Choices Topic for January: Video Game & Internet Addiction

**Who’s at Higher Risk for Internet and Video game Addiction?**

Those who experience the following may be at a greater risk for these addictive behaviors:

* ADHD
* Hostility and aggression
* Depression
* Social Phobia

Previous reports found that anywhere between 1.4 percent and 18 percent of children and teens are addicted to the Internet. Among those teens, a large percentage likely suffers from ADHD, depression, social phobia or hostility.

If you have determined that your child or teen is addicted to the Internet, it is important to get help immediately. Doing so can also help you identify any disorders that are underlying your teen’s addiction, such as ADHD or depression.

**Is Video Game “Addiction” a Real Thing?**

Although Video Game Addiction may not be given as an official diagnosis, addiction-like behaviors with the computer, video games and internet gaming is real. Compulsive gaming can lead to a strong dependence on the behavior and failure to do so can result in irritability or depression.

**What are some signs or symptoms?**

* Preoccupation with the game or computer
* Downplaying gaming use
* Lack of control
* Loss of time
* Negative impact on other areas of life
* Using gaming to hide negative or uncomfortable feelings
* Defensiveness
* Misuse of money
* Mixed feelings of euphoria followed by guilt for the time spent gaming and neglecting other obligations

Discussion Questions: How much time do you spend on the Internet/gaming?



**Students:**

* How do you monitor the amount of time spent playing video games or surfing the web?
* Why do you feel the need to game or spend time on the internet?
* What are some other possible outlets or ways you could spend your time?
* Do you know someone who spends too much time gaming or on the internet?
* How would you confront them if you began to notice their hobby was interfering in their daily activities and relationships?

**Parents, Faculty and Staff:**

* How do you monitor the amount of time spent gaming or on the internet at home?
* Are you aware of what your children/students do when they surf the web, or the type of games they play?
* How do you monitor your own use?
* What are some other positive outlets and hobbies to engage in other than internet/video game use?
* What steps can you take to confront someone struggling with overuse of the internet/video games?

Resources: <http://www.video-game-addiction.org/symptoms-computer-addiction-teens> http://www.psychguides.com/guides/how-to-find-help-treating-a-video-game-addict/

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