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ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE GUIDE FOR YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

MINDSET
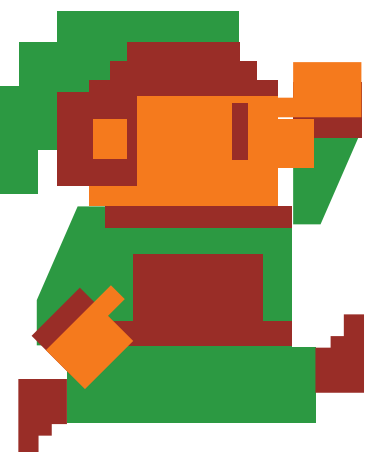
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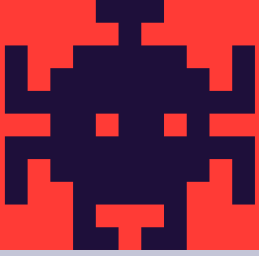
Authors

Eftychia Kechri (KMOP EIH)
Chrysostomos Peppos (CIP)
Mirela Begonja (IC e.V.)
Dr. Dina Abdelhafez (IC e.V.)
Alexandria Pears (FIP)
Angelo Marco Luccini (Succubus Interactive)
Jennifer Walsh (Succubus Interactive)
Paulina Bojanowska (FIiW)
Carolina Vilaça (Mobiliza-te)
Franca DeSyo (die Berater)

Editors
Eftychia Kechri (KMOP EIH)

Graphic design
Chrysostomos Peppos (CIP)

MINDSET is an Erasmus + KA2 project that aims to create tools to prepare youth organizations and youth workers to identify the early signs and prevent the development of gaming disorder among youth.

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Contents

1.Introduction

According to the 2020 report on Europe's Videogames Industry (ISFE), 72% of the European population aged between 15 and 24 play video games. In 2018, gaming disorder was classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). Gaming disorder has severe consequences on the mental, physical and social health of the person suffering from it.
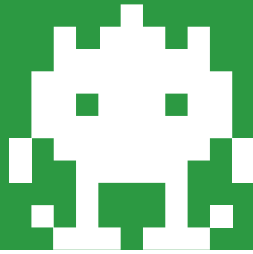
MINDSET project aims to prepare youth organisations and youth workers to identify the early signs and prevent the development of gaming disorders among youth. More specifically, the project has the following objectives:

✓   Raise awareness of the negative effects of excessive gaming,

✓   Provide youth workers and youth organisations with the knowledge to recognise the signs of gaming disorder, disambiguating it from normal gaming behaviour,

✓   Equip youth workers with the tools to identify early signs and prevent gaming disorder,

✓Promote the development of new policies for the identification and prevention of gaming disorders.

The objectives of the Work Package 2-Guide for Youth Workers in France, Poland, Germany, Ireland, Austria, Cyprus, Portugal and Greece are to collect necessary data on the situation of gaming disorder and the measures taken to tackle it in national contexts, to gain insight on the views of young people and youth workers on gaming disorder in national contexts, to improve the knowledge of young people and increase awareness among them regarding gaming disorder, to increase awareness on the organisational changes that need to be made in youth organisations to meet the needs of young people with gaming disorder or at risk of gaming disorder.

To reach the aforementioned objectives, the project's partners have conducted primary (both quantitative -through an online survey- and qualitative -through interviews- research) and secondary research (desk research). The outputs of the research have led to the development of two Guides, the Handbook for Youth and the Organisational Change Guide for Youth Organisations.
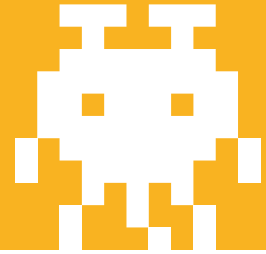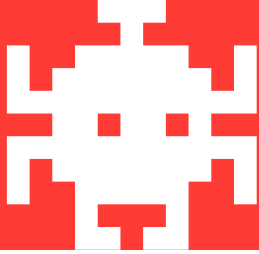
Introduction to the Organisational Change Guide for Youth Organisations

The MINDSET Organisational Change Guide for Youth Organisations aims at providing information on the organisational changes that need to be made in youth organisations in order to meet the needs of young people with gaming disorder or at risk of gaming disorder, guidance on the strategies and methods that youth organisations should adopt for changing the way they address gaming disorders among young people, as well as innovative resources and tools that youth workers can use for helping young people struggling with gaming disorders.

The Organisational Change Guide for Youth Organizations is addressed to any type of youth organisation, including schools and entities that run after-school activities of all kinds (sports, cultural, religious), summer clubs, social groups, self-help groups, youth advocacy groups, or environmental protection initiatives, scouts, or service organisations. The Guide should be relevant and meaningful to all types of Youth Organizations, whether community or neighbourhood-based, state-run, national or regional.

The Guide was tailored according to the results of the desk and the field research across partnership countries and includes a summary of the research results, ways to cooperate with parents and specialised stakeholders, information on the role of youth organisations and ways of working with young people with gaming disorders, as well as best practices that can inspire youth organisations in achieving change.
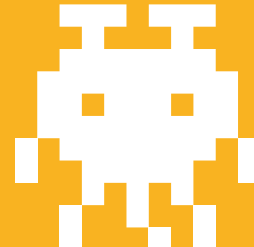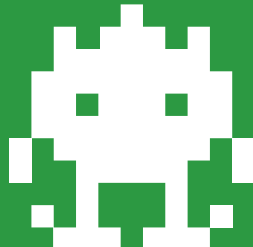
2. Summary of Research Result in partner - countries

Austria

So far, no exact figures regarding gaming disorder prevalence in Austria can be found, as these studies require a large coverage to provide representative results, which are associated with high costs (cf. Stevens et al. 2021). The last notable observational study on this topic was conducted in 2016 by David Riedl, who conducted a survey among 389 Tyrolean adolescents and found a prevalence of 5.4% among gaming addicts (cf. Riedl et al. 2016).

Cyprus

No statistics related to the risk of developing gaming disorders or any other related data were found for Cyprus. However, some statistics were found regarding the gaming market in Cyprus. The revenue in the video game segment is projected to reach approximately 15 million EUR (Xace, 2021), with mobile games being the leading gaming methodology in the country, followed by online games, gaming networks and online games (Statista, 2022).

France

It is worth noting that the gaming culture in France is significant, with the country being one of the largest markets for video games in Europe. A study carried out by 2022, by the Union of Video Game Publishers SELL in collaboration with Médiamétrie (a public limited company that specializes in audience measurement and research into audio-visual and digital media usage in France) found that over a quarter of French people play video games every day, and counts more than 37 million gamers.

The French Ministry of Culture has officially recognized video games as a form of art since 2011, which grants them access to various forms of government funding and support typically reserved for other creative pursuits such as film and literature. The Centre National du Cinéma et de l'image animée (CNC), a French governmental agency responsible for promoting and supporting cinema, television, video games, and other audiovisual industries, has been instrumental in the growth of the French video game industry. The CNC oversees the Support Fund for Videogames (FAJV), which aims to encourage innovation and creation within the video game sector. In collaboration with the CNC, the French Ministry of Foreign

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Affairs also promotes the French video game industry.

Germany

According to a representative survey of German families, 93% of children 12 to 19 years old own a smartphone and over 80% of them reported unrestricted internet access (Paschke et al. 2021). Around six out of every ten Germans play computer and video games, which means that more than 600,000 children and young people show pathological usage behaviour and make 59 per cent of the population between the ages of 6 and 69 reach for their P.C., smartphone, tablet or console to dive into the digital world and play computer and video games. In recent years, there has been a consistent increase in the average age of video game players in Germany, which rose from 37.4 in 2020 to 37.6 in 2021 (The German Games Industry Association). According to Thomasius' longitudinal study from 2019 to 2021, the increase in digital games used in Germany is 31.3% during weekdays and 12.9% during the weekends (Thomasius, 2021). There was also a significant increase in gaming disorders of 51,8% (Thomasius, 2021). Even after the pandemic restrictions eased, the average media usage times are still above the pre-pandemic values (Fischbach, 2021).
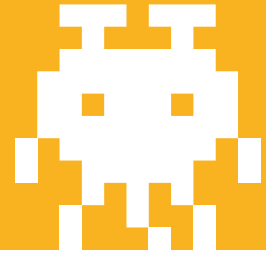
Greece

According to data retrieved from the helpline of the Greek Safer Internet Centre (SIC), SafeLine for 2021, gaming addiction is one of the main reasons why people call the line, reaching a percentage of 43%. Other reasons mentioned are problems related to personal data privacy (12%), technical issues (11%), violence on the internet (9%), excessive use (7%), sexting (6%), relationships and sexuality (4%), education in the media (4%), sexual abuse (1%), harmful content (1%), online reputation (1%), hate speech (0%) (Greek Safer Internet Centre, 2021).

As far as the profile of those addicted to gaming is concerned, nine out of 10 people who sought rehabilitation services to address their problematic or excessive use of the internet/gaming in KETHEA – Therapy Centre for Dependent Individuals were young, males, with Greek nationality, with an average age of 18.9 years old, residing with their parental family. During 2021, 531 people in total were supported by KETHEA, of which 141 were young people and 390 were their family members (KETHEA - Therapy Centre for Dependent Individuals, 2021, p. 47). Their occupation with the internet was described as daily and concerned mainly with Massively Multi-played Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs)
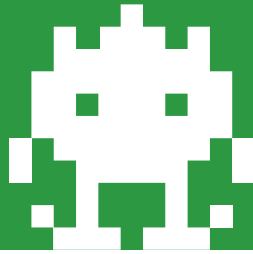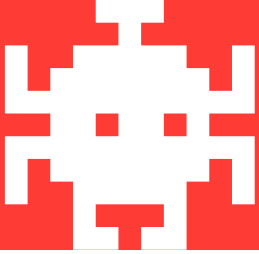
Ireland

A recent study in Ireland investigated the prevalence of gaming disorders among regular gamers. The study was conducted online, and participants were asked to complete a survey consisting of 21 questions related to gaming behaviours, including the age of onset, hours played, the device used, mobile gaming, motives for gaming, use of microtransactions, engagement in esports, and a screening tool for gaming disorder (Columb, Griffiths, & O'Gara, 2020).

