

Call of Duty® for Parents:

Battling Video Game Addiction with Your Children

CALL OF DUTY
BLACK OPS

Press **A** to start



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Identifying the Problem



"internet gaming disorder"

- gaming must cause "significant impairment or distress" in several aspects of a person's life
- does not include problems with general use of the internet, online gambling, or use of social media or smartphones
- **most people who develop clinically significant gaming problems play primarily on the internet**

Proposed Symptoms

- Preoccupation with gaming
- Withdrawal symptoms
- Tolerance
- Unsuccessful attempts to quit gaming
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities due to gaming
- Continuing to game despite problems
- Lying about the amount of time spent on gaming
- The use of gaming to relieve negative moods
- Risk



Identifying the Problem



“gaming disorder”

- a pattern of gaming behaviour characterized by
 - impaired control over gaming
 - increasing priority given to gaming over other activities
 - continuation or escalation of gaming despite the occurrence of negative consequences
- significant impairment in personal, family, social, educational, occupational or other important areas of functioning and would normally have been evident for at least 12 months

Resistance to Identification

- excessive gaming as the primary problem or the result of other underlying difficulties
- the majority of gamers wouldn't experience anything close to addiction
- minimizes the reality of other addictions
- a moral failure or a behavioural problem



Advantages of Identification

- creates a basis so that the health care system can respond
- there are aspects of games that may make them particularly susceptible to addiction
- the number of active gamers worldwide will rise to more than 2.7 billion people in 2021



Susceptibility to Gaming Addiction

- Gaming at an early age
- Above average intelligence
- Large periods of unstructured time
- Computers or video game consoles in their rooms
- Few real world friends or those who struggle socially
- Middle class or upper-middle class families
- Attention or concentration difficulties
- Male



Signs of Video Game Addiction

Psychological

- Decreased interest in school, homework, and academic achievement
- Loss of interest in other activities
- Dreaming about the game
- Distorted perception of time



Signs of Video Game Addiction

Psychological

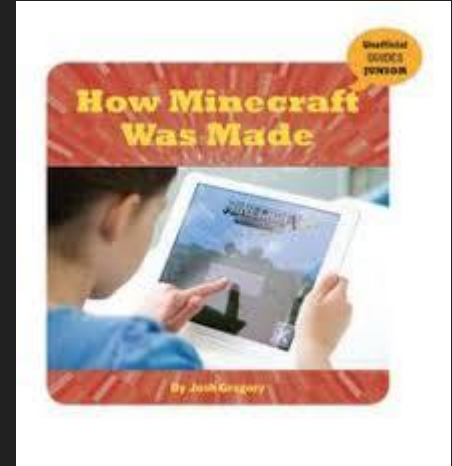
- Becoming visibly angry, depressed or anxious when access to the game is limited
- Feelings of excessive responsibility to a guild, clan, or online team
- Difficulty abstaining from video games for an extended period of time



Signs of Video Game Addiction

Behavioural

- Decreased academic performance
- Neglecting other important responsibilities
- Reading about the game, discussing the game with fellow players in online forums, or writing about the game
- Spend large portions of his allowance or income from a job on gaming accessories



Signs of Video Game Addiction

Behavioural

- More and more time playing the game
- Attempt to play at the first available opportunity
- Frequent (or even occasional) gaming “binges”
- Inability to quit despite a desire to do so



Signs of Video Game Addiction

Physical

- Sleep difficulties or dramatic changes in sleep schedules
- Decreased attention to personal hygiene
- Poor or irregular eating habits
- Headaches, dry eyes, and sore fingers
- Decreased levels of physical health



Signs of Video Game Addiction

Relational

- Lying about the amount of time spent gaming
- Rather play video game than go out with friends, play sports
- Time spent with parent(s) decreases
- Others whom you trust/respect begin to notice problems
- Blame others(especially parents) for their excessive play

Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games (MMORPG)



Examples: World of Warcraft, Fortnite

Description:

- Players create, develop, and control characters that exist as part of an online fantasy world
- The world is always evolving
- Often require monthly subscriptions and have no pre-determined “end”

Addictive Potential: Very Much Above Average

Real Time Strategy

Examples: Age of Empires, Command and Conquer

Description:

- a resource gathering / resource building game which happens in real time
- often involve building empires or civilizations, war, managing worlds and working with simulated economies
- usually have no ending, offers unique gameplay experiences



Addictive Potential: Above Average

First Person Shooter (FPS)



Examples: Halo, Call of Duty

Description:

- the player sees only his hand or weapon when actually playing
- often have engaging single player modes that can take twenty or more hours to complete (even more on harder difficulty settings)
- the greater draw is the interactive online component in which the user competes against other human players

Addictive Potential: Above Average

Action



Examples: Grand Theft Auto, Assassin's Creed

Description:

- presented from a third person perspective
- primarily single player experiences
- player assumes the role of a predefined character
- generally have predefined goals and clear endings
- the most popular games often have violent / mature content

Addictive Potential: Average

Sports



Examples: NHL, NFL

Description:

