



These [recommendations for game developers and platforms](#) are based on the findings in our [Pulse Survey: Digital Gaming and Social Interaction](#) that show while gaming is a highly social activity, there is room for improvement when it comes to providing positive, enjoyable, and fulfilling interactions for young users. Since game design influences player experiences, it's important to consider how features and mechanics can be intentionally designed to foster more prosocial experiences, which in turn can [positively impact user mental health and wellbeing](#).

## 1. Broaden Communication Options

**Improve off-platform communication:** Many teens use external chat platforms like WhatsApp, Discord, and Slack to communicate while gaming. Consider ways to identify and moderate these groups in line with established gaming moderation standards and expectations. Implementing consistent, age/stage-appropriate policies can help safeguard users and enhance the gaming experience.

**Offer communication crossover:** Enhance user experience by collaborating with communication platforms to integrate external chat features within the gaming environment. This could include features like game status updates or the ability to join game-specific chat channels.

## 2. Challenge Stereotypes

**Move beyond gender norms:** Integrate both competitive and collaborative elements to appeal to a more diverse audience and challenge traditional gender norms around play. Consider fresh representation in characters and storylines, and partnering with [game developers](#) and content creators from [diverse backgrounds](#) to bring [new perspectives](#) and ideas.

**Ensure equal opportunity for competitions:** Ensure that competitive games are inclusive and provide equal opportunities for players of all genders. This includes fair representation in tournaments and equal prize pools.

## 3. Foster More Collaborative Experiences

**Educate at onboarding:** Use interactive gameplay — rather than a laundry list of community guidelines on a Help page — to educate new players at onboarding about the benefits and risks of social gaming, and to establish prosocial norms and behaviors from the outset.

**Integrate prosocial features:** Introduce features such as teams, guidance from more experienced players, asynchronous multiplayer interactions (e.g., notes, hints), in-game social events/activities, trading and gifting, and reward-sharing to enhance social experiences, which can [translate into prosocial attitudes and behaviors outside of gaming](#).

**Enhance matchmaking systems:** Tailor matches to better align with players' social preferences, which can enhance the social experience. Consider allowing players to specify their preferred type of gameplay (e.g., competitive vs. collaborative), or communication style (e.g., brief exchanges vs. extended conversations).

## 4. Encourage Co-Play

**Facilitate co-use and positive caregiver-child interactions:** Develop multi-generational games that are challenging and engaging for all ages to foster collaborative and social play, which can help kids [build a sense of competence and learn to cope with challenges](#).