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**GAMING
DISORDERS**

Teacher training on gaming disorders

Digital balance and understanding gaming risks



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OVARFORMA - Ensino e Formação Lda.

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Digital Balance

Understanding and personal reflection

The concept

Digital balance refers to the mindful and intentional management of one's relationship with technology to ensure it supports rather than detracts from overall well-being, productivity, and meaningful human connections. It involves:

- setting boundaries around screen time
- prioritizing face-to-face interactions
- aligning digital usage with personal values and goals.

Achieving digital balance requires self-awareness, the ability to recognize when technology enhances life versus when it becomes a distraction or source of stress, and the practice of integrating periods of digital disconnection into daily routines.

The importance for well-being

Maintaining digital balance is essential for physical, mental, and emotional health. By managing screen time and embracing offline activities, we can:

- Improve physical health: Reducing screen time is an encouraging factor for more physical activity and better sleep quality.
- Enhance mental and emotional health: Limiting excessive technology use reduces stress and anxiety, fostering calm and focus.
- Strengthen relationships: Being present during in-person interactions deepens connections and empathy.

In essence, digital balance empowers us to enjoy the benefits of technology while safeguarding our overall well-being.

Enhancing productivity

Digital balance also plays a crucial role in boosting academic and personal productivity due to a number of benefits arising from this.

Key benefits include:

- Improved focus: Reducing distractions allows for better concentration on tasks.
- Increased efficiency: Setting boundaries around digital use prevents multitasking and promotes task completion.
- Better work-life harmony: Healthy habits reduce burnout, enabling sustained productivity and personal fulfilment.

By practicing mindful technology use, we can maximize productivity while maintaining a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

Self Assessment-time

Understanding gaming risks

Understanding and personal reflection

SPOT THE SIGNS: 9 REASONS TO GET SUPPORT

1. PREOCCUPATION WITH VIDEO GAMES
2. WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS WHEN VIDEO GAMING IS TAKEN AWAY
3. TOLERANCE – THE NEED TO SPEND INCREASING AMOUNTS OF TIME ENGAGED IN VIDEO GAMES
4. UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL OR LIMIT GAME PARTICIPATION
5. LOSS OF INTEREST IN PREVIOUS HOBBIES AND ENTERTAINMENT
6. CONTINUED EXCESSIVE USE OF VIDEO GAMES DESPITE KNOWLEDGE OF THE PROBLEM
7. DECEIVING FAMILY MEMBERS AND/OR THERAPISTS
8. USE OF VIDEO GAMES TO ESCAPE NEGATIVE MOOD
9. HAS JEOPARDISED OR LOST A RELATIONSHIP, JOB, OR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Gaming related challenges

An Overview

Gaming addiction:

- Repetitive gameplay loops and engaging narratives can lead to excessive gameplay
- Emotional investment and constant progression foster fixation, often at the cost of real-life responsibilities

In-game purchases:

- Aggressive monetization strategies, like loot boxes and battle passes, blur lines with gambling
- Ethical concerns arise, especially in games targeting younger audiences

Psychological effects of competitive gaming

- Intense competition fosters stress and anxiety
- Online toxicity and social pressure within multiplayer environments affect emotional well-being

GAMING DESIGN MECHANICS AND THEIR IMPACT ON PLAYER ENGAGEMENT



REPETITION & PERSISTENCE

Maintains engagement but risks frustration and potential addiction when not balanced.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY & BELONGING

Positive for social interaction but can lead to excessive gaming due to players' sense of belonging.



KEY GAME DESIGN FEATURES

REWARDS & INCENTIVES

Keeps players engaged but may lead to compulsive play in games with frequent rewards and monetized incentives.

NARRATIVE & STORYLINE

Fosters engagement but encourages replayability, potentially leading to fixation and extended gaming sessions.

GAME AESTHETICS & INTERFACE

Visual and interface appeal extend playtime and increase the likelihood of extended gaming sessions.



Impact of gaming risks

On players

Addiction: Disrupted sleep, reduced academic/work performance, and strained relationships.

Monetization: Financial strain from frequent in-game purchases; psychological impact akin to gambling.

Competition:

- Positive: encourages skill-building and teamwork
- Negative: excessive focus on winning leads to frustration and burnout

Ethical Concerns

Age-appropriate content based on PEGI or ESRB ratings.

Balancing engaging rewards with responsible design to avoid exploitative mechanics.

Fostering Healthy gaming habits

Strategies

Recognize risks like addiction and unhealthy spending patterns

Encourage balance gameplay by:

- Setting time limits
- Exploring offline activities

Promote games emphasizing fair play, inclusivity, and educational value

Let's Role-Play!

Strategies for the Classroom

Practical solutions and peer collaboration.

Resource Creation

Draft classroom poster and/or guides for the promotion to students of digital wellness

Collaborative Planning

Work in groups and come up with actionable plans for integrating digital breaks, monitoring gaming behaviors, and encouraging healthy gaming habits.

Peer Review and concluding remarks!