- common for new versions of existing franchise to be released yearly
- “GM modes” in which you take control of other aspects of your favorite team

Addictive Potential: Average

Fighter



Examples: Tekken, Mortal Kombat

Description:

- almost always emphasize one-to-one combat against either a computer character or a human player (either in person or online)
- a single game / match in a fighter typically only lasts a few minutes

Addictive Potential: Slightly Below Average

Racing



Examples: Need for Speed, Gran Turismo

Description:

- there is a distinct beginning and end to online match-ups
- often see yearly updates

Addictive Potential: Below average

Music



Examples: Rock Band and Guitar Hero

Description:

- Often played with friends, family, and others who are in the same room at the same time
- Usually set up for a few hours during a party or get-together and then put away until the next time people visit

Addictive Potential: Below Average

Casual/Puzzle

Examples: Bejeweled, Candy Crush



Description:

- pick-up-and-play and are very easy to learn
- often only last a few minutes, but encourage multiple sessions to “make it to that next level”
- often methods of procrastination when one should be working at the computer

Addictive Potential: Below Average (for children & teens)

Platformer



Examples: Super Mario Brothers, Sonic the Hedgehog

Description:

- control a cartoon character, run and jump between levels and platforms while avoiding or defeating enemies
- clear endgames, little replay value after the game is over
- primarily single player games, limited online support

Addictive Potential: Considerably Below Average

Video Games Can be Beneficial

Often used in the classroom:

- foster better reading skills, faster reaction times and more efficient problem solving
- refine cognitive skills
 - visual-spatial
 - enhance memory for visual information



Video games entertain and relax:

- a temporary escape from stressful, real-life problems
- provide a social outlet

Video Games Can be Beneficial

- “Prescription video games” trying to see how games — especially with the advent of virtual reality — could be used to help treat mental health conditions
 - Increasing self-esteem and self-confidence
 - Promote social interaction in a safe environment
 - Can increase the positive moods of children
- Moderation is the key



Educate Yourself & Model Good Behaviour

- Educate Yourself & Make Informed Decisions on Games
- Avoid Relying on Games to Entertain Your Child
- Join your child in gaming
- “Family” Rules
- Become Familiar with the ESRB
(Electronic Software Rating Board)



ESRB Rating System



EVERYONE

Content is generally suitable for all ages. May contain minimal cartoon, fantasy or mild violence and/or infrequent use of mild language.



EVERYONE 10+

Content is generally suitable for ages 10 and up. May contain more cartoon, fantasy or mild violence, mild language and/or minimal suggestive themes.



TEEN

Content is generally suitable for ages 13 and up. May contain violence, suggestive themes, crude humor, minimal blood, simulated gambling and/or infrequent use of strong language.



MATURE

Content is generally suitable for ages 17 and up. May contain intense violence, blood and gore, sexual content and/or strong language.



ADULTS ONLY

Content suitable only for adults ages 18 and up. May include prolonged scenes of intense violence, graphic sexual content and/or gambling with real currency.

Environmental & Schedule Changes

- Set & Enforce New Limits on Play
- Consider a “Weekends-Only” Schedule
- Homework Before Gaming
- Work & Play Computers
- No Consoles or Computers in the Bedroom



Encourage Other Activities

- Sports and Physical Activities
- Make an Effort to Invite Friends Over
- Reality Breaks
- Introduce or Reinforce the Importance of Doing Chores
- Encourage a Part-Time Job



Parental Controls

- Set Parental Controls on Consoles & Computers
- Become an Administrator on Home Computers
- Access Parental Controls on Individual Games



Other Considerations

- Make Exceptions for Educational Software
- Prevent Covert Late Night Gaming Sessions
- Switch from a Wireless to a Wired Connection
- Switch from a High Speed to a Dial-up Connection
- School Counsellors

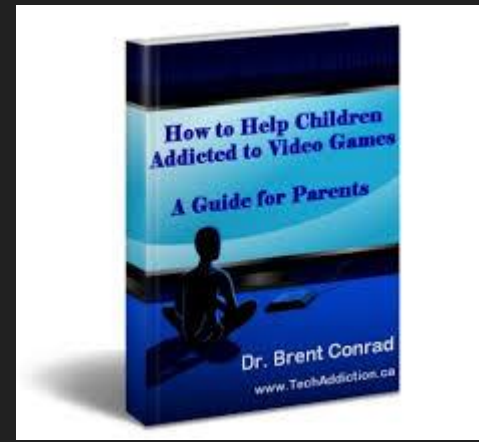


“If you are worried about the long-term consequences of your child’s current gaming addiction, acknowledge that the addiction may temporarily change the path he is on, but it rarely has the power to prevent him from returning to this path in the future... and certainly does not prevent him from choosing a different path to a similar or even better destination.”

Dr. Brent Conrad, PhD.



Resources



This presentation was based on the book:

How to Help Children Addicted to Video Games -
The Guide for Parents
by Dr. Brent Conrad, Clinical Psychologist

www.techaddiction.ca

Questions?



GAME OVER