

# A Quick



# Guide for Parents



## A Quick Pokémon GO Guide for Parents



- *Pokémon GO* is based on the long-running Pokémon franchise.
- It's a smartphone app available for Android® and iPhone® devices.
- The game involves walking through local neighborhoods and public spaces to find and capture imaginary magical creatures called Pokémon (short for *Pocket Monsters*).
- The franchise's worldview is vaguely Eastern in its spirituality, and it includes evolution (of individual creatures) as part of the gameplay.
- Positive aspects of the game include exercise and playing with others.
- Potentially problematic elements include not paying attention to real-world hazards (e.g. traffic), interaction with adult strangers, compulsive gameplay and the temptation to overindulge on in-app purchases.
- For younger players, the game could be a catalyst for interest in other aspects of the extensive Pokémon franchise, which includes trading cards, TV shows, movies and other video games.
- Experts have raised privacy and smartphone security concerns regarding the information the game makes available to publisher Niantic. The company has addressed this by simplifying the ability to opt out of sharing information when players sign up.

## For Parents Who've Decided to Let Your Children Play Pokémon GO



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- Establish clear boundaries regarding not only how long they play but where they can walk, and with whom.
- Talk about the two primary safety concerns: not noticing dangerous obstacles and interacting with people they don't know.
- Engage with your kids and, if possible, even play the game with them (or watch and walk as they do so).
- If you play with your children, take time to notice (and encourage them to notice) the world around you as you walk, not just the screen in front of you.
- Pokémon Go imagines a world full of unseen creatures that battle each other. Parents can use the game as a springboard to discuss the actual spiritual reality that we can't see. (See Ephesians 6:10-18.)
- Remember sunscreen and proper hydration, especially for kids not used to being outside that much.
- Look for and intentionally cultivate other, non-screen-based ways to engage your children's imagination and creativity, whether it's reading, drawing, building, crafting or in constructive play.

## For Parents Who've Decided Not to Let Your Children Play Pokémon GO



- Explain to them that you've done your homework and that you understand the game's basic concepts.
- Help them understand the specific reasons for your decision, whether it's the amount of time spent playing on a phone, safety concerns or convictions regarding the game's overall world view.
- As noted above, look for other compelling avenues to stimulate and engage your child's imagination and attention.

**For a more in-depth explanation of and conversation about Pokémon GO, check out <http://bit.ly/PokemonGOforParents>**

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