

Gaming: Case Study

The following clinical description is fictional. Any resemblance to real cases is purely coincidental.

Scenario

As a service provider, a parent asks you to see their 13-year-old son. The parent says he is dropping social activities he used to enjoy, has no hobbies, is not sleeping well, and is more interested in playing video games alone than joining his family and friends for activities.

Practice question 1:

What information should you collect to get a broader picture of this situation?

Possible answer:

Go over the warning signs of problematic gaming and the description of gaming disorder in the online gaming section of the toolkit. See if the client has indications of problematic gaming, any mental and physical health concerns, and gauge the client's interest in changing his gaming behaviour. It is important to know if there are any underlying mental, physical, or familial concerns. Using a family-centred care approach might help in determining some of the issues that the youth and his family may be experiencing. Some youth may use technology as a way to cope with a mental health problem or other stressors. For example, youth who feel isolated, have challenging relationships, or are dealing with family disruption may escape their problems by immersing themselves in online communities. The internet can become a place for an individual to fulfill their needs for socialization, connection, and wellbeing; therefore, individuals who are involved in problematic internet use should be considered as clients for treatment related to addictive behavior.

Practice Question 2:

What interventions do you think would be most helpful for this client and his family?

Practice Direction and Recommendations

Service providers:

- Provide treatment for any presenting mental health concerns. Based on your knowledge and training, this could include modalities such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), motivational interviewing or a referral to a mental health specialist.
- Apply assessment tools and analyze results.
- Where possible, obtain information from family, school, and the community in general.
- Provide treatment or make a referral for problematic gaming. This could include CBT, motivational interviewing, addiction counselling, and information on finding healthy hobbies, physical activities, and positive social interaction.
- Provide the family with the resources, and encourage active participation in any treatment plans.