

THE PROBLEM OF DEPENDENCE ON VIRTUAL WORLD NOWADAYS

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Video games are becoming increasingly complex, detailed, and compelling to a growing international audience of players. With better graphics, more realistic characters, and greater strategic challenges, it's not surprising that some teens would rather play the latest video game than study hard, spend time with friends, play sports, or even watch television. It's becoming quite a serious problem in the society nowadays.

Of course, all gamers are not addicts – many teens can play video games a few hours a week, successfully balancing school activities, grades, friends, and family obligations. But for some of them gaming has become an uncontrollable compulsion. Studies estimate that 10 percent to 15 percent of gamers exhibit signs that meet the World Health Organization's criteria for addiction.

Here are some symptoms of game addiction - the more of these symptoms can be identified, the greater the need to get professional help: most non-school hours are spent on the computer or playing video games, falling asleep in school, falling behind with assignments, worsening grades, lying about computer or video game use, choosing to use the computer or play video games, rather than see friends, dropping out of other social groups (clubs or sports), being irritable when not playing a video game or being on the computer.

There also are physical symptoms that may point to addiction: carpal tunnel syndrome, sleep disturbances, backaches or neck aches, headaches, dry eyes, failure to eat regularly or neglecting personal hygiene.

When the topic of video game addiction comes up, most people immediately picture a 13-year-old boy absorbed in his Sony PlayStation or Xbox. But gaming addiction also affects adults. From the executive to the stay-at-home mom, the compulsive use of video, computer, and Internet games causes thousands of adults to ignore important work and family obligations.

Since game addiction is widely spreading nowadays, it is under the study of specialists of different fields, who have presented their recommendations, but the main thing is to remember that in the case of game addiction people should try not to be judgmental or angry, because it's common for a person who is confronted about an addiction to get defensive.