The survey received responses from 166 participants, and the results showed that 2.4% of the study population had a gaming disorder, while up to 5.4% showed some evidence of disordered gaming. The study found that the disordered gaming group spent more time playing games on weekdays and weekends compared to the non-disordered group (Columb, Griffiths, & O'Gara, 2020).

The main motivation for gaming among the non-disordered group was recreation, while the disordered group reported competition, escape, and coping as their primary motives for gaming.
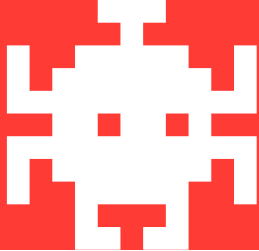
Poland

Data from Statistics Poland (GUS) 2021 shows that 98.4 % of young people between 16 and 24 use a computer or laptop for activities varying from studying to shopping and entertainment. With the increasing technological possibilities, more and more young people spend their time playing computers, video consoles or mobile games. This situation has been boosted by a pandemic - the transition to working and learning from home. According to a survey conducted by CBOS (Public Opinion Research Centre) in 2022, 100% of people between 18 and 24 use the Internet and 41% of them play online games.

Portugal

In Portugal, there isn't much information about gamers' profiles, however, there are data about the use of the internet and electronic devices for gaming. Department for Intervention in Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies (SICAD) published a paper prepared by Guerreiro and Ferreira (2021) with some statistics on Gaming and the Internet. The report consisted of information from young people aged 18 and it showed that 58,3% of the inquired played games online, with 55,7% playing during weekdays, and 53,8% during the weekend. Of these, 7,2% played six or
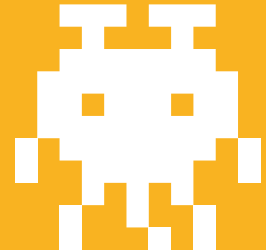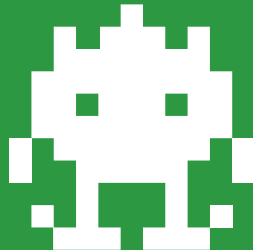
more hours per day on weekdays, with 9,1% on the weekends, and more commonly, up to one hour was spent on online gaming, both on weekdays (25,2%) and the weekend (19,9%). It was also noted an increase in online gaming between 2015 and 2019, from 53,9% to 58,3%.

Conclusions reached through the desk and field research in partner countries

Although problematic gaming was recognised as a mental health disease by WHO, partners found that the legal framework regul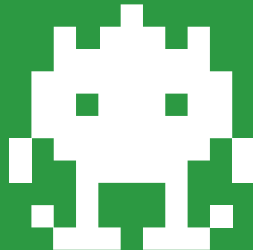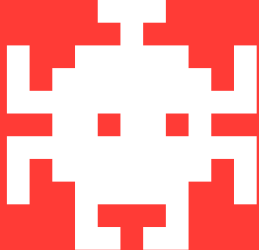ating the use of computer and electronic games by children and adolescents is still underdeveloped in project countries. A positive remark is that all partner countries have adopted the PEGI (Pan European Game Information) age rating system, which is endorsed by the European Commission and can serve as a model for harmonising legislation on electronic games.

The gaps in the legal framework gaming are explained by the recent inclusion of gaming disorder in the 11th edition of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) in 2018 – officially in 2019- and the controversial reactions it received. Furthermore, the gaming industry is an ever-evolving industry and thus, constant legislation reforms are needed to keep up with the new trends in video and digital gaming.

It is also worth noting that in many cases the legal framework for gambling works as an umbrella for gaming disorder as well. Even though gaming disorder presents some similarities with gambling, the different nature of gaming disorder being a legal leisure activity with proven positive impact on the cognitive and emotional development of children and adolescents demands a different and separate legal approach.

Research showed that young people, as well as the family and social environment surrounding them, are not yet aware of the gaming disorder and its impact on mental health and social life. Not only is there a lack of awareness about gaming being a potential source of addiction, but there is also a resistance in acceptance that problematic gaming habits are actually a behavioural addiction that needs medical attention and treatment. This resistance is linked to the social stigma around addictions and seeking treatment. The online survey also revealed the fear of being stigmatised for having a gaming disorder. Even though the majority of
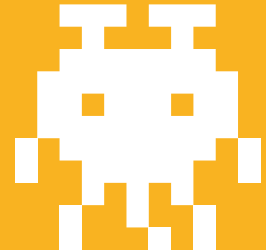
participants responded playing computer games daily or weekly, participants who played at high frequency answered that they can control their gaming habits on their own, or that they do not spend a lot of time playing games to need help/support.

Regarding difficulties in treating gaming disorder, many similarities were found in project countries. The state does not have an organised strategy against gaming disorder, which in turn perpetuates the limited awareness of gaming disorder by young people and their families. In addition, in the school environment, the educational personnel lack the training efforts and resources needed to support students struggling with problematic gaming behaviour. Another difficulty that needs to be highlighted is the lack of visibility of organisations specialised in preventing and treating gaming disorder. The field research showed that not only the general public, but also youth workers had limited knowledge on organisations specialised in gaming disorder. Apart from their weakness to raise awareness on their activities, their concentration in big urban centres accentuates the difficulty of the population living in small cities and villages to reach the support they provide.

The interviews conducted with youth workers shed light on the obstacles and needs that youth workers face in their efforts to help and protect young people against gaming disorder. The high majority of youth workers that participated in the interviews responded that they do not have the proper knowledge and training skills to help young people with symptoms of gaming disorder. Their needs were identified to be better information about the situation of gaming disorder among young people, the legal framework, the organisations, the policies and tools available for treating gaming disorder. They also expressed the need for training programs and educational resources that can help them identify and support young people with gaming disorder, as well as increased funding for implementing programs and activities related to gaming disorder

Based on the results of the desk and field research, the following recommendations were made:

- Given the lack of visibility of organisations specialised in gaming addictions, a mapping of all the specialised services and organisations that can deal with gaming disorder with contact information is deemed necessary.
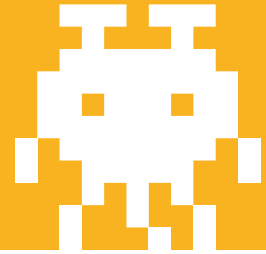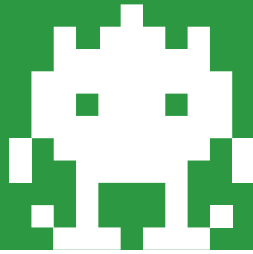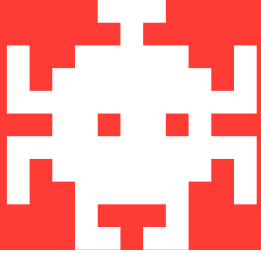
- Due to the lack of public awareness of gaming disorder, the organisation of awareness-raising activities addressed to parents, children, teachers and other professionals working on gaming disorder is also essential.
- Considering the needs of youth workers for better information and training on gaming disorder, a guide with practical recommendations, best practices, useful tools and resources can help youth organisations to become more competent and effective.
- Finally, the organisation of capacity-building activities on gaming disorder for professionals is also considered important, as well as for parents. A guide should include general information on gaming disorder (early and alerting signs, causes, risk factors, course of the disorder), positive and negative effects of gaming, prevention strategies, intervention strategies, alternative activities, support mechanisms, updated services' mapping with contact information, ready to use tools and activities with instructions. Regarding the form that such training should have, it is best that participation and interaction of learners is encouraged.

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3. Ways of working with young people with gaming disorders

Chapter Key Takeaways

- Youth organizations should prioritize raising awareness about gaming disorders through education and information campaigns, develop screening processes to identify those at risk, and collaborate with mental health professionals to provide tailored support

- Youth groups need to educate about gaming disorders, screen for risks, and work with mental health professionals. Promoting healthy gaming habits and social connections is also vital.
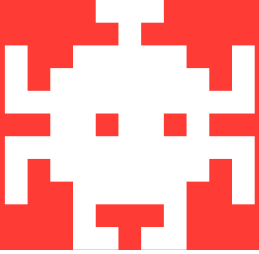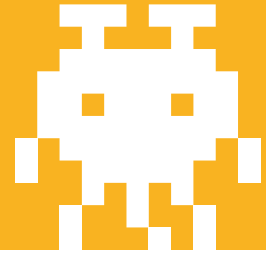
Strategies and Methods for Youth Organisations

Working with young people who have gaming disorders requires a thoughtful and comprehensive approach. Fortunately, youth organisations can implement strategies and methods to address gaming disorders in young people. Some of these strategies and methods include:

Education and Awareness: By providing information and educational sessions about gaming disorders to both young people and their parents/guardians, youth organisations can raise awareness about the signs, symptoms, and potential consequences of excessive gaming. This can have a massive impact in early identification and intervention.

Screening and Assessment: When developing a screening process, youth organisations can identify young people who might be at risk of or already experiencing gaming disorders. By using validated assessment tools, they can measure the severity of the disorder and determine the appropriate level of support needed.

Psychology Tools is a free website that provides access to academically validated psychological assessment tools for psychology professionals, students, and the general public. The website offers tests, questionnaires, and assessments in a user-friendly format with automatic scoring. All assessments are derived from respected psychological journals with an account of practical application.

