



# FACT SHEET: TALKING TO YOUR TEENS ABOUT DIGITAL GAMING

COMPUTER GAMING IS ONE SOCIAL PAST TIME FOR MANY AUSTRALIAN ADOLESCENTS. THEY PLAY ANYWHERE BETWEEN 2-18 HOURS PER WEEK AND OFTEN LONGER ON WEEKENDS THAN WEEKDAYS. HIGHER PREVALENCE RATES (8-15%) HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN POPULATIONS OF ADOLESCENTS AND COLLEGE STUDENTS, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO PLAY ONLINE-ENABLED VIDEO GAMES

## IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT DIGITAL GAMES

*UNDERSTANDING THE GAMES WILL GIVE YOU A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WHY YOUR CHILD IS GAMING!*

- Gaming today is a very diverse form of entertainment which caters for everyone
- Modern video games are more structurally complex and can be psychologically appealing to attract players
- If used well, digital games can be benefit to the education and physical and psychological development of the young people

## EXCESS USE

**EXCESSIVE USE OF DIGITAL GAMES CAN LEAD TO PROBLEM GAMING AND ADDICTION. IT IS CHARACTERISED BY THE EXCESSIVE AND UNCONTROLLED USE OF ONLINE GAMES TO THE EXTENT THAT IT SIGNIFICANTLY INTERFERES WITH DAILY LIFE RESULTING IN NEGATIVE PSYCHOSOCIAL AND PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES.**

## SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR

*ALTHOUGH A FEW INDIVIDUALS MAY DEVELOP SYMPTOMS OF VIDEO GAME ADDICTION WITHIN A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, FOR MOST, THE COURSE IS MORE INSIDIOUS.*

*VIDEO GAME ADDICTION TYPICALLY BEGINS IN EARLY ADOLESCENCE AND EARLY INDICATORS OR WARNING SIGNS OF VIDEO GAME ADDICTION INCLUDE:*

- Spending most or all available hours playing a video game
- Diminished job and/or educational productivity
- Choosing to play video games rather than socialize and/or sleep
- Lying or being secretive about video game use, and
- Avoiding or no longer participating in other activities in order to spend more time playing video games.



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## HOW TO MANAGE GAMING AT HOME

**AS A PARENT, YOU NEED TO LEARN HOW TO MANAGE YOUR KIDS' GAMING ACTIVITIES AT HOME. HERE ARE SOME ADVICE:**

- **Choosing the right game:** Check the classification for a neutral rating of the content in the game and make sure it's appropriate for your child
- **Setting the appropriate limits:** As a parent, you should be the one who sets the limits or rules within your household, including setting the time limit for your children's game play activity
- **Controlling the environment:** Encourage the children to use the gaming devices in shared rooms and common areas and try be a part of it as much as you can
- **Finding other healthy alternatives:** By engaging in activities with your child, you will help them develop other interests and get a sense of achievement and being rewarded
- **Educating your children about staying safe online:** This includes protecting their privacy online, stop using or deleting certain content if being harassed

The Australian Government's *Cybersmart* website (<https://esafety.gov.au/?from=cybersmart>) has information for parents and kids about online games and staying safe online.

## GETTING HELP

- **Your Local GP:**  
Please visit your regular GP as a first point of contact.
- **Gambler's Help:**  
Gambler's Help on 1800 858 858 or **Gambler's Help Youthline** on 1800 262 376
- **KidsHelpLine:**  
1800 55 1800 or A counselling service specifically for young people aged between 5 and 25.

## IN-LANGUAGE SERVICES

- **Arabic Welfare Inc.**  
**Contact (Arabic):** Contact: Hoda Nahal  
[goweh@arabicwelfare.org.au](mailto:goweh@arabicwelfare.org.au) +61 3 93809346
- **Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS) (Arabic):**Contact: Issam Alameh  
[issam.alameh@vass.org.au](mailto:issam.alameh@vass.org.au) +61 3 93592861
- **EACH Social and Community Health)(EACH) (Chinese):** Contact: [rcsintake@each.com.au](mailto:rcsintake@each.com.au), 1300 131 973
- **Australian Vietnamese Women's Association (AVWA) (Vietnamese):**  
Contact: Kim Vu  
[kim.vu@avwa.org.au](mailto:kim.vu@avwa.org.au) +61 3 9428 9078
- **Springvale Indo-Chinese Mutual Assistance Association Incorporated (SICMAA)(Vietnamese) :** Contact: Bic Gresty  
[bgresty@sicmaa.org.au](mailto:bgresty@sicmaa.org.au) +61 3 9547 6161