

Research paper for computer game addicted

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From the time computer games made their way into family homes, parents have wondered if violent video games may negatively affect children and teenagers. Today, parents still worry about the effects of violent computer games and of course it also remains a popular topic for the media. However, with a growing number of children and teens spending excessive time playing computer games, perhaps parents should be more worried about teenagers addicted to computer games than the effects of violent video games. An examination of the literature reveals that those who study video game addiction sometimes disagree on the proportion of children and teenagers addicted to computer games. However, the majority of studies suggest that approximately 5 to 10% of youth who play computer games become addicted. Compared to other psychological difficulties (such as depression and anxiety), teenage computer game addiction is obviously a relatively new problem faced by families. As such, parents may lack accurate and/or helpful information on the signs of computer game addiction, the risk factors for video game addiction, and strategies for helping teenagers addicted to computer games after the problem develops. As more therapists work with teenagers addicted to computer games and more researchers study the problem, they are becoming better at detecting the signs of addiction, testing for video game addiction, and offering help to parents with teenagers addicted to computer games. Still, there is much confusion about exactly what computer game addiction is and how parents can help a teenager who seems far more interested in playing in a virtual world than living in the real world. Teenagers Addicted To Computer Games - Advice for Parents 1. For now, computer game addiction is not an official psychological

disorder. The possibility of including computer game addiction in future editions of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders is being debated, but currently it just a way to describe someone whose life appears to be negatively impacted by excessive gaming - and is not a recognized addiction. 2. Common sense suggests that the more a teen plays computer games, the more likely his play has crossed over into the "unhealthy levels of play" category. However, because computer game addiction is not an official diagnosis there is no set number of hours per day signifying an addiction. Therefore, in addition to measuring the average number of hours he/she plays per day, it is perhaps more important to examine how computer gaming is interfering with a teen's social relationships, school performance, mood, and development of interpersonal skills. 3. Parents who are worried that their teenager is spending too much time playing computer games and neglecting other activities should not assume that their child will eventually get bored of video games and that gaming is simply a phase. True, some teenagers addicted to computer games do eventually develop other interests and their gaming subsides...but there are also those who develop even more extreme gaming habits as they get older. Parents should not depend on the problem taking care of itself. Computer game addiction needs to be attended to as soon as parents recognize that it is causing significant impairment in other important areas of the teens's life. 4. Most kids and teenagers can and do play computer games without developing an addiction. However, for some teens there is no question that their computer use is unhealthy and excessive by anyone's standards. For these teens, computer games take priority over all other activities, and development in other areas (for

example, school, relationships, clubs, sports) is sacrificed so that more time can be spent in front of the computer screen. It really does not matter if this is called an "addiction" or not. If he continues to play despite experiencing significant negative consequences in other areas of his life (e. g., ignoring school or friends) his computer gaming is a problem and it needs attention.

5. For parents, one of the most concerning things about teenagers addicted to computer games is the effect it has on their child's academic performance. If a student regularly achieved As and Bs prior to becoming hooked on computer games but is now only bringing home Cs and Ds, parents should establish very clear rules around gaming (including the possibility of a ban) until marks have improved. Furthermore, it is critical that any rules around gaming are not only set, but consistently enforced. Setting limitations on computer games but not following through by enforcing the new rules is potentially more harmful than having no limitations at all. 6. In general, treating teenagers addicted to computer games requires that all computers and/or game consoles are removed from his or her room. Of course, this is certainly not the only intervention, but it is almost impossible for a parent to successfully place limits on gaming if the child can still access the game in the privacy of a bedroom. 7. The most popular treatment approach for computer game addiction is cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT). CBT for gaming addiction involves challenging and replacing unhealthy thoughts (cognitions) about computer games (e. g., "my gaming doesn't hurt anyone") and introducing gradual behavioral changes to reduce the time spent playing video games (e. g., rewards for following new rules, appropriate consequences for time limit violations, planned reminders to

stop playing, software solutions, involvement in other activities, identifying and reducing enabling behaviors, avoiding environmental triggers, etc.). 8. Parents seeking assistance from a therapist or psychologist should consider meeting with him or her prior to the first appointment with their child. Although the issue of teenagers addicted to computer games is being taken more seriously by mental health professionals, there are those who dismiss the possibility of video game addiction entirely and focus only on discovering the "root cause" of the problem. The therapist should at least consider the possibility that computer game addiction is the primary problem and offer direct treatment for this issue if necessary. Related to this point... 9. At times, computer game addiction is a symptom of another psychological, emotional, or interpersonal problem. True, computer game addiction can be the primary presenting problem...but there is considerable evidence that excessive computer use also can be triggered or exacerbated by difficulties such as depression, anxiety, and poor social skills. For example, a teenager who is struggling with depression may embrace computer games because he does not feel capable of dealing with real world problems. Of course, turning to online games is very unlikely to make the challenges he faces in the real world go away, and potentially makes them even worse. In this example, the therapist must not only treat the unhealthy gaming, but also the depression which may be feeding the addiction. 10. Despite the challenges and inevitable frustrations of dealing with teen computer game addiction, parents must remember never to give up teenagers addicted to computer games. Although changing unhealthy video game habits is not always easy, teenage computer game addiction can be treated especially if parents have

the critical information and strategies they need for planning a successful video game addiction intervention.