The automatic scoring system saves time and reduces human error while making the scoring process more understandable. Results include both raw scores and indicative score ranges when available. One of the tools available is the Excessive Gaming Screening Tool, which helps individuals determine if video games and/or Internet use might be problematic in their lives. However, it is important to note that the tool is not meant for clinical diagnoses (Psychology Tools, 2023).

Figure 1 Photo by Unsplash+ on Unsplash

Professional Support: By collaborating with mental health experts who specialise in addressing gaming disorders, organisations can provide a variety of valuable services to assist young individuals facing issues related to excessive gaming. This includes offering personalised counselling sessions, therapeutic interventions, or the opportunity to participate in supportive group discussions.

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Healthy Gaming Guidelines: Youth organisations can promote the concept of responsible and balanced gaming by developing and sharing guidelines that encourage young people to establish healthy gaming habits, including setting limits on screentime and prioritising other activities.

Game Quitters is a supportive community dedicated to helping individuals quit playing video games and reclaim control of their lives. They collaborate with parents, gamers, teachers, and professionals worldwide to offer comprehensive assistance to those seeking help.

On their community website, they provide a guideline called "Healthy Gaming Habits for Kids, Teens, and Adults". This guideline is designed to help individuals who either have gaming disorders or are at risk of developing them. By following these guidelines, they can recognise and prevent addiction, promoting a healthier relationship with gaming (Game Quitters, 2021).
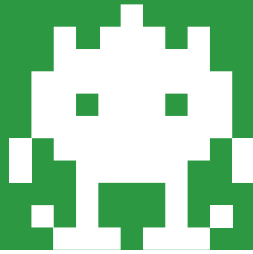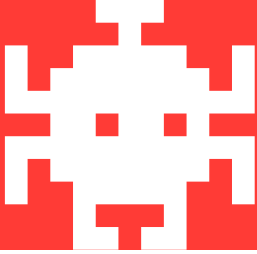
Parental Involvement: Youth organisations should engage with parents/guardians in the process of addressing gaming disorders. By providing them with the most suitable information, resources, and strategies, they can help their children develop healthy gaming habits.

Figure 2 Photo by sofatutor on Unsplash

Social Connection: By encouraging opportunities for young people to engage in social activities and build positive relationships, this can help to combat social isolation, which can be a contributing factor to gaming disorders.

It is critical for youth organisations to remember that gaming disorders are complex issues, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach, every individual is different. Because of this, tailoring interventions to meet the specific needs of the young people involved and being understanding to their unique challenges and circumstances is paramount.

Knowledge and Skills Needed for Youth Workers

Working with young people who have gaming disorders requires youth workers to have a broad range of knowledge and skills to effectively support and help these young people to navigate their challenges. Here are some fundamental knowledge and skills needed:

- Understanding Gaming Disorders: Youth workers play a vital role in supporting young people, and they need to understand gaming disorders thoroughly. This means knowing the criteria used to diagnose gaming disorders, which can be found in the DSM-5 or the ICD-11 and staying updated with the latest research and literature on the subject. By being well-informed about the potential negative effects of excessive gaming on mental health and social functioning, youth workers can offer appropriate support to young individuals (Luo et al., 2022). Being knowledgeable in this area helps youth workers provide the best possible support and guidance to those who might be struggling with gaming-related issues.

- Familiarity with Mental Health: To effectively address gaming disorders, youth workers should familiarise themselves in the area of mental health, as emphasised by Doherty (2021), who highlights the significance of mental health training for youth workers. Having this solid foundation in general mental health concepts is crucial because it enables youth workers to recognise the signs and symptoms commonly linked with gaming disorders. Additionally, this knowledge equips youth workers to identify potential connections between gaming disorders and other mental health challenges, such as depression, anxiety, or attention problems. By understanding these interrelationships, youth workers can provide comprehensive support, considering the bigger picture of a young person's overall well-being (Sternlicht & Sternlicht, 2023). This integrated approach enables them to provide better and more caring assistance to individuals facing challenges related to gaming and the connected mental health issues.
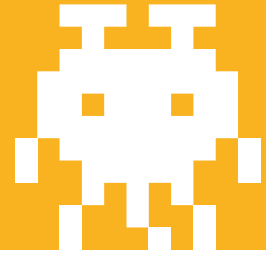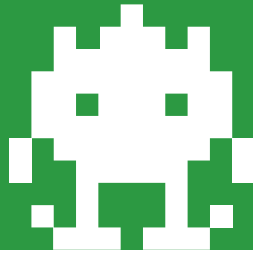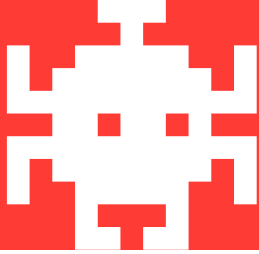
- Communication Skills: Effective communication serves as a fundamental pillar of youth work. Proficiency in active listening, using open-ended questions, and responding with empathy can significantly aid youth workers in building strong and trusting relationships with young individuals. When youth workers foster an environment that encourages open dialogue, it creates a safe space for young people to freely express their thoughts and emotions regarding gaming. This lack of judgement allows them to share their gaming experiences and feelings openly (Maynooth University & Tallinn University, 2019). By developing such a supportive environment, youth workers can connect more deeply with the youth they work with, enabling them to better understand their needs and provide appropriate guidance and support.

- Non-judgemental Attitude: Having a non-judgmental and non-stigmatising mindset is critical for youth workers when dealing with young individuals facing gaming disorders. They should create a safe and supportive environment that is free from shame or blame. By doing so, they can encourage young people to feel comfortable seeking help and sharing their struggles openly (Oakes, 2020). This compassionate and understanding strategy helps build trust and rapport, allowing youth workers to better connect with those they are trying to help. When young people feel accepted and respected, they are more likely to be open-minded to guidance and support, leading to more positive developments in their journey to overcome gaming-related issues.

- Collaborative Approach: Adopting a collaborative approach stands as a key characteristic in youth work. Youth workers frequently collaborate with various professionals, including psychologists, counsellors, and mental health specialists, to provide comprehensive care. Having more experience in multidisciplinary team settings, youth workers can offer a more comprehensive and integrated approach for helping young people struggling with gaming disorders. This cooperative strategy guarantees that diverse expertise and insights merge, resulting in a more well-rounded and effective support plan for those in need. By working together, these professionals can address the multifaceted elements of gaming-related challenges and provide tailored advice that considers the whole spectrum of a young person's well-being.
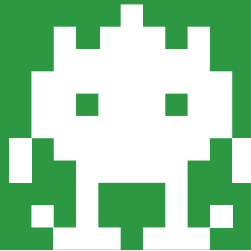
- Self-care: Engaging in self-care is a vital aspect of youth work, especially when dealing with young people affected by gaming disorders. The demands of this role can take an emotional toll, so it is important for youth workers to prioritise their own well-being. This involves various steps such as seeking supervision, regularly engaging in self-reflection, and recognising when they might need extra support (D'Arcy, 2016). By practicing self-care, youth workers ensure they are better equipped to provide effective support to others. Taking time to care for themselves allows them to maintain their own emotional resilience and stay better attuned to the needs of the young people they are helping.

By having this extensive knowledge and skills, youth workers can offer the necessary guidance and support to help young people with gaming disorders develop healthier gaming habits, enhance their emotional well-being, and improve their overall quality of life.
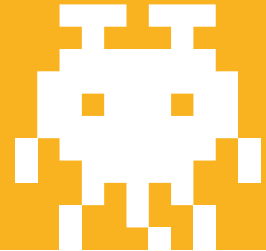
Strategies and Methods for Youth Organisations

One of the best tools that can be used to address against any type of addiction or overreliance is to learn how to consume in moderation. When working with young people who may be suffering from a gaming disorder, youth workers must be prepared to teach about coping mechanisms in relation to withdrawals, as well as moderation skills.

According to Olivia Grace, a clinical psychologist who specialises in therapy for video game addiction, teaching young people mindfulness is one of the best ways in which a person can help assist in overcoming gaming disorder (Mandriota, 2022). Activities such as mindfulness meditation can help a young person cope and develop self-awareness. Some helpful tools can be found linked below:

- Headspace: https://www.headspace.com/
- Mindful: https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/
- 10 Minute Mindfulness Meditation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZToicYcHlOU
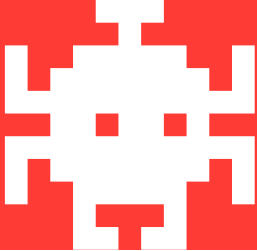
By assisting young people to set aside 10 minutes a day to practice mindful meditation, youth workers can help combat overreliance on other forms of entertainment.

Another way of helping to combat gaming disorder is by helping young people to set limits on the time spent on games for teaching young people to have a healthy relationship with video games. This allows them to understand and appreciate the importance of moderation. A way of teaching young people how to set healthy boundaries and time limits for gaming periods suggested by recovery centres, is to remove gaming consoles and devices from bedrooms. Young people would therefore be prevented from using these devices and would be obliged to make a conscious decision to use the family room (Stonewater Recovery, 2023).
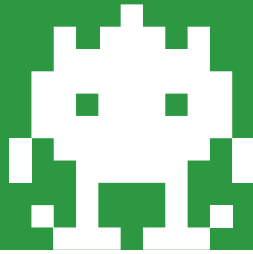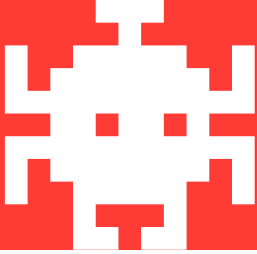
Creating online support communities or forums where young people can share their experiences, challenges, and triumphs related to gaming disorder can promote a sense of camaraderie and offer a safe space for discussion. Implementing peer support programs that pair young people who have overcome gaming disorder or are managing it effectively with those struggling is another effective way of addressing the problem as peer mentors can provide valuable insights and encouragement. Youth workers can also encourage and facilitate participation in creative outlets and activities, such as art, sports, music, or other hobbies. These activities can serve as healthy alternatives to excessive gaming.

