

When Video Games Become More Than Just Entertainment

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Do you spend all of your free time playing video games or playing games online? If you think there might be a problem, chances are there is. Research estimates that 10% of people that use the internet to play games or play video games are addicted to them.

Normally, when people hear the word addicted they connected it to substance addiction. However, the general definition of addiction is as follows: 1. When an individual needs more and more of a substance or behavior to keep them going. 2. When the individual does not get more of the substance or behavior, they become angered, miserable and anxious (withdrawal symptoms). Too much “gaming” to most people may feel this behavior is harmless compare to the danger of drug addiction or drug overdose.

Is gaming really harmful? Children, who play hours and hours per day and have no time for socializing, doing homework, or getting involve in extracurricular activities in school, will lack the development of social skills. Socializing requires a set of social skills, which one gets by being around others. For example, you can have a 23 year old with the emotional intelligence of a 13 years old. He has never learned to socialize with peers. As a result of not socializing the individual may now suffer from social phobia, low self esteem and anxiety.

What are some of the warning signs of game addiction: 1. Playing for a long extended amount of time. 2. Always preoccupied about playing when they are doing other things. 3. Using gaming as a coping mechanism to avoid tough situations. 3. Lying to individuals about playing video games. 4. Feeling anxious/irritable when trying to stop playing video games.

Parents beware! Children who lack social skills, poor self-esteem, and isolate themselves tend to gravitate to these games where they may feel in control because in the real world they may feel helpless.

If you feel you or someone you know needs assistance it’s very important to seek professional help. Addiction is quite difficult to overcome alone.



Reading Suggestions:



Meet Our New Counselors!



Valerie Olivarez, M.Ed., LPC

Valerie is currently receiving training to become a Registered Play Therapist. She utilizes play therapy skills when working with children to help them process and express themselves in an age appropriate manner. She also works with teenagers and adults, utilizing cognitive behavioral therapy to help them process their current presenting problem. Her goal is to create a positive trusting environment to assist the clients to achieve their goal of improving their daily life.



Laura L. Osio, M.A., LPC

Laura is currently providing services to adolescents and adults using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, as well as Client Centered Therapy to guide them through their current presenting problem. Laura strives to create a positive, trusting environment, and to guide clients in achieving their personal goals in therapy.



Sandra Y Solís, M.Ed., LPC

Sandra has extensive experience working with adolescents and couples. Her skills include the use of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to assist clients with solving current problems, change unaccommodating thinking, and behavior. She also works with children and uses play therapy skills to help them express themselves. Her goal is to guide her clients through their presenting issues and help them lead happy, and healthy lives.