Industry responsibility and regulation

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CHALLENGE(S)

Industry responsibility and regulation: The gaming industry has a responsibility to promote healthy gaming habits and implement measures to prevent excessive and problematic gaming behaviours among young players. However, the major goal of the industry, like any other industry, is to make the most profit from purchases and subscriptions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATION

The games industry, while seeking to maximise profits, also has a responsibility to promote healthy habits among gamers, especially younger ones. This includes creating games that are age-appropriate and do not promote violence or anti-social behaviour. Research shows that playing violent games heavily can increase aggressive behaviour, especially in young children. Therefore, the industry should be aware of the potential negative impact of certain games and work to regulate them appropriately. It is important to remember that computer games can also have a positive impact, for example in the treatment of certain disorders or the development of skills. The industry should strive to develop and promote games that have a positive impact on the health and development of users. It is important for the gaming industry to work with parents and educators to educate about safe and healthy game use. This can be done through information campaigns or guides for parents.

STAKEHOLDERS ADDRESSED

- Youth workers & Educators
- Parents, Families and Friends
- Caregivers & Healthcare professionals
- Policymakers and government bodies
- Game industry

BARRIERS

➢ Limited knowledge and understanding of gaming disorder among stakeholders.
➢ Lack of law regulations.
➢ Downplaying of gaming addiction - normalising the problem.
➢ Need to increase sales profits.

SHORT-TERM GOALS

1. Increase awareness and knowledge about youth gaming disorder among games creators.
2. Enhance understanding of the signs, symptoms, and impact of gaming disorder by game developers.
3. Awareness of the many opportunities to use games for other purposes.

LONG-TERM GOALS

1. Industry engagement - educating about the dangers and integrating knowledge about the harms of games into game development.
2. Raise awareness of the responsibility of game developers - aligning game content with the user group.
3. Designing games for purposes other than entertainment.

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

- ✓ Develop and distribute informational materials and resources on youth gaming disorder.
- ✓ Conduct workshops, seminars, and training to enhance games developers understanding of gaming disorder.
- ✓ Initiate cooperation between the games industry and other businesses.

LONG-TERM ACTIONS

- ✓ Putting knowledge into practice - incorporating healthy habits into games.
- ✓ Foster partnerships between mental health organizations, gaming industry stakeholders, and youth work organizations to update knowledge, practices and trends.
- ✓ Organise networking meetings in different industries on opportunities for collaboration and use of games - designing games for education, using games in the treatment of various disorders and other areas.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE(S)

Poland: the game 'Na Wsi' is the first Polish therapeutic game, developed by the Krakow-based company DrOmnibus in cooperation with the Hipoterapia Foundation. It is an educational game designed to support the development and therapy of children, including those with disorders such as autism or ADHD. The game aims to develop children's cognitive skills through interactive learning tasks. The children's task in the game is to identify different animals based on their sounds and help the shepherd to feed his charges. It was designed for children with developmental disorders, providing a tool to support behavioural therapy. Experts in the fields of pedagogy and psychology have been involved in its creation, ensuring its therapeutic value.

Europe: The PEGI (Pan-European Game Information) system is a European rating system for the content of computer and video games. It was created to provide information about the content of a game and its suitability for specific age groups. The main aim of the PEGI system is to help people make informed purchasing decisions about computer games, based on information about the content and the recommended age of the audience. System defines age categories and uses warning symbols to indicate the presence of potentially controversial content. It is used in 38 European countries. The system has an important role in protecting younger users from inappropriate content and supporting parents in their decisions to purchase children's games.