Gaming: Recommended Educational Resources

This document contains resources, including websites, videos, books, and academic articles that service providers may find helpful while supporting children, youth, and families facing challenges around problematic gaming.

Books and Manuals

How to Help Children Addicted to Video Games (Brent Conrad, 2018)

This book provides practical implications, recommendations, and discussions for helping children or teens overcome video game addiction.

Handouts can also be ordered at: http://www.techaddiction.ca/children-addicted-to-video-games.html

Soul Crush Story: A Resource to Help Raise Awareness of Healthy and Harmful Video Gaming (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2014)

This treatment manual offers key messages to raise awareness about the impacts of healthy or unsafe gaming.

https://learn.problemgambling.ca/PDF%20library/Soul_crush_story_manual.pdf

Articles

A meta-analysis of pathological gaming prevalence and comorbidity with mental health, academic and social problems (Ferguson, Coulson, Barnett, 2011, Journal of Psychiatric Research, http://www.christopherjferguson.com/Video%20Game%20Addiction.pdf)

This meta-analysis considers existing research to examine how different measurement methods influence prevalence rates and associations with other mental health problems. There is still disagreement about the appropriate way to measure problematic gaming, how prevalent the issue is, and how harmful it can be. Most scholars point to the lack of criteria to identify pathological gaming, despite their being a common agreement that gaming problems exist; pathological gambling symptoms have been used and reworded to describe all problematic gaming as pathological, the assumption is that compulsive behaviors symptomatic of pathological gambling can be reassigned to other classes of behavioral addictions. The overidentification and mislabeling of non-pathological young people who have been struggling with gaming as pathological players, can potentially harm them and their families.

Stuck on Screens: Patterns of Computer and Gaming Station Use in Youth Seen in a Psychiatric Clinic (Baer, Bogusz, & Green, 2011, Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3085682/)

This study describes how computer and gaming-station use has become a usual activity in youth culture. The results of the study confirmed that the presence of addictive features was

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positively correlated with emotional / functional impairment and were consistent with anecdotal reports from clinicians and parents involved with children and youth with mental health concerns.

The cognitive psychology of Internet gaming disorder (King & Delfabbro, 2014, Clinical Psychology Review, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0272735814000658)

Internet gaming disorder (IGD), was included in section III of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) as a condition warranting further study, and deliberation continues for it to be fully recognized as an established disorder. This article synthesizes current evidence around IGD. It reviews 7 treatment studies employing cognitive therapy for IGD and 29 quantitative studies on Internet gaming cognition. The authors identified four cognitive factors underlying IGD: (a) beliefs about game reward value and tangibility (e.g., attributing high value to games, obsession: rumination/planning), (b) maladaptive and inflexible rules about gaming behavior (e.g., procrastination/prioritization), (c) over-reliance on gaming to meet self-esteem needs (e.g., positive/negative expectancy, control), and (d) gaming as a method of gaining social acceptance (e.g., autonomy, power, success, dominance, sense of acceptance and belonging). The authors conclude that it is essential for clinicians working with individuals who are struggling with the disorder to consider these factors as an interpretation of findings that needs to be guided, in part, by clinical judgement. They add that further research is needed to examine and validate these factors, and expand and improve cognitive therapies for individuals who experience IGD.

Websites

MediaSmart:

The Online Gaming section of the MediaSmart website explores different types of online games that youth are immersed in and the issues that may be encountered; additionally, it provides guidelines for parents to support them in managing gaming at home.

https://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/general-information/internet-mobile/online-gaming

Game Quitters:
This website is an online community where individuals may find support through resources, forums, podcasts, videos, and parent support groups.

https://gamequitters.com/

TechAddiction's Information Centre:
This website contains helpful articles on video game addiction and internet addiction.

http://www.techaddiction.ca/video-game-addiction-internet-addiction.html

Common Sense

This nonprofit organization's website contains information for parents and educators. The Keeping Games Fun and Friendly article in the for Educators section of the website delivers service providers with some strategies and resources to support youth in keeping their gaming experiences fun, healthy, and positive.

https://www.commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship/lesson/keeping-games-fun-and-friendly#

Videos

Just One More Game: Parenting and Video Games

In this 50 minute video, Dr. Tyler Black, a child adolescent psychiatrist at British Columbia Children's Hospital, talks about the benefits and harms of video games. He also offers recommendations for parents on ways to support children and youth who are experiencing problematic gaming.

https://mediasite.phsa.ca/Mediasite/Play/b31662e8fca54f328ad209827c9101271d

Internet and Video Games and our Children: What Parents Need to Know

In this 55 minute video, Dr. David Greenfield discusses facts for parents about internet and technology addiction, texting, sexting, online pornography, and social media. He explains what happens in the nervous system when children and youth overuse technology.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jchXCjo09gI