



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 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 socialise 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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G A P
GAMBLING AWARENESS PROJECT

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 to 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 *eSafety* website (<https://www.esafety.gov.au/education-resources/iparent>) has more information for parents and kids about online games and staying safe online.

GETTING HELP

Gambler's Help

1800 858 858

gamblershelp.com.au

Gambler's Help provides free and confidential support in Arabic, Cantonese Mandarin and Vietnamese. An interpreter can be arranged for other languages on request. Visit gamblershelp.com.au for more information.

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact Gambler's Help through the National Relay Service. For more information visit relayservice.gov.au

FREE SUPPORT SERVICE: GAMBLER'S HELP

IF YOU THINK YOU OR SOME ONE YOU CARE ABOUT HAVE A PROBLEM, TALKING TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST IS A GREAT FIRST STEP TO GET BACK IN CONTROL.

GAMBLER'S HELP IS A FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE TO SUPPORT PEOPLE AFFECTED BY GAMBLING RELATED PROBLEMS ACROSS VICTORIA. IT OFFERS SUPPORT, ADVICE AND INFORMATION TO PEOPLE AFFECTED BY GAMBLING (BOTH GAMBLERS AND NON-GAMBLERS) AND TO THE BROADER COMMUNITY.

Counselling for gambling-related problems offers:

- A professional, confidential and free service
- A thorough assessment of gambling and other related issues
- Information to fit the needs of the client
- Referrals to other agencies and help services where appropriate
- Services for individuals, couples, families or groups
- Support for both the gambling and/or their partners and families
- Culturally appropriate assistance and interpretation services can be arranged for free upon request.