


Chapter 4

Gaming Disorder and Its Impact on Adolescents' Mental Health

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores Gaming Disorder (GD) and its impact on adolescents. GD is defined as a condition in which excessive gaming negatively affects various life aspects (American Psychiatric Association, 2023). The chapter identifies key sources for recognizing GD symptoms, which can aid practitioners (American Psychiatric Association, 2023). It examines the prevalence of GD among adolescents, highlighting contributing factors like stress, family dynamics, and mental health conditions such as depression and ADHD (Gao et al., 2022). Emphasizing the importance of therapists understanding the gaming world of adolescents, it discusses how gaming practices can lead to addiction, thus guiding effective treatment (Van der Schyff et al., 2023). The chapter outlines strategies for parents to prevent GD (Young, 2009) and highlights effective counseling techniques for practitioners (Kim & Chun, 2022). Lastly, it promotes healthy gaming practices, helping adolescents engage in gaming more balanced and healthfully (Educational Advancement, 2022).

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I. INTRODUCTION

Definition of Gaming Disorder (GD)

Gaming disorder (GD) is a condition with significant mental health concerns where individuals lose control over their gaming habits, leading to negative consequences in areas such as self-care, social relationships, school, and work. This condition can occur both during online and offline gaming experiences (American Psychiatric Association, 2023). While video game use has raised concerns, it remains an ambiguous topic within the field (American Psychiatric Association, 2023).

Diagnostic and treatment interventions for GD, particularly those focused on symptom-based criteria, can be restrictive and potentially confusing (American Psychiatric Association, 2023). The purpose of this chapter is not to condemn gaming, but rather to highlight GD as a stage in which an individual's life is substantially affected across multiple domains. While there is a growing body of research indicating the potential benefits of gaming, such as fostering pleasure and well-being (Nguyen et al., 2018), it is essential to recognize that it can also become problematic when taken to excess (Griffiths, 2018).

Diagnosing GD

Gaming disorder has been identified in two primary reference sources for counselors: the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5-TR) and the *International Classification of Diseases* (ICD-11). The definition of GD is still controversial, and both the DSM-5 and ICD-11, which are authoritative references, offer different interpretations of the disorder, leading to differences in prevalence, etiology, assessment, and intervention (Borges et al., 2021; Ko et al., 2020). Counselors may reference both the DSM-5-TR and ICD-11 when assessing gaming-related concerns, though only the latter provides an official diagnosis.

DSM-5-TR

The first recorded classification of GD appears in DSM-5-TR as a “condition for further study” and a “tentative disorder,” with nine criteria for clinical assessment (American Psychiatric Association, 2023). However, GD has not been officially recognized as a formal mental disorder due to insufficient research and lack of con-

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