

# Research proposal on video game addiction

[Entertainment](#), [Video Games](#)



## **Introduction**

The recent technological advancements have led to increased involvement in computer and video games, leading to an overuse of these games such that it interferes with daily life (Van et al., 2011). There have been reported cases whereby people have become addicts of video and computer games to the extent that they are unable to socially interact with their close friends and family members. Medics and psychologists do not condemn playing of video games, but they are concerned with these games once a person becomes an addict and he or she focuses entirely on the games, without exhibiting the normal social and emotional characteristics of a person. Douglas Gentile observed that approximately 8.5 percent of young people, who play these games (between 8 and 18 years of age) in the United States, usually have behavioral addiction symptoms (Inspirations for Youth and Families, 2011).

The following paper discusses the issue of video games addiction in the society and the corresponding effects that it has on a person and his close relationships. It explains the social, medical and emotional problems that are associated with addictions to video gaming. Also, it describes the solutions available to the addicts and his close friends and family. It explains the intervention methods aimed at rehabilitating the addicts especially detox psychotherapy, psychopharmacology and the twelve steps. It also describes the preventive measures that are applicable to persons who are potential addicts especially the young people.

## **Effects of Video Games Addiction**

According to the Inspirations for Youth and Families, (2011), addiction affects any age, but mostly the young people and children are more prone to addiction, and this is the reason as to why this study has a great significance. School going children can become quite addicted and start neglecting their academic duties and work, thereby putting a toll on their studies. Addiction to video and computer games can affect any person once it starts interfering with people's normal lives, and there have been many concerns from the public and the government alike.

A research done by the Council on Science and Public Health in the year 2005 that involved a survey done by the Entertainment Software Association showed that most gamers spent more than two hours daily, leading to an overuse of video games (Telling it like it is, 2008). In the year 2007, an interactive poll that was used to survey the extent of game use in the United States, targeting young people between the age of eight and eighteen, and more than 80 % of the interviewees made it clear that they played games at least once each month. Among the surveyed, it was concluded that 8.5% of them was clinically addicted to these games.

In the year 2009, researchers found a link between on screen time or playing video games with various attention issues. Also, some mental disorders have been connected to technology addictions (for example, video game addiction) (Van et al., 2011). Such mental disorders include anxiety problems, depression and obsessive compulsive issues. These disorders may coexist with the addiction due to the immediate gratification and brain

stimulation that goes with video games. The government has been closely analyzing the issue of video games addiction after reports showed that solitaire addiction had resulted into a loss of millions of dollars in the year 2005, leading to an anti-solitaire policy proposal by the then North Carolina State Senator Austin Allran . Government employees were spending a large portion of their time playing that game while they neglected their duties in the state offices.

## **Solutions to Video Games Addiction**

Addiction can either be substance addiction or behavioral addiction, and video games addiction falls into the category of behavioral addiction. The therapist must be able to understand the extent of the addiction so that he/she can find the best way to treat a client, and for a behavior or substance to be addictive it has to follow these criteria (Van et al., 2011):

1. The addicted person requires more and more of that behavior, action or substance every time.
2. The person usually becomes irritated and sad once he does not get more of the behavior or substance.

There is a detox procedure that can be used to rehabilitate video games addicts. This process aims at eliminating the prime cause of the addiction in those people who exhibit impulse control disorder. Just like other addictions, the goal is usually to take an addict to a treatment center whereby the addictive video games are eliminated and removed from his access (Hub Pages, 2012). This detox process happens much the same way as with substance abuse. For example, alcoholics and other drug addicts are usually

taken to a treatment center and all traces of drugs are removed and eliminated from the addicts' reach. In most cases, detox process is always the first step towards treating people who are addicted to video games. Once the video games and computer games are removed from the addicts' reach, the therapists usually embark on psychological examination of the addict.

Treatment and therapy form the best course for rehabilitating video games addicts since most of these people usually have strained relationships, jobs, education and personal health. Even after a detox process, it remains hard for video games addicts to stop thinking about their games, and in most cases they feel powerless to put a stop to it (Van et al., 2011). If therapy is not offered, it becomes very easy for them to slip back into their addiction. Since video games addiction is a new problem in behavioral addictions, therapists and psychologists have recommended a combination of treatments by the use of psychopharmacology, psychotherapy and the twelve- steps procedure. In psychopharmacology, psychoactive drugs are used in order to deal with brain chemical interactions while inducing various changes in an addict's psychological and physiological functions. In psychotherapy, the therapist may decide to treat the addict as an individual or as a group (a couple or family members), through psychological interventions. According to Telling it like it is, (2008), the main aim of psychotherapy is usually to enhance and addict's sense of his worthiness, whereby the therapist uses communication and relationship building as ways of improving the affected. The twelve-step program can also be used to rehabilitate an addict as formulated by the American Psychological

Association. This program is very appropriate for behavioral addictions such as addiction and compulsion. The twelve steps consist of statements that allow addicts to admit that they have a problem, ask for God to restore their sanity and after the spiritual awakening, they go on to practice what they have learnt for the betterment of their lives.

The other solutions that can be used to reduce video games addicts in the society are through preventive measures. In most cases, the largely affected age group is the young people, and their video gaming can easily be controlled by their parents, teachers or guardians. As they are taught on how to use video gaming sparingly, these young people can easily learn on how to control their gaming and restrict their involvement in video games to leisure and entertainment only (Inspirations for Youth and Families, 2012). This can be done by setting boundaries as to when games should be played without appearing like the parent wants to prevent the child from playing games. Also, it is possible to delete the games from the computers at home or in the office to stop the players from getting addicted. These preventive measures are effective in avoiding the development of video games addiction.

## **Conclusion**

Video games addiction is as real as any other addiction, and unlike substance addiction, video games addiction is behavioral type of addiction. Addicts usually try to escape from the realities of life and in most cases it affects teenage boys who are trying to immerse themselves in a world that they feel they can control. Their social lives become damaged due to the

great involvement in a virtual world of video gaming. The above paper has discussed the issue of video games addiction in the society and the corresponding effects that it has on a person and his close relationships. It has explored the social, medical and emotional problems that are associated with addictions to video gaming. The paper has also given the solutions available to addicts and his/her close friends and family. It has described the intervention methods aimed at rehabilitating the addicts especially detox psychotherapy, psychopharmacology and the twelve steps. Finally, it has offered the preventive measures that are applicable to persons who are potential addicts especially the young people.

## References

Hub Pages. (2012). Computer Game Addiction: Parents, Preventions and Solutions. Available at <http://benjamin1.hubpages.com/hub/Computer-Game-Addiction---Parents--Preventions-and-Solutions>

Inspirations for Youth and Families. (2011). Video Game Addiction: Teen Excessive Compulsive Behavior. Available at <http://www.inspirationsyouth.com/Video-Game-Addiction.asp>

Telling it like it is. (2008). Video Game Addiction: Symptoms and Treatment of Video Game Addiction. Tellingitlikeitis.net. Available at <http://www.tellingitlikeitis.net/2008/11/video-game-addiction-symptoms-and-treatment-of-video-game-addiction.html>

Van Rooij, A. J., Schoenmakers, T. M., Vermulst, A. A., Van Den Eijnden, R. M., & Van De Mheen, D. (2011). Online video game addiction: identification of

addicted adolescent gamers. *Addiction*, 106(1), 205-212. doi: 10.1111/j.1360-0443.2010.03104.x