Commentary: Fears of radicalisation via gaming, parents need to step up and listen to their children

By Jonathan Sim

Once again, gaming platforms are back in the spotlight of public discussion. The latest controversy involves the creation of Islamic State propaganda videos by a 16-year-old using Roblox game footage. This highlights the need for parents and educators to be more involved in their children's online activities.

It's time for us adults to embrace the culture of youths to connect more effectively with them. The world of youths may be different from what we are used to, but we need to acknowledge and appreciate their perspectives. It's crucial to understand that they can relate to and resonate with.

Sharing our passion with someone who matters in our lives.

In the era of technological advancements, it's easy to forget that the human need for belonging and understanding that we all share. As adults, we often question the influence of gaming platforms on youths, and we may feel that our life experiences are irrelevant to them.

We need to take an interest in what youths do on gaming platforms - not just a superficial observation, but a genuine engagement. We should supervise and guide them on how to navigate through the complexities of life. This will provide us avenues for communication and understanding. They will feel heard and valued, and in turn, be more open to sharing their experiences with us.

Related to this, the drive for human connection and to discover one's identity is not a special tech problem or gaming platforms. It's a human problem, and we need to address it.

As adults, we often question the influence of gaming platforms on youths, and we may feel that our life experiences are irrelevant to them. But have we ever stopped to consider the human experiences that our life stories can hold to this uninformed view, the more we will alienate youths and further reinforce the message that our life experiences are irrelevant to them.

In one study, adults who were more interested in what youths do on gaming platforms were found to be more effective in supervising and guiding them on how to navigate through the complexities of life. They were also more likely to feel heard and valued, and in turn, be more open to sharing their experiences with us.

But for many others, gaming platforms such as Roblox and Discord provide the communities of like-minded peers sharing similar values and interests - people who they desire to be. In that process, they will seek out peers who can inspire them and be role models.

Through these interactions, youths hope to discover more about who they are and what they truly understand them in their current state of life.

As an educator and gamer myself, I've seen the value that games can bring to our individual development and learning, but it's crucial to balance this with proper guidance and supervision. Without proper guidance, youths may be more susceptible to influence by individuals who may lead others down a path of extremism or other harmful actions.

In conclusion, we need to listen to our children and understand their perspectives. It's time for us adults to embrace the culture of youths to connect more effectively with them. This will provide us avenues for communication and understanding. They will feel heard and valued, and in turn, be more open to sharing their experiences with us.

Listen: How does a young person become radicalised?