Each young person is unique, so it is essential to tailor interventions based on individual needs and preferences. Additionally, staying updated on the latest research and best practices regarding gaming disorder will ensure that youth workers are equipped with the most effective resources and tools

Ideas of Group Activities for Overcoming Gaming Disorders

Overcoming gaming disorder requires an integrated approach that addresses physical, emotional, and social aspects of an individual's life. Group activities can be instrumental in providing support, promoting healthy habits, and fostering a sense of community among individuals struggling with gaming disorder.
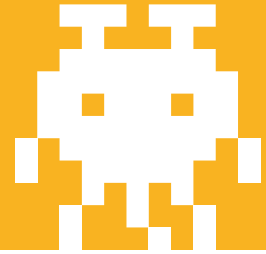
Some ideas of group activities for overcoming gaming disorder include organising a gaming-free challenge for a set period, like a week or a month. Youth workers face this challenge by encouraging participants to replace gaming time with other activities and track their progress. Check in with the participants by holding regular group meetings to discuss challenges and share success stories.

Another idea is to encourage young people to participate into other creative outlets that engage the same senses as gaming does. For example, youth workers can engage young people in art therapy sessions or creative activities like drawing, painting, or doing handmade crafting. Art can serve as a therapeutic outlet for expressing emotions and managing stress. Or instead of video games, they could consider introducing tabletop RPGs[1], where participants can collaborate, problem-solve, and engage in imaginative storytelling without screen time.

Additionally, youth workers can create small peer support circles where individuals can share their struggles, progress, and strategies for overcoming gaming disorder. By encouraging open and non-judgmental discussions, youth workers can organise group brainstorming and develop strategies for moderating gaming habits. This can also include discussing setting gaming schedules, implementing breaks, designing RPGs, and finding alternatives to gaming.

Youth workers should always keep in mind that the effectiveness of these activities will depend on the individual's willingness to participate and engage. Creating a supportive and understanding environment is essential in helping participants on their journey to overcome gaming disorder. They should always ensure to prioritise the safety and well-being of the group members and seek professional guidance when necessary.

[1] E.g. Dungeons & Dragons board game: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dungeons_%26_Dragons

4. The role of youth organisations in addressing gaming disorders

Chapter Key Takeaways

- Bridging the gap between gaming-related challenges and mental health services ensures timely access to resources and raises awareness about mental health in the gaming community.
- Providing parents with information and support helps create a nurturing environment for responsible gaming within families.
- Encouraging open conversations about gaming disorders helps reduce stigma and promotes understanding.
- Equipping individuals with tools for responsible gaming, including self-regulation and balanced screen time, empowers them to maintain a healthy gaming lifestyle.

Increasing Communication and Dialogue Opportunities

Gaming disorders have emerged as a significant concern in today's digital age, impacting countless individuals' mental and emotional well-being, particularly among the youth. As technology advances, youth organisations' role in addressing gaming disorders becomes crucial. This chapter explores youth organisations' multifaceted strategies to combat gaming disorders, highlighting their efforts in increasing communication, promoting healthy gaming, encouraging non-gaming activities, educating parents, and facilitating access to mental health services.

Youth organisations are pivotal in establishing open communication and dialogue platforms about gaming disorders. These organisations create safe spaces for individuals to share their gaming experiences, concerns, and challenges by hosting workshops, seminars, and support groups. These dialogues offer invaluable insights into the psychological dimensions of gaming disorders, allowing participants to understand their challenges within a broader context. Through the dialogues facilitated by youth organisations, participants gain insights into the intricate psychological dimensions of gaming disorders.
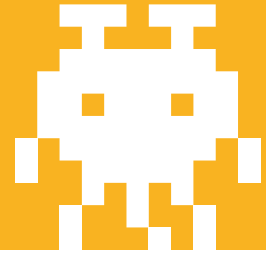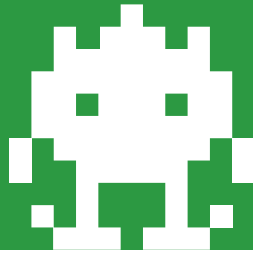
Expert facilitators, often in collaboration with mental health professionals, steer these discussions toward a deeper understanding of the underlying motivations and emotional triggers associated with excessive gaming. These conversations delve beyond surface observations, encouraging participants to explore the intricate web of thoughts, emotions, and behaviours that underpin their relationship with gaming. Furthermore, as young individuals, the members of youth organisations can relate to their peers' experiences, preferences, and challenges. This relatability creates a comfortable environment for open conversations about gaming, allowing participants to share their thoughts and concerns without fear of judgment. The nurturing environment established by youth organisations encourages self-expression and plays a pivotal role in dismantling the societal stigma surrounding gaming disorders (Griffiths et al., 2021).

Developing Strategies for Healthy Gaming

While school-based primary prevention programs are generally available concerning mental health issues, smoking, drinking, etc., there are limited programs to prevent gaming problems. Hence, promoting healthy, mindful, and responsible gaming habits is a central focus of youth organisations. Youth organisations can design strategies that resonate with the interests and preferences of young individuals. They have an innate understanding of their peers' gaming habits, motivations, and behaviours. This insight enables them to develop strategies that are more likely to be embraced by young gamers, increasing the likelihood of successful implementation.

Furthermore, these organisations devise comprehensive guidelines for healthy gaming habits by collaborating with mental health experts and drawing from evidence-based approaches highlighted in The Cambridge Handbook of Substance and Behavioral Addictions. Emphasising the importance of balanced screen time, regular breaks, and physical activities, youth organisations empower individuals to regain control over their gaming behaviours. They also teach participants about time management – how to set limits on gaming time to ensure a healthy balance between gaming and other activities. Perhaps the most empowering aspect of these strategies is their focus on self-regulation.
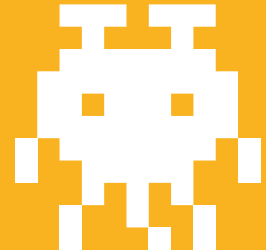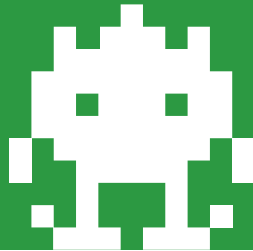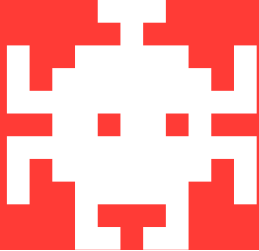
Youth organisations foster a sense of agency and control by equipping individuals with the tools to monitor and manage their gaming behaviours. This proactive approach helps individuals recognize the signs of excessive gaming, facilitating early intervention and cultivating healthy habits. These strategies, rooted in scientific research, equip individuals with the tools to navigate the digital realm while safeguarding their mental well-being

Creating Opportunities for Non-Gaming Activities

Youth organisations design and facilitate a diverse range of non-gaming activities to counteract the allure of constant gaming. These activities offer diverse avenues for skill development, social interaction, and personal growth, from sports and outdoor adventures to artistic pursuits and community engagement. Through participation in sports, individuals cultivate physical dexterity, teamwork, and discipline.

Artistic pursuits, whether in music, painting, or theatre, encourage creativity and self-expression, nurturing a sense of identity beyond the digital realm. Participating in sports, arts, or other creative endeavours provides an outlet for stress relief, enhances mood, and encourages a positive outlook on life. By channelling energies into alternative interests, individuals can gradually shift their focus away from compulsive gaming. Non-gaming activities contribute to overall well-being by promoting mental, physical, and emotional health. Furthermore, they offer opportunities for young individuals to contribute to their communities and make a positive impact. Whether volunteering, participating in environmental initiatives, or engaging in charitable work, youth organisations empower young individuals to develop a sense of purpose and responsibility beyond gaming. The mosaic of opportunities crafted by youth organisations enriches lives and fosters a holistic sense of fulfilment and purpose that contribute to their overall well-being.

Educating Parents about Gaming

Although gaming highly affects family life, parents expectedly do not have adequate knowledge about gaming and the digital world, therefore, quickly fail to provide their children with compatible advice and guidance (Varuhin, A., 2018). Recognizing the integral role of parents in addressing gaming disorders, youth organisations undertake initiatives to educate and guide parents in understanding their children's gaming behaviours.
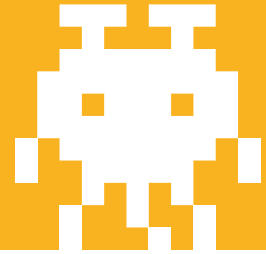
They provide a neutral and non-judgmental space for parents to learn and ask questions about gaming. This environment encourages open dialogue and reduces the stigma or fear of discussing gaming-related topics. Workshops, webinars, and informative resources empower parents with the knowledge needed to discern healthy gaming from problematic behaviour.

Youth organisations also help parents by establishing parent support groups where parents can connect, share their challenges, and exchange strategies for managing gaming-related issues. Peer support fosters community and empowers parents to learn from one another. By fostering an environment where communication flows freely, parents nurture a sense of trust and connection that forms a supportive family relationship. With insights from experts and scientific literature, parents can actively engage in constructive conversations with their children, fostering a supportive familial environment that bolsters healthy gaming practices (Sussman, 2020).