**Share personal experiences and insights,
fostering a supportive community of practice.**



Thank you



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**GAMING
DISORDERS**

Pre-evaluation questionnaire

Understanding Gaming Disorders and Digital Balance



Thank you for taking the time to complete this pre-evaluation questionnaire for the Gaming Disorders project. Your input is essential to help us better understand the starting point of participants' knowledge, experiences, and expectations regarding gaming behaviors and digital balance in school settings.

The purpose of this questionnaire is not to test your knowledge but rather to capture your perspectives, experiences, and familiarity with the key topics that will be addressed during the training. Specifically, we aim to gather insights on:

- Your current awareness and understanding of gaming-related risks and digital wellness;
- Your experiences in promoting digital balance among students;
- Your expectations and needs for the upcoming training sessions.

Your honest responses will help us tailor the training to your needs and maximize its relevance and impact. We sincerely appreciate your participation and your commitment to fostering a healthier digital environment for students!

1. I am

- Teacher
 Student
 Parent

2. Country of Residence

- Austria
 Cyprus
 Ireland
 Germany
 Portugal
 Spain

3. School

SECTION 1: Knowledge Check

1.1. 1. What is the recommended maximum recreational screen time per day for teenagers, according to international health guidelines?

- 1 hour
 2 hours
 4 hours
 No recommended limit

1.2. Which of the following is NOT commonly associated with excessive gaming behaviour?

- Social withdrawal
- Improved academic performance
- Sleep disturbances
- Decreased physical activity

1.3. In-game purchases (e.g., loot boxes, skins) can contribute to which risk/s among young players?

1.4. Which psychological factor is often linked to gaming addiction?

- High levels of empathy
- Strong time management skills
- Poor emotional regulation
- Increased Outdoor activity

SECTION 2: Self-Reflection

2.1. In your current role, which of the following signs of excessive gaming have you observed among students?

- Decreased academic performance
- Frequent tiredness/sleepiness during class
- Social isolation from peers
- Increased aggression or irritability
- None observed

2.2. What actions have you taken when noticing potential gaming issues among students?

- Discussed concerns with the student
- Contacted the student's parents/guardians
- Referred the student to the school counsellor
- Integrated discussions about gaming balance into lessons
- No action taken so far



SECTION 3: Attitudes and Practices

3.1. How confident do you feel in recognizing gaming-related issues among your students?

- 1 – Not confident at all
- 2
- 3
- 4 – Very confident

3.2. How often do you discuss healthy technology use or gaming balance in your classroom?

- 1 - Never
- 2
- 3
- 4 - Frequently

3.3. Which best describes your current knowledge about gaming disorders?

- Extensive: I have read materials and/or attended trainings.
- Moderate: I know some general information.
- Limited: I have heard of gaming disorders but don't know much detail.
- None: This training will be my first exposure to the topic.

SECTION 4: Challenges, strategies and outcomes

4.1. In your opinion, what are the main challenges schools face in promoting healthy digital habits?

**4.2. Have you ever implemented strategies like digital breaks or tech-free zones in your teaching?
If yes, briefly describe one example?**

4.3. What outcomes would you like to achieve from this training?



SECTION 5: Opinions on School Strategies

5.1. Which strategies do you believe would be effective in promoting digital wellness in schools? (Check all that apply)

- Introducing scheduled digital detox breaks
- Creating student workshops on digital balance
- Engaging parents through digital wellness education
- Implementing school-wide policies limiting non-educational screen use
- Providing counselling and support services for gaming disorders

5.2. What are the biggest barriers to addressing gaming-related issues in your school? (Check all that apply)

- Lack of time in the curriculum
- Lack of training/resources for teachers
- Resistance from students
- Resistance from parents
- Lack of school policies on digital use

5.3. Is there anything specific you would like this training to address regarding gaming or digital balance?

Digital habits self- assessment worksheet

Name:

Date:

Daily screen time

How many hours do you spend on screens each day (e.g., phone, computer, TV)? Which apps or activities take up most of your screen time? Are there moments when you feel you could reduce screen time?

Habits

Do you have specific times or routines for using technology (e.g., before bed, during meals)? How often do you take breaks from screens during the day? Do you prioritise offline activities, such as hobbies or exercise, over screen time?

Triggers

What situations or emotions often lead you to increase your screen time (e.g., boredom, stress, procrastination)? Are there specific notifications or alerts that make it hard for you to focus on non-digital tasks? Do you find it challenging to disconnect, even when you're with friends or family?



THE OVERWHELMED ACHIEVER

Scenario

Workin groups of 3-4.

Read the background story, the classroom indicators, the role-playing set up and the objectives

Background: Alex is a high-performing student who recently started playing a popular online game arising from peer-pressure and since all of the others were engaged. Initially, Alex managed to balance gaming and schoolwork but has gradually begun to show signs of struggle.

Classroom Indicators:

- Frequently distracted during class and seems sleep-deprived.
- Decline in grades, particularly in subjects that had really high successes in the past and are subjects which require critical thinking or creativity.
- Constantly talks about gaming achievements and strategies with peers but avoids discussing school tasks.

Role-Playing Setup:

Teacher: Notices Alex's declining performance and lack of engagement. Initiates a one-on-one conversation.

