

Videogame Use and Abuse

Understand what type of videogames they are into:

- 1 person games – no internet needed, tetris/candy crush etc, quite below average risk
- Real time strategy games – competitive, resource gathering/building game, above risk
- Massively multiplayer online games – internet needed, on-going virtual world, reach goals with others, very much above average risk
- Role playing games – on-going virtual world, build up characters/experiences/abilities/\$, adventures, very much above average risk
- First person shooter games – fast, world on-going if team are in the game, above average risk
- Life simulators – not competitive, player-created goals
- Social and casual games – online, simple rules, few controls, below average risk
- Gaming and gambling

Effective interventions

- Limit type/duration
- Play AFTER work is done
- Social skills on/offline
- Social activity on/offline
- Increase physical activity
- Know your child's friends
- Monitor play
- Monitor bullying
- Monitor grades
- Put the wifi on a timer
- Ask questions/start conversations
- Check ratings of games - Early childhood/Everyone/Everyone 10+/ Teen/Mature/Adults only/Rating pending

How to start the conversation:

- What game(s) are you playing?
- What do you like most about that game?
- What do you like least about that game?
- Who do you play with?
- Do you know them personally or just through the game?
- Do you have a role with your online friends in the game
- If you don't play, do your online friends get mad at you?
- Do you think the time you play is not enough or too much?
- What similarities and differences are there between online and offline worlds?
- What kind of lessons do you learn from gaming that you can use offline?
- Where do you see gaming taking you in life?

Expanding conversation

- **Cut down** – Have you ever felt like you should cut down on playing?
- **Annoyed** – Have you been annoyed by people’s comments about your playing?
- **Guilty** – Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your playing time?
- **Eye opener** – Do you think about playing when you are not playing?

Resources- In person

1. Family doctor
 - Appointment needed. If you don’t have one you can call 811, or find one on www.albertafindadoctor.ca or on www.cpsa.ca
2. Adult addiction Services Calgary (AASC)
 - Offer a full range of outpatient addiction treatment services for adults(18+) and their families concerned about substance use, gambling, and videogame addiction problems. Supports clients in reaching their goals and living a healthy lifestyle.
 - Walk-in appointments available Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm
 - Telephone appointments available Monday to Thursday 8am – 8pm, Friday 8am to 4pm
 - 3rd floor, 707 10 Ave SW Calgary, 403-367-5000
3. Youth Substance Use & Mental Health Services Calgary
 - Walk – in hours M, W, and F. 8:15am – 11:00am. Youth and parents.
 - 1005 17 St SW. 403-297-4664

Online resources

- <http://www.techaddiction.ca/> resources for parents related to teen video game addiction
- <https://mediasmarts.ca/> offers resources for parents and teachers, including lessons, research, and information on digital citizenship and digital and media literacy.
- <https://healthychildren.org> a website out of the American Academy of Pediatrics. It has a number of resources for parents, including [information on how to create a personalized Family Media Use Plan](#) that works within each family's values and busy lifestyles.

Reminders

- understand your risks & costs
- get fully vaccinated for COVID-19
- set the right time for travel tests
- get insurance: COVID-19, other health, emergency
- get informed of entry requirements: overseas/Canada
- keep a list of important websites/resources/proofs/contacts
- check for the newest information

Detailed information available on <http://diversitycalgary.ca/vua>