Youth organisations can also facilitate conversations between parents and their children about gaming. They can guide how to initiate these discussions, what questions to ask, and how to set boundaries and expectations regarding gaming habits. As parents become well-versed in gaming, they are poised to guide their children toward balanced and mindful digital habits. Parents are encouraged to be vigilant about age-appropriate content, online safety, and potential in-game purchases. By fostering digital literacy, youth organisations empower parents to instil critical thinking skills and ethical awareness in their children's digital interactions

Accessing Mental Health Services

The intricate relationship between gaming and mental health is a subject of growing interest among researchers, clinicians, and the general public. While many individuals engage in gaming without experiencing adverse effects, some players may face challenges such as excessive gaming, social isolation, and deteriorating psychological well-being. Recognizing the potential impact of gaming on mental health, integrating mental health services into the gaming landscape is crucial.

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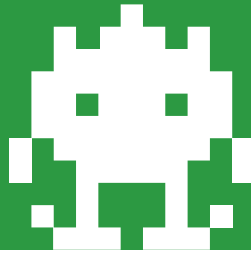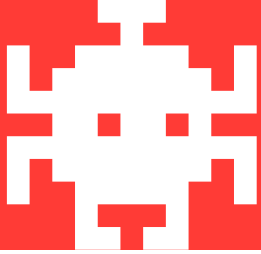
Youth organisations serve as a bridge between individuals struggling with gaming disorders and professional mental health services. They collaborate with licensed therapists, counsellors, and psychologists to provide accessible assessment, counselling, and treatment resources. Youth organisations draw upon their insights into the distinct complexities of gaming disorders. At the same time, mental health experts bring their clinical proficiency, wealth of knowledge, and evidence-backed methodologies to the table.

Accessing mental health services can be overwhelming for young individuals and their families. Youth organisations can act as guides, helping individuals navigate the complexities of finding appropriate mental health professionals, clinics, and resources. Through partnerships with local healthcare providers, youth organisations ensure that individuals in need receive timely and appropriate interventions. These efforts contribute to the holistic well-being of individuals grappling with gaming disorders.

Furthermore, through social media, events, and collaborations, youth organisations can launch awareness campaigns that highlight the importance of mental health for youth gamers. These campaigns can break down barriers and encourage open conversations. They can also advocate for including gaming-related mental health support in schools, communities, and healthcare systems. By raising awareness about the specific needs of youth gamers, they contribute to a more comprehensive approach to mental health care.

Tips and Tricks for the Role of Youth NGO in addressing gaming disorders between young people

I. For the Youth Organisations:

Addressing gaming disorders through youth organisations requires a multi-faceted approach that combines education, support, and community engagement. Here are some practical tips and activities that youth organisations can implement to highlight their role in tackling gaming disorders:
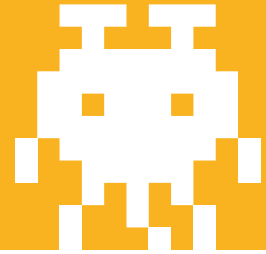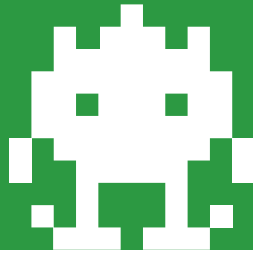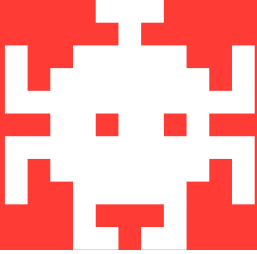
Raise Awareness:

- Workshops and Seminars: Organise workshops and seminars on gaming disorders to educate both young gamers and their parents about the risks and signs of addiction.
- Awareness Campaigns: Launch awareness campaigns on social media platforms and within your community to destigmatize gaming addiction and encourage open discussions.

Support and Counseling:

- Hotlines and Online Support: Set up hotlines or online chat support where individuals and their families can seek help or advice regarding gaming addiction.
- Support Groups: Create support groups where individuals can share their experiences, challenges, and successes in dealing with gaming disorders.
- Peer Counseling: Train peer counsellors within your organisation who can provide support and understanding to those struggling with gaming addiction.

Education and Prevention:

- School Programs: Collaborate with local schools to incorporate gaming addiction prevention programs into their curricula.
- Parent Workshops: Offer workshops specifically designed for parents to help them understand gaming habits and how to support their children in maintaining a healthy gaming balance.
- Online Resources: Develop informative websites or apps with resources and articles on gaming addiction prevention, warning signs, and healthy gaming habits.

Gaming Awareness Events:

- Gaming Tournaments: Organise gaming tournaments that emphasise responsible gaming and awareness of gaming addiction.
- Game Design Workshops: Organise workshops to make gamers understand how a game is designed, what levers (e.g. game designtechniques and motivational triggers) contribute to set game objectives and to engage and retain players, on the one hand, and to understand what kind of different games can be designed, like tabletop RPGs, on the other hand.
- Panel Discussions: Host panel discussions featuring gamers, mental health professionals, and experts to discuss the impact of gaming on mental health
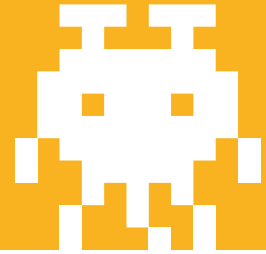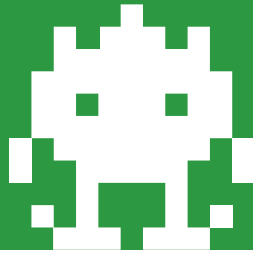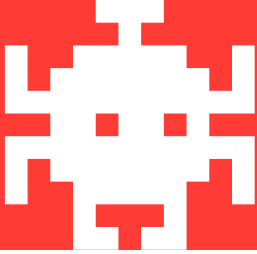
Community Engagement:

- Community Talks: Arrange talks at community centres, libraries, and schools to discuss gaming disorders and the role of youth organisations in addressing them.
- Partnerships: Collaborate with local mental health organisations, schools, and government agencies to create a united front against gaming disorders.

Skill Development:

- Alternative Activities: Provide workshops and programs that introduce alternative hobbies and activities to gaming, helping individuals discover new interests.
- Life Skills Training: Offer life skills training, such as time management, communication, and stress management, to help individuals build a balanced life.

Data Collection and Research:

- Surveys and Studies: Conduct surveys and research studies to gather data on gaming habits and disorders within your community. Use this data to tailor your programs.
- Anonymous Reporting: Create a platform where individuals can anonymously report concerning gaming behaviours in their peers, offering a way to intervene early.

Advocacy:

- Policy Advocacy: Advocate for policies and regulations related to gaming and its impact on mental health, especially for minors.
- Media Engagement: Write articles, op-eds, or letters to local newspapers or online platforms to raise awareness and advocate for change.

Monitoring and Follow-up:

- Regular Check-ins: Establish a system for regular check-ins with individuals who have sought help or support for gaming addiction.
- Progress Tracking: Develop tools or apps to track gaming time and behaviours, providing insights for individuals and their families.
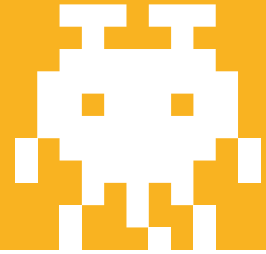
Collaboration with Mental Health Professionals:
- Referral Networks: Build relationships with mental health professionals who can provide specialised treatment for gaming addiction cases.
- Training Workshops: Host workshops for mental health professionals on recognizing and treating gaming disorders.

By implementing these practical tips and activities, youth organisations can play a crucial role in addressing gaming disorders within their communities, supporting affected individuals, and promoting responsible gaming habits among young people.

II.For Youth Workers:

Youth workers can play a vital role in helping young people with gaming disorders by offering support, education, and healthy alternatives. Here are some practical activities and tips for youth workers to engage with and assist young people struggling with gaming disorders:

Education and Awareness:
- Gaming Disorder Workshops: Organise workshops or presentations to educate young people about the signs, symptoms, and consequences of gaming disorders.
- Screening Assessments: Conduct screening assessments to help young people self-assess their gaming habits and identify any potential issues.
- Guest Speakers: Invite former gaming addicts or mental health professionals to share their experiences and knowledge about gaming disorders.
- Game Design workshops: Invite game designers in order to raise awareness and interest on how games are designed and on what levers (e.g. game design dynamics, mechanics and components, motivational triggers) are used to set objectives and to engage and retain players.

Supportive Environment:
- Safe Space: Create a safe and non-judgmental environment where young people feel comfortable discussing their gaming habits and challenges.
- Peer Support Groups: Establish peer support groups where young people can connect with others facing similar issues and share coping strategies.
- One-on-One Sessions: Offer individual counselling sessions for those who need personalised support.
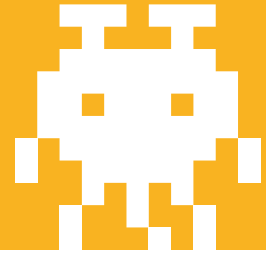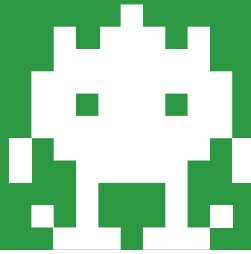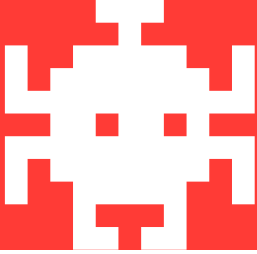
Alternative Activities:
- Recreational Activities: Organise outdoor activities, sports, arts and crafts, or other hobbies to provide enjoyable alternatives to gaming.
- Skill-Building Workshops: Offer workshops on developing life skills, such as time management, communication, and stress management.
- Volunteering Opportunities: Encourage young people to get involved in community service or volunteering to redirect their focus and build a sense of purpose.