Alex: Denies any issue, stating gaming is just "a way to relax."

Peers: Some encourage Alex's gaming habits, while others express concern over the shift in focus.

Objective: Participants will explore how to identify gaming addiction warning signs and how to encourage students to set limits without feeling judged.



THE SOCIALLY WITHDRAWN GAMER

Scenario

Work in groups of 3-4.

Read the background story, the classroom indicators, the role-playing set up and the objectives

Background: Nicole, once an active participant in group projects and extracurricular activities, has started avoiding social interactions. Nicole spends most free time playing an immersive online game and no longer interacts with friends outside of gaming.

Classroom Indicators:

- Refuses to work in groups, preferring solo tasks.
- Appears irritable and disengaged during lessons.
- Spends breaks looking at game-related content or gaming on a phone.

Role-Playing Setup:

Teacher: Observes Nicole's withdrawal and tries to foster group engagement during a class project.

Nicole: Responds defensively, claiming group work is unnecessary and prefers gaming over "boring school activities".

Peers: Some express frustration about Nicole's lack of participation, while others feel empathy but don't know how to help.

Objective: Participants will practice strategies to address social withdrawal, foster collaboration, and encourage culture of balance between gaming and real-world relationships.



THE FINANCIALLY STRAINED SPENDER

Scenario

Work in groups of 3-4.

Read the background story, the classroom indicators, the role-playing set up and the objectives

Background: George has become deeply involved in a game with in-app purchases, spending significant amounts of money on upgrades and customizations. This has started to create tension at home, with George's parents expressing concern about unexpected charges.

Classroom Indicators:

- George frequently asks classmates about strategies to earn in-game currency or advance without spending money.
- Exhibits signs of stress and avoids conversations about the game's monetary aspects.
- Parents contact the school to inform and mention concerns over George's focus on gaming and financial habits.

Role-Playing Setup:

Teacher: Invites George to discuss healthy gaming habits and introduces the idea of setting budgets for in-game purchases.

George: Feels embarrassed and defensive, believing that spending is essential to keep up with peers in the game.

Peers: Mixed reactions - some normalise the spending as "part of the game," while others express that it's unnecessary.

Objective: Participants will explore ways to support students in understanding the financial risks of in-game purchases and teach responsible gaming habits.



**GAMING
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Evaluation Form

Teacher training/workshop on Gaming Disorders



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Thank you for taking the time to participate in this evaluation questionnaire for the Gaming Disorders project. Your feedback is crucial to ensure that the resources and activities we have developed effectively meet their intended goals.

The purpose of this evaluation is to gather a broad overview of the materials and activities available within the project. This is not a test of your knowledge on the topic of gaming disorders; instead, we are keen to understand your perspective on the usability and effectiveness of the resources. Specifically, we are looking for your evaluation of:

- The ease of use of the materials
- Whether their structure, length, and depth align with the objectives of the activity

Your honest opinions and suggestions will help us refine and improve the materials to better serve the needs of our target audiences. We truly value your input and appreciate your time!

1. I am

- Teacher
 Student
 Parent

2. Country of Residence

- Austria
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SECTION 1: ACTIVITY

1.1. Did the activity cover the content that you were expecting?

- Yes
 No

1.2. What further material were you expecting or would have liked included that were not covered?

1.3. Rate your understanding of the activity structure.

- 1 – Poor
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 – Excellent

1.4. Was the activity arranged in a clear and logical way?

- Yes
- No

1.5. How relevant was the subject matter?

- 1 – Poor
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 – Excellent

1.6. How would you rate the amount of material covered?

- 1 – Poor
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 – Excellent

1.7. Rate the quality of the examples presented.

- 1 – Poor
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 – Excellent

1.8. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this activity? Please explain.

SECTION 2: MATERIALS/RESOURCES

2.1. How consistent were the resources with the activity objectives?

- 1 – Poor
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 – Excellent

2.2. Did the material adequately explain the knowledge, skills and concepts it presented?

- 1 – Poor
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 – Excellent

2.3. Did any of the examples/activities/videos/quizzes help you gain a clearer understanding of the activity?

- Yes
- No

2.4. How would you rate the ease of navigation of the material presented?

- 1 – Poor
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 – Excellent

2.5. Rate the amount of multimedia (audio and video) used in the course.

- 1 – Poor
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 – Excellent

2.6. Rate the contribution of multimedia (audio and video) to the understanding of the activity.

- 1 – Poor
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 – Excellent



2.7. Are there any comments you would like to make on ways to improve the activity material?

SECTION 3: FEEDBACK AND IMPACT

3.1. Which impact did this activity have on the way you perceive Gaming Disorders?

3.2. Do you feel more empowered or better equipped to address gaming-related challenges at school and at home?

- Yes
 No

3.3. Do you have suggestions for improving this training in future sessions?

SECTION 4: FINAL REMARKS

4.1. Rate the overall aesthetic of the activity content and materials

- 1 - Poor
 2
 3
 4
 5 – Excellent

4.2. Based on this experience, would you recommend the activity and associated material? Why or why not?



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Thank you for your feedback!