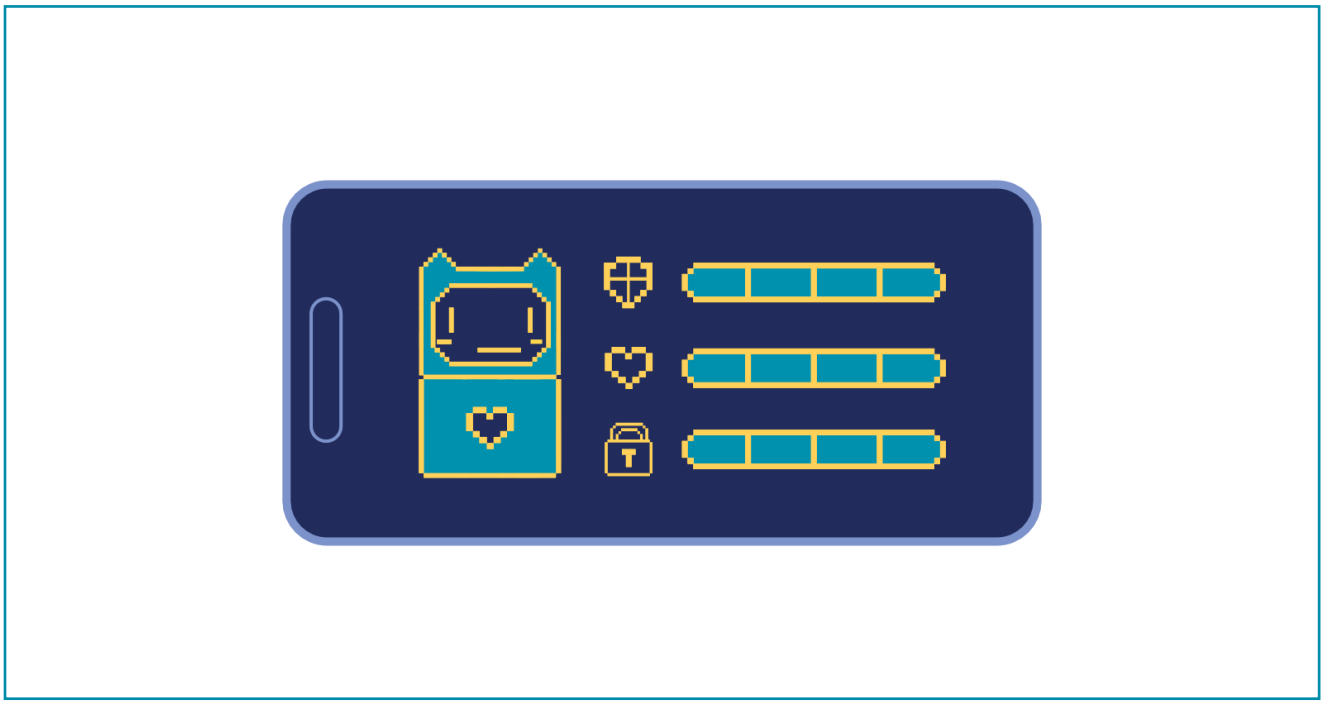
Help! My Partner is Harassing Me Through Online Gaming



Online games can be a fun way to connect with friends, relax, and build community. But sometimes, a current or former partner can use games to stay in contact or harass you.

If someone you used to date or are trying to get space from is messaging you in-game, spreading rumours, joining your matches, or using games to monitor or threaten you, that's not okay. **You deserve to play, connect, and feel safe online.**

Signs Your Partner Might Be Using Games to Harass or Control You

- They keep joining your games or using alternate accounts to contact you.
- They use in-game chat or voice channels to send mean or threatening messages.
- They pressure you to share your gaming schedule, location or who you're playing with.
- They try to turn other players against you or spread personal details about you.
- They make you feel unsafe or like you can't enjoy gaming anymore.

Steps You Can Take

1. Change Your Username or Create a New Account

Choose a name that doesn't include your real name, nickname, or anything your former partner could recognize. If you can, create a new profile picture or avatar too.

2. Block and Report the Player

Most games let you block players so they can't message or join you. Use the "report" option if they're harassing you – it helps the platform take action.

3. Adjust Privacy Settings

Look for settings that:

- Hide your “online” status or gaming activity.
- Limit who can see your friends list or message you.
- Prevent unknown players from joining your games.

4. Protect Your Info

- Don’t share your real name, photos, or personal details in chats or profiles.
- Be cautious about linking your gaming account to your social media accounts.
- Use a different email and strong, unique passwords for gaming accounts.

5. Save Evidence

If your partner is threatening or harassing you:

- Take screenshots or video screen recordings of messages or chats. Some gaming consoles let you take screenshots or video recordings of what is happening on your screen.
- Save usernames and timestamps if you can.
- Keep this evidence somewhere safe or share it with someone you trust.

This can help if you decide to report the harassment to the platform, a counsellor, or the police.

6. Talk to Someone You Trust

You don’t have to deal with this alone.

- Tell a friend, school counsellor, or trusted adult.
- If you have a youth counsellor or support worker, let them know what's happening.
- You can also contact Kids Help Phone (1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868) for free, confidential support.

Harassment, stalking, or threats through gaming are never your fault. You deserve to play, connect, and enjoy your time online without fear.

Technology-facilitated gender-based violence is part of a continuum of violence that can be both online and in-person. If you or someone you know is experiencing technology-facilitated violence, you are not alone. Encourage them to chat with a trusted adult, connect with the Kids Help Phone to create a safety plan, or use ShelterSafe.ca to find a shelter/transition house near you to discuss options and create a safety plan. You don't need to stay in a shelter to access free, confidential services and support.