Goal Setting and Monitoring:
- Goal-Setting Sessions: Help young people set specific, achievable goals related to reducing gaming time and improving their well-being.
- Progress Tracking: Use apps or journals to track gaming time and monitor their progress toward their goals.
- Positive Reinforcement: Celebrate their milestones and successes in reducing gaming or achieving other goals.

Parental Involvement:
- Parent-Youth Workshops: Host workshops for parents to help them understand gaming disorders and learn how to support their children.
- Parent Support Groups: Create support groups or forums for parents to share experiences and strategies for managing gaming-related issues.

Time Management and Balance:
- Time Management Tools: Teach time management techniques to help young people balance gaming with other responsibilities and interests.
- Digital Detox Challenges: Organise challenges encouraging participants to take breaks from gaming and engage in other activities.

Online Resources:
- Curated Content: Provide curated online resources, articles, and videos related to gaming disorders and responsible gaming.
- Gaming Diaries: Encourage young people to keep diaries or journals where they can reflect on their gaming experiences and emotions.
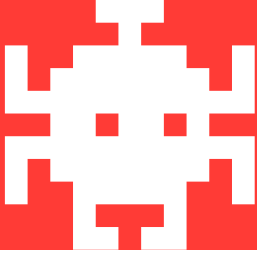
Social Skills Building:

- Communication Workshops: Conduct workshops on effective communication, empathy, and conflict resolution to improve relationships offline.
- Social Outings: Organise outings or events that encourage face-to-face social interaction and build social skills.

Referral to Professionals:

- Mental Health Referrals: If needed, refer young people to mental health professionals specialising in addiction or gaming disorders.

Follow-Up and Support:

- Remember that building trust and rapport is essential in helping young people with gaming disorders.
- Be patient and empathetic, and adapt your approach to meet each individual's unique needs and circumstances.
- Collaborate with mental health professionals when necessary and involve parents or guardians in the support process for the best outcomes.

5. Cooperation with parents and specialised stakeholder

Cooperation between many stakeholders is needed to deal with youth who are struggling with gaming disorders. Effective collaboration among stakeholders, such as parents, gaming companies, and mental health experts, is essential for mitigating and reducing risks associated with the development of gaming disorders in youth. In the following sections, we will present ways in which stakeholders such as parents, gaming companies, and mental health experts can collaborate to reduce the risks associated with developing gaming disorders

Cooperation with parents

During field research in the Mindset project, we conducted interviews with experts in mental health and gaming disorders. Through these interviews, what became apparent was that players' perspectives are often not considered during the processes of identifying and treating gaming disorders. Furthermore, Kuss et al (2017) identified that the need to improve clarity and understanding in the field of gaming disorders can be achieved by direct dialogue with players. Young people's views are crucial to create impactful results, especially for health and mental health issues (Larsson et al., 2018).
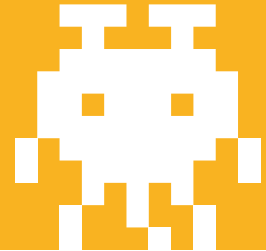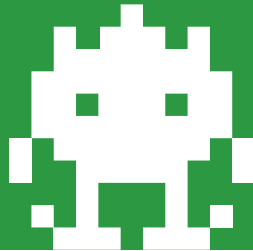
This is where parental interventions play a crucial role in involving young people in dialogues and discussions concerning gaming disorders. Engaging young people in discussions regarding gaming disorders is crucial, and parental interventions serve as a vital bridge for communication and understanding with other stakeholders.

The best way for parents to reduce their children's excessive use of harmful video games is through parenting interventions. Parental education in this area is a preventive measure that can have a significant long-term positive impact on managing young people's gaming addiction. Parents who want to better understand the dangers of gaming addiction and gaming disorders can easily access online educational resources. Educational resources are available online to parents who strive to gain awareness about the risks of gaming addiction and gaming disorders. These resources can be accessed free of cost and are designed to equip parents with knowledge so that they can ensure their children's safe and responsible use of gaming platforms.

For example, Game Quitter is a peer-to-peer support community that offers a parent assessment questionnaire to identify if their children have a problem with excessive gaming. In addition, they offer a guide for dealing with Fortnite addiction , one of the most popular games among adolescents. Moreover, it is important for parents to be informed about the gaming traits that may contribute to problematic gaming habits in their children such as loot box purchasing, which is provided by gaming companies as an in-game purchase.

It is crucial to adopt a holistic and cooperative approach in order to maximise the value of collaboration with parents in addressing gaming disorders.

Collaboration with gaming companies

The video game industry has exploded in the past 40 years, growing into a $138 billion dollar industry in 2018, surpassing the film and music industries combined (Ell, 2018). With a high engagement rate among teenagers and the development of infrastructure for professional gaming, growth is projected to accelerate (Ell, 2018). The gaming sector's largest revenue is generated from the sale of loot boxes (Drummond et al., 2019). However, this trend is becoming a growing concern as it has been linked to the transition of gamers into gamblers, leading to problematic and addictive behaviours that can result in mental health issues (Amano & Simonov, 2023).
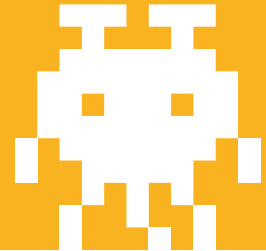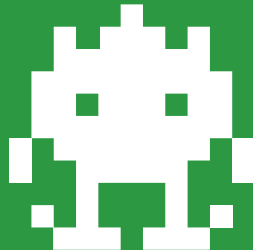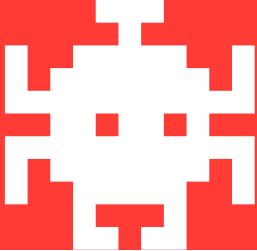
Loot boxes are in-game items that can be purchased with real-world currency, often by adolescent video game players, which provide add-ons to enhance gameplay (Drummond et al., 2019). Loot boxes appear in 93% of games rated 12+. 40% of gamers have opened loot boxes before (Close & Lloyd, 2021). 12 out of 13 studies link loot boxes to gambling, acting as a "psychological nudge" to buy more boxes and gamble in real life (Drummond et al., 2019). Their pricing ranges depending on the game and the rarity of the items that players have the chance to claim (Drummond et al., 2019). Many of those features are presented in the Figure 3 below:
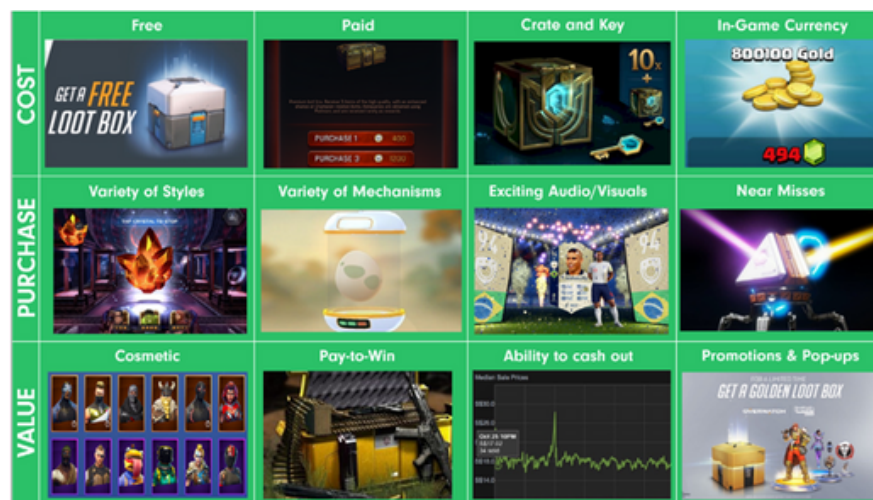
Figure 3. Various features of loot boxes (Close & Lloyd, 2021)

The EU is considering implementing new regulations on loot boxes due to their association with problematic behaviour (Simmons & Simmons, 2023). The European Parliament has urged video game companies to be more transparent regarding the odds in loot box mechanisms, including providing information in clear language about the algorithms used (Dentons, 2023). It can be understood, that closer collaboration with gaming companies is necessary in order to ensure the safety of the player. Therefore, several ways to achieve that is through promoting responsible gaming and supporting research and data sharing (Shrivastava, 2022).

Regarding responsible gaming, gaming companies can play an active role in educating their player base about potential risks of excessive gaming and the signs of gaming disorders. This will make gaming companies more reliable and at the same time increase their corporate social responsibility. Gaming companies can share anonymized data with experts to understand gaming habits and potential risk factors for gaming disorders. This can inform evidence-based treatments for those at risk. Youth organisations and groups that support young people's mental health should seek to collaborate with gaming companies.

Collaboration between video game developers and youth workers is essential for ensuring that young people can play video games responsibly and safely, thereby reducing the risk of gaming disorders. This can include adding disclaimers on loot boxes or provide education on how to use loot boxes responsibly. This collaboration fosters a holistic approach to gaming, emphasising not only entertainment but also the well-being of young gamers, ultimately creating a safer and more enjoyable gaming environment for all.

Collaboration with Mental Health Experts

With the inclusion of gaming disorders in the ICD-11 of the WHO, there has been an increased awareness of the potential mental health impacts of gaming. As a result, various countries have begun to take this issue seriously and have engaged mental health experts to discuss and inform relevant stakeholders such as parents and young people. Working together with mental health experts is an essential aspect of dealing with gaming disorders and ensuring the psychological health of young people who are vulnerable.

Collaboration between mental health professionals and community organisations, such as parents and youth groups, can prove to be an invaluable asset in developing strategies to identify early signs of gaming disorders among young people at risk. One easy-to-understand concept that mental health experts can work closely with interested parties in order to understand young people behaviour is player's motivation. For example, using Yee's gamer motivation model (Yee, 2021) as presented in Figure 4, mental health experts and youth organisations or parents can work together to identify potential risky behaviours by adolescents and young people.

