

Video Gaming Fact Sheet

by Nancy M. Petry, Ph.D.

Over 90% of teens play video games¹

Playing video games is a common hobby. Popular video games include massively multiplayer online role playing games (MMORPGs), shooter games, and strategy games. Fantasy sports are also popular.



- On average, teens play video games 12 hours a week.¹
- About 1-5% of youth develop problems with video games.¹⁻⁷
- Adults also play-- and can develop problems with—videogames.^{3,5}

Signs of gaming problems include:⁸

- Thinking about games even when involved in other activities, like when at school.
- Needing to play games more often or for longer periods to feel satisfied from gaming.
- Unable to stop or reduce gaming.
- Anger, depression, or anxiety when gaming is not possible for long periods.
- Gaming to get away from bad moods or real life problems.
- Losing interests in other activities.
- Continuing to game even after problems (at school or with family or friends) developed from it.
- Lying repeatedly about gaming.
- Risking or losing a friendship or opportunity at school or work because of gaming.



Most video games are free or require a subscription to play. Winning usually does not involve financial gain, but people can gamble on outcomes of video games. In particular, Fantasy Football players develop teams online and bet on performances. If money is risked, gambling problems may also develop.

PGS PROBLEM
GAMBLING
SERVICES

What is gambling? The act of risking something of value, including money and property, on an activity that has an uncertain outcome.

What is social gambling? Social gamblers gamble for entertainment, will not risk more than they can afford, and often gamble with friends. They gamble for a limited period of time and are not preoccupied with gambling.

Resources for Help

Problem Gambling Services
Department of Mental Health &
Addiction Services,
State of Connecticut
860-344-2244

Services include
Peer Support; Bettor Choice Program
Sites; Local, regional and statewide
Prevention Services.

The Connecticut Council on Problem
Gambling (CCPG) Helpline 1-888-789-
7777, www.problemgambling.org



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What are risk factors for gaming problems?

- Having electronics in the bedroom⁹
- No rules about gaming in the home¹⁰
- Attention deficit disorder, autism, depression, or anxiety problems, especially social anxiety.^{1,7,11,12}

How can you help someone with gaming problems?

- **Talk with them about it!**
- Remove electronics from bedrooms.
- Limit, and monitor, electronic use daily.
 - ☑ Gaming should occur only after completing other responsibilities (chores, homework).
 - ☑ Gaming should stop at least an hour before bedtime.
- Encourage other recreational activities.

Worried about how much your child plays video games?

Volunteer for a research study looking at ways to help reduce gaming.

- All participants receive assessment and referrals and half receive 6 weekly therapy sessions.
- All participants complete 4 interviews over 6 months.
- Children participate with their parents, and all participants receive up to \$180 for their time.

Call Amy at 860-989-7105 for a confidential screening to see if you are eligible. IRB#17-028-2 PI:Petry UConn Health

How can you help someone with online gambling problems?

Call the gambling helpline (1-888-789-7777)

or text (847-973-5684)

Help them get into gambling treatment

(www.ct.gov/dmhas/pgs)