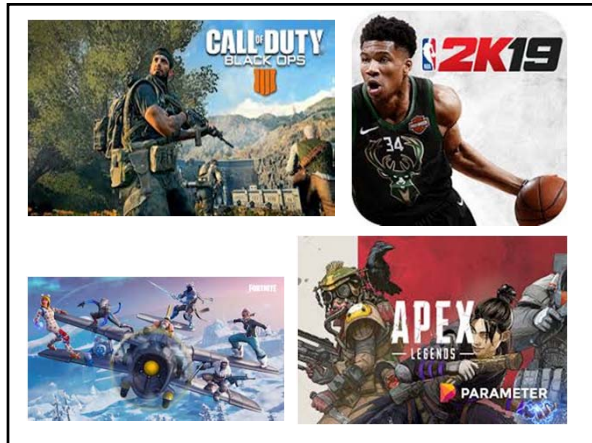


Blurred Lines...The Convergence of Gaming and Gambling

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Q: WHAT CAN EARLY EXPOSURE TO GAMING OR GAMBLING DO TO A CHILD?

A: THINK OF WHAT IS BEING LEARNED:

- Immediate gratification
- Inability to develop patience or control
- Early exposure or a Big Win can be a predictor in future problems for gambling
- For gaming, speed and action dominate the brain (Overdrive)
- If coupled with unresolved trauma in childhood, can lead to multiple issues in the future



What are eSports?!

- ◆ A global industry!
- ◆ eSports as an Olympic sport!
- ◆ Competitive gaming in real time allowing for engagement, thinking critically, and collaboration in team sports
- ◆ You Tube and Twitch streams tournaments live...Twitch now owned by Amazon who bought it for \$1 Billion in 2014

What are eSports?!

- ◆ Audience 225 million 2015 // 380 million 2018
- ◆ Audience expected to exceed 600 million by 2020
- ◆ Revenue \$325 million 2015 // \$906 million 2018
- ◆ Revenue expected to exceed \$1 Billion by 2020

What are eSports?!

- ◆ Closer to home...High School in Connecticut first to offer eSports tournaments in the US in 2017.
- ◆ Connecticut partnership with the Electronic Gaming Federation (EGF)
- ◆ EGF seeking similar goal to NCAA in expanding reach and access to multiple states



What is a Loot Box?!

- 1) A consumable virtual item in a [video game](#) which can be redeemed to receive a random selection of further virtual items.
- 2) A loot box is typically a form of [monetization](#), with players either buying boxes directly or receiving the boxes during play and later buying "keys" with which to redeem them.
- 3) Regulated under [gambling law](#) in some countries.
- 4) Criticized for being a form of unregulated gambling, for creating situations in games that make people "pay-to-win."

Loot Boxes Defined Another Way

- ◆ Random Reward Mechanism that requires 3 components:
- ◆ Eligibility: Requirement to trigger the random event of a loot box (i.e. accomplishment, paying \$, spending time). The triggering event is done actively which perpetuates that "illusion of control."
- ◆ Random Procedure: The randomness is the process and is what makes it feel like gambling.....the HOOK!!
- ◆ Reward: Skins, VC, Weapon, item of value, advancement

Random Reward Mechanisms

- ◆ There is a growing relationship between video games and gambling.
- ◆ Video Games glorify randomness using easily recognizable gambling mechanics and activities (wheels, dice, spinning)
- ◆ Sound effects are vital to provide a sense of realism
- ◆ Try to play a game with no sound vs sound on....less excitement

Why is Gaming so Popular?

- Free to play and Freemium
- Temporary Escape
- Social Connection
- Measurable Growth
- Purpose and Meaning
- Dopamine Overload
- Behavioral Psychology keeps you in
- Safe place to play, experiment, fail

Internet Gaming Disorder

- A condition for further study in DSM-5 (APA 2013)
- Not an "official" disorder in the DSM but one in which the American Psychiatric Association wants additional research done.
- W.H.O classifies as addiction in 2018!



Potential Risks with Gaming

- Can lead to Problem Gambling.
- Bigger concern among the youth.
- The earlier one starts, the higher likelihood to develop a problem.
- The brain develops the "gas pedal" faster than the "braking system."
- Inability to control impact on time or money.
- Illusions of Control
- Sense of identity and belonging.

Potential Pathways to Adolescent Gambling

- Social Casino Games: Easy, short duration, multiple devices, fun or competitive, isolation or social.
- Constant exposure normalizes the experiences
- Availability and Supply
- Positive experience + social interaction
- In game purchasing normalizes the habit of spending money on games....may carry to adulthood.
- Rewards (loot boxes and skins) and leveling up carries may carry over to comps in adulthood.

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Challenges to Prevention

- Difficulty in differentiation between “Gaming” and “Gambling” activities in addiction research
- Many common features in terms of speed, aesthetics, and structure
- Both can create harm through excessive involvement
- Boundaries and lines are getting blurred (digital games with free and paid virtual currencies or items, as well as the capacity for wagering)
- Delay of gratification



SUPPORT. TREATMENT. HOPE.

Thank you!

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