Action "Boom!"	Social "Let's Play Together"	Mastery "Let Me Think"	Achievement "I Want More"	Immersion "Once Upon a Time"	Creativity "What If?"
Destruction Guns. Explosives. Chaos. Mayhem.	Competition Duels. Matches. High on Ranking.	Challenge Practice. High Difficulty. Challenges.	Completion Get All Collectibles. Complete All Missions.	Fantasy Being someone else, somewhere else.	Design Expression. Customization.
Excitement Fast-Paced. Action. Surprises. Thrills.	Community Being on Team. Chatting. Interacting.	Strategy Thinking Ahead. Making Decisions.	Power Powerful Character. Powerful Equipment.	Story Elaborate plots. Interesting characters.	Discovery Explore. Tinker. Experiment.

Figure 4. Gamer Motivation Model (Yee, 2021)

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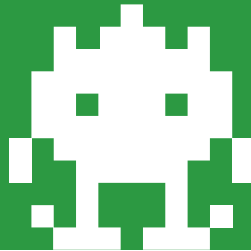
This model can be used as a guide to create activities that test how motivation affects young gamers. Therefore, collaboration between all relevant stakeholders is important in designing and addressing the needs of young people. It is crucial for parents, mental health experts, and youth organisations to consider motivation when tailoring a treatment or support program for young people's mental health. This is because motivation lies at the core of the development of the problem, and being aware of it can help in designing an effective treatment plan (Wang & Cheng, 2022).

Collaboration Tips

In order to effectively address concerns related to gaming disorder, it is important for parents, gaming companies, and mental health experts to collaborate. Youth organisations can serve as a bridge between these stakeholders by establishing a shared understanding of the player's (young people) value and ensuring that their mental health is not compromised. Therefore, the following tactics can be followed to achieve the above:

- **Parent Support Groups**: Establish parent support groups with multiple stakeholders - youth organisations, representatives from gaming companies, mental health experts, - where they can share their experiences, concerns, and strategies for managing gaming-related issues in their children. These support groups can serve as safe spaces for parents to seek advice and emotional support from one another.
- **Workshops and Webinars**: Organise interactive workshops and webinars to teach practical parenting techniques for managing screen time, recognizing signs of gaming addiction, and fostering open communication with children about gaming habits.
- **Collaboration with Educational Centers (Schools, Institutions etc.)**: Collaborate with educational institutions to integrate responsible gaming education into the curriculum, emphasising its importance both at home and in school.
- **Data Sharing for Research**: Gaming companies can collaborate with experts and researchers by sharing anonymized data on player behaviour. This data can be useful in identifying gaming habits and potential risk factors that may contribute to gaming disorders. Ultimately, this information can be used to develop evidence-based treatments and preventive strategies.
- **Youth Organization Partnerships**: Collaboration between gaming companies and youth organisations is essential. This partnership can lead to the development of initiatives that support young people's mental health and promote responsible gaming.

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A Theory of Change is the methodology of thinking and planning for change. For Youth Organisations a theory of change is the necessary process that should be followed in order for them to adjust and adapt to the fact that gaming disorder is officially recognized as a mental health condition by the World Health Organization. In the following table, you can find a Theory of Change against the problem of loot-boxes in video games.

Problem: We have identified a problem with purchasing loot-boxes and relying on them for advancing in a video game. This can lead players towards problematic behaviours that may result in gambling and using real-money to advance in a video game (Drummond et al., 2019). Youth organisations can serve as a communication platform between relevant stakeholders to mitigate negative effects of loot-box purchases.

Long-Term Goal: To reduce reliance on luck in advancing through the game and mitigate on purchase loot-boxes and prioritise strategic gameplay for players.

Strategies

Player Education Awareness:
- Create in-game tutorials that promote strategic gameplay rather than advancing through loot-box purchasing
- Campaigns for parents and players on what are the risks of purchasing loot-boxes

Game Design:
- Collaboration between gaming companies and youth organisations on how to develop and design a game based more on strategic play (e.g. acquiring resources through challenges and/or collaboration and/or competitions, by making non-monetary transactions with other players) rather than luck-based or money-based progression.

Strategies

Roundtable discussion:
- Youth organisations can establish regular roundtable discussions between interested parties to create a safer environment for players.

Risks

1. Gaming Companies
2. Player's resistance due to the impatience for acquiring the promising content of the loot-box and keep pursuing own goals.

Outputs

1. Education Resources around the impact of loot-boxes
2. Game Modification based on the cooperation of gaming companies
3. Examine player spending and behaviour patterns to spot those who might become too reliant on loot boxes.

Outcomes

1. A shift on gamers behaviour into a more strategic gameplay rather luck-based progression
2. Safer (video) gaming environment
3. Positive collaborations between stakeholders for responsible game design.
4. Mitigate the loss of real money due to reduction of loot-box purchasing

6. Conclusions

In an era marked by technological advancement and digital immersion, the role of youth organisations in addressing gaming disorders is paramount. By increasing communication, promoting healthy gaming, providing non-gaming alternatives, educating parents, and facilitating access to mental health services, these organisations empower individuals to overcome the challenges of excessive gaming. As youth organisations continue to evolve, their collective efforts contribute to creating a supportive and resilient community that embraces both the benefits and limitations of digital entertainment.

Working with young people who have gaming disorders requires a thoughtful and comprehensive approach from youth organisations. By implementing strategies such as education and awareness, screening and assessment, professional support, healthy gaming guidelines, parental involvement, and promoting social connection, these organisations can effectively support young individuals facing gaming-related challenges.

Additionally, youth workers need to possess a range of knowledge and skills, including understanding gaming disorders, mental health awareness, effective communication, non-judgmental attitudes, a collaborative approach, and self-care to provide effective support to these young people. By employing innovative resources and tools, such as mindfulness practices and setting healthy boundaries, youth workers can assist young people in overcoming gaming disorders and developing healthier gaming habits. Group activities can also play a vital role in promoting support, healthy habits, and a sense of community among individuals struggling with gaming disorders. By tailoring interventions to individual needs and preferences, youth workers can help young people overcome gaming disorders and lead fulfilling lives with a balanced approach to gaming.

Best Practices

Austria (1)	
Title	Workshop: Opportunities and Risks of Computer Games
Location/ Geographical Coverage	Austria
Implementer	**Name of youth organization(s)**: The Media Youth Info of the Federal Chancellery and BuPP.at (Federal Agency for the positive rating of digital games) **Type:** Public organisation **Short background/description:** This workshop introduces the world of computer games. In addition to basic knowledge, the workshop also discusses the opportunities and dangers that computer games pose **Funding/Sponsors:** The Media Youth Info (MJI) of the Federal Chancellery (BKA)
Duration of practice/project	3-5 hours by arrangement

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Best Practices

Austria (1)	
Needs addressed & Objectives	Addresses the needs of a comprehensive approach to computer games, an understanding of the opportunities and dangers of gaming, and offers a support community for both youth and parents
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** 3-5 hours long workshops by arrangement **Major topics covered by the practice:** the world of gaming, challenges, opportunities, dangers, community **Specific tools used:** N/A **External participants (stakeholders):** N/A **Evaluation of practice:** N/A
Challenges and Innovation	N/A
Useful Links	• https://bupp.at/de/artikel/workshop-e-chancen-und-risken-von-computerspielen • https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/agenda/jugend/medien-und-information/workshops-und-schulungen-zur-medienkompetenz.html

Best Practices

Austria (2)	
Title	Saferinternet.at Initiative
Location/ Geographical Coverage	Austria
Implementer	**Name of youth organization(s):** The Austrian Institute for Applied Telecommunications (ÖIAT) coordinates Saferinternet.at. Saferinternet.at consists of the Safer Internet Centre Austria together with the Stopline (reporting centre against sexual abuse depictions of minors and national socialist re-activation) and Rat auf Draht (telephone help for children, young people and their caregivers). **Type**: Public body, NGO **Short background/description:** the EU initiative Saferinternet.at primarily supports children, young people, parents and teachers in using digital media safely, competently and responsibly **Funding/Sponsors:** the EU Commission's Digital Europe / Safer Internet program, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, the Federal Chancellery, the Federal Ministry of Finance, A1 & Facebook

MINDSET is an Erasmus + KA2 project that aims to create tools to prepare youth organizations and youth workers to identify the early signs and prevent the development of gaming disorder among youth.

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Best Practices

Austria (2)	
Duration of practice/project	2005 - ongoing
Needs addressed & Objectives	Navigating digital media in a safe & responsible way
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** N/A **Major topics covered by the practice:** Cyberbullying, Digital games, Cell phone & Internet, Social networks, Data Protection, Information Literacy, Copyrights, Online shopping, Viruses, Internet fraud **Specific tools used:** website, workshops, event, information material **External participants (stakeholders):** N/A **Evaluation of practice:** An evaluation report was published in February 2023 and is available here.
Challenges and Innovation	N/A
Useful Links	• https://www.saferinternet.at/ • https://www.saferinternet.at/ueber-saferinternetat/die-initiative#

Best Practices

Cyprus (1)

Title	Preventive Mental Health Nursing Program "EXELIXIS" Directorate of Nursing Services
Location/ Geographical Coverage	Cyprus (Paphos, Geroskipou, Paralimni, Lakatamia, Strovolos, Larnaka, Ipsonas, Limassol)
Implementer	**Name of organisation:** Ministry of Health **Type:** Counselling scheme to young people and teenagers for issues regarding mental health and addictive behaviours **Short background/description:** The "EXELIXIS" Programme supports and participates in Preventive Actions in the Community, such as for vulnerable groups of the youth population, planned activities in camps, summer schools and crowded youth areas, aiming to prevent harmful behaviours in order to strengthen mental resilience. **Funding/Sponsors:** The programme is a collaboration between Larnaca Municipality and the Nursing Services of the Ministry of Health.
Duration of practice/project	Since April, 2021

Best Practices

Cyprus(1)	
Needs addressed & Objectives	Especially after the Covid-era there was a growing need for Cyprus Youth to consult professional for their mental health issues. Thus, the "Exelixis Programme" was formed to provide online consultations to young people and their parents. The programme first began in Larnaca district and in the post-covid era, the programme has gained popularity and has been moved to other major municipalities of Cyprus as well. The main areas that the programme covers are the following: • Development of self-esteem and emotional expression" in children and adolescents. • Addiction and prevention" in adolescents and/or parents • Mental empowerment for older people.
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** Exelixis Preventative Programme tries to raise awareness about mental health in young people and also, provides consultation to young people and/or parents. The methodology that is often followed is through experiential workshops or webinars with specific topics. For example, during their latest workshop held in Larnaca, the main topic was internet addiction and how parents can assist their children with this issue.

