

November 15, 2019



QSI

INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL OF PÁPA
HUNGARY

Gaming, A New Approach

Teen boys are spending 9 hours on average each week playing video games. And of course, there are many girls who spend a lot of time on such games. The ones that are really hooked often are up late into the night playing and can spend 9 hours easily in one day. They do this for many reasons, including because it is fun, social, they get to level up, AND, the companies are doing a great job of hooking them.

Many teens who play a lot of video games also have happy, full lives—being social offline, doing other things for the challenge that lets them build needed self-competence, family time, and much more. When kids and teens have lots going on off the screen, it is a great sign of mental wellbeing!

Yet, many hours on video games can be a red flag when there is very little happening outside of game time. Are they experiencing stressors offline for which gaming is an escape? Is there clinical anxiety or depression that is leading to avoidance and isolation, and then games become the perfect fill-in? It is crucial to sort this out when a youth fits this picture. And seek help from a school counselor, friends, or other resources.

Even if your child or students are not attached to video games, they likely have friends who are, and a personal short talk is a way to inspire productive conversations. Watching this [TEDx](#) talk by Cam Adair, a self-described former video game addict, is a great way to open a conversation.



After nearly a decade of eating, sleeping, and gaming up to 16 hours a day, Cam quit gaming. In January of 2015, he started the website, [Game-Quitters](#). What began as a way to help him find his purpose and keep him away from the consoles, has turned into a community 30,000 strong. In his TEDx, he talks about how he had to abandon work to get proper sleep

because he was playing games all night. He goes on to explain why people dive into the gaming world. It was a way to escape from real-world problems temporarily into imaginary ones; it's a way to socialize with avoiding hard social interactions; it's also a place to be challenged and gain competencies.



Upcoming Events

- Nov 17 QSI Chime Performance
- Nov 20 Teen Talk
- Nov 21-22 Prof Dev (no school)
- Nov 27 Tarczy Pickup
- Nov 29 Concern Assembly

Lunch November 18-20

- 18: Breaded cheese with fries, mayonnaise
- 19: Baked pork chop with rice and fresh salad
- 20: Pizza Margherita



A FEW IDEAS . . .

Here are some ideas around helping you parent around gaming:

- **Validating Gaming is Fun**

Validating that gaming is fun is important but also explaining the allure and why you have limits. There is an art to validating our teens' feelings effectively. Work to tell them you see and appreciate the challenge of what they are feeling, and try not to follow it with statements such as, "Oh, don't worry, it will get better."

- **Do Swaps**

See if your child will commit to designing video games (maybe even learning to code online depending on the age) for some percentage of the time plays video games—even just try this for a weekend. It is all about throwing a few peanuts into a bag of popcorn now and then to see if little shifts can occur (or a new product for that matter—girl, did I love Cracker Jacks growing up.)

- **Let Tech Do the Work**

For example, with Apple's Screen Time, you can set all phone games to go off at a certain time. Make sure your phone is truly linked to your child's. Otherwise, they can just push the button that says, extend the time. Now that might be your system—i.e. you have a limit just as a reminder to them, but just make sure you know which way it is. I know several parents who did not realize this for some time.

- **Replacing the Time Spent**

Much of what I, and many researchers and practitioners, are concerned about is the displacement of time. What are our kids not doing, not developing when they are spending most of their free time on screens?

MORE IDEAS AND QUESTIONS

- **Parents Getting Support**

I am a big believer in building a community around parenting to help our kids through difficult times and to support each other through difficult parenting moments. In Screenagers NEXT CHAPTER, I share how it was a team of friends, teachers, and others that helped Tessa get through a very stressful time dealing with depression.

- **"My House, My Rules."**

My wonderful neighbor told me how she operates with her kids (ages 9, 12, 15). "We just have a Wii at our house and have tried to stick with active video games. No guns, etc. Wii Sports, Just Dance, Mario Kart. No video games on phones for us. I tend to do 'my house, my rules' with other kids and allow for the same at friends' houses."

Here are some questions to talk to your kids about gaming addiction:

- Have everyone talk about their favorite video game or all other consuming internet activities. What makes them so appealing?
- Do you ever play a game as a way to escape dealing with a feeling?
- How easy is it for you to set your own limits around using the internet and gaming and then stop when the time is up?
- How many hours do you think is the right amount of time in a day to spend on video games?

We look forward to our upcoming screening of:

SCREEN
AGERS **NEXT**
CHAPTER



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