Best Practices

Cyprus(1)

Description of the practice	**Major topics covered by the practice:** Mental Health issues, addictive behaviours, internet and screen addiction **Specific tools used:** Face-to-face seminars, Skype/Zoom Consultation meetings, experiential workshops, prevention activities and awareness-raising campaigns. **External participants (stakeholders):** N/A **Evaluation of practice:** This practice has been successful and impactful since its implementation in Larnaca Municipality in 2021. It has now expanded to other major municipalities in Cyprus in just one year. The practice is still ongoing.
Challenges and Innovation	The Exelixis Programme offers consultation services for youth with addictive behaviors and mental health issues. In April 2023, they conducted a workshop on internet addiction. The program uses a hybrid strategy, offering online consultations and on-site workshops and awareness campaigns. To contact the program, email exelixis.th@gmail.com. Communication is primarily through municipalities' social media and websites.

Best Practices

Cyprus (2)

Title	ELEKTRA Counselling Centre for the Treatment of Online Addiction
Location/ Geographical Coverage	Limassol, Cyprus
Implementer	**Name of organisation:** Cyprus Institute for Psychotherapy **Type:** NGO, Counselling **Short background/description:** It is a 4 innovative structure of the Cyprus Institute of Psychotherapy that combines treatment and prevention and is addressed to both minors and underage people. Thes name was choosen to emphasize the scope of action of Electr-A (in English: Electronic Addiction, while in Greek it is rendered as Electr-A or Electr-A i.e. Electronic Addiction), which has set as its priority the more systematic assessment and treatment of the needs and risks of problematic involvement with betting and gaming. **Funding/Sponsors:** Cyprus National Addictions Authority & National Betting Authority

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Best Practices

Cyprus(2)	
Duration of practice/project	Started on the 1st of March, 2018
Needs addressed & objectives	The general objective of Electra is to meet the counselling and treatment needs of minors and young adults who mainly reside in the Limassol district. To offer counselling and treatment to minors and young people of the Limassol district as well as to families facing problematic involvement with: • electronic recreational/interactive games • electronic gambling and online betting • social media & pornographic sites
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** Through psycho-educational workshops implemented through the method of Motivational Focus Groups. This method applies an experiential way of group teaching and enlightenment that overcomes the difficulties and lack of interactivity that often characterise traditional lectures. Furthermore, it is a method that can help to gather valuable information on how participants perceive and deal with the various aspects of pathological involvement in betting and internet addiction.

Best Practices

Cyprus(2)	
Description of the practice	**Major topics covered by the practice:** Elektra is an NGO that covers a range of topics beyond just gaming. It deals with addictive and problematic behaviors related to gambling, betting, social media addiction, and porn addiction. Additionally, it provides support to individuals who struggle with excessive screen use and those whose socialization has been negatively impacted by it. **Specific tools used:** PCIAT, Brent Conrad test, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, DASS-21, South Oaks Gambling screen. **External participants (stakeholders):** Cyprus National Addictions Authority & National Betting Authority **Evaluation of practice:** Elektra has two levels of evaluation to monitor the effectiveness of the programme: internal and external. Weekly supervision is conducted at the first level, and external supervision is performed once a year by an addiction expert who is not involved in the centre's operation. The treatment ideogram is a key tool used in internal clinical supervision. The centre keeps meticulous records on its clients, which is important for supervisory control.

Best Practices

Cyprus(2)	
Challenges and Innovation	The addiction to electronics is triggered and sustained by similar mechanisms as any other form of pathological dependence, with the difference that certain needs and symptoms are unique to this addiction. However, the program provides personalized treatment for each young person or adult who participates. Each treatment is based on key principles of modern (synthetic) psychotherapy: • The principle of individualized universality suggests that although people operate with some common axioms, they each ultimately possess a unique psychosynthesis. • Every problem has its solution. The difficulty in solving some problems is simply a matter of how well hidden the solution is. • Change is a state of evolution, as is human nature. Therefore, change must go through stages.
Useful Links	https://www.facebook.com/ElectrAtherapy/

Germany (1)

Title	"AddicTech"
Location/ Geographical Coverage	European Union
Implementer	**Name of youth organisation (s):** ANKA Youth Team **Type:** NGO **Short background/description:** All ideas of this NGO form around our motto "We bring the World together". It especially promotes young people who have fewer opportunities to be active in society and take part in many projects. **Funding/Sponsors:** Erasmus+ EU Grant
Duration of practice/project	The project started on the 1st of January 2022 and ended on the 31st of January 2023

Germany (1)

Needs addressed & objectives	The objectives were: • To exchange personal interactions related to unhealthy internet use in order to analyze and propose alternatives to critical problems such as fake news, cyberbullying, computer security, general internet digital addiction, and video gaming addiction. These questions are related to the dangers of internet access. • To develop our digital capabilities in order to improve our employability and prepare for present and future labor market demands at the European level. Supporting young people's rights, awareness, and successful use of technologies is a requirement of the European Youth Strategy's (Erasmus+) knowledge and dialogue mission. • Investigating digital inclusion and how we, as young people, can combat digital isolation and foster a positive and equitable online environment; the exercises are structured in this way to teach us new digital approaches, resources, and platforms for our personal and professional growth. • To foster intercultural dialogue and social integration by putting together people with diverse views, opinions, expectations, and cultures, as well as by combating misconceptions spread across the internet and media.

Best Practices

Germany (1)	
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** In the youth exchange, there were 36 participants from 8 different countries between the ages of 18-30. 4 people from each country comprised 1 group leader, 2 disadvantaged young individuals and 2 young individuals. The APV, which prepared for youth exchange, had 14 participants from 7 countries. Two people from each country that were in the APV consisted of group leaders and a disadvantaged youth. Activities planned for youth exchange were based on nonformal education, and based on the participation of young individuals in activities, self-enrolment and creating a learning space with group leaders for themselves and other participants. Major topics covered by the practice: • Digital addiction • Digital tools for personal and professional development **Specific tools used:** N/A **External participants (stakeholders):** N/A **Evaluation of practice:** N/A

Best Practices

Germany (1)

Challenges and Innovation	**Challenges:** N/A **Innovation:** Participants had the opportunity to look in-depth at the problems they have experienced before and they get more awareness about digital addiction and the correct use of technology. In addition, they learned how to use the tools and methods in a digital environment for their personal and professional development, will continue to work on the competencies acquired during the youth exchange even after the mobility concludes and also they will use these competencies in other organizational and personal activities
Useful Links	• https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2021-2-DE04-KA152-YOU-000039760

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France (1)

Title	Promoting responsible gaming and providing resources for parents, educators, and young gamers.
Location/Geographical Coverage	The direction of the PédaGoJeux website is overseen by the l'Union Nationale des Associations Familia (UNAF), the National Union of Family Associations
Implementer	**Name of the organisation:** PédaGoJeux **Type**: a platform that provides resources and information related to responsible gaming for children and adolescents, as well as support for parents & educators **Short background/description** PédaGoJeux is a French organisation dedicated to promoting responsible gaming for children and adolescents. It provides resources and guidance to parents and educators to help young gamers develop healthy gaming habits while raising awareness about potential risks associated with video games

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France (1)

Implementer	**Funding/Sponsors:** PédaGoJeux is a collective formed around stakeholders in the video game industry: public authorities, economic actors, media, gamers, and their families.
	The active members of the PédaGoJeux steering committee include five founding members :
	1. L'Union Nationale des Associations Familiales (UNAF) (the National Union of Family Associations) which leads the collective.
	2. The Family Affairs Ministry
	3. Internet Sans Crainte (Internet Without Fear) - a French national awareness program that aims to help young people better understand and manage their digital lives through free resources and practical advice,
	4. The Syndicat des Editeurs de Logiciels de Loisirs - S.E.L.L (Union of Video Game Publishers)
	5. JeuxOnline a French website that provides information and community resources on video games, particularly MMO (massively multiplayer online) games, and popular cultures.
	In 2017, the Association for the Improvement of Vision (AsnaV) and Action Innocence Monaco (AIMC) joined the collective

Best Practices

France (1)

Duration of practice/project	2008
Needs dressed & Objectives	Inform and raise awareness of parents about video games to create a positive and serene experience of video games within the family.
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** The objectives of Pédagojeux are: • Providing information and resources to parents and educators to help them understand the gaming world and provide them with tools and good practice to support children and young people • Promoting responsible gaming for children and adolescents • Helping young gamers develop healthy gaming habits • Addressing the challenges of video games and providing the keys to a pleasant video game experience • Providing objective information about video games • Creating a positive and serene experience of video games within the family. • Provide the contacts of healthcare professionals for treating severe troubles with gaming.

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Best Practices

France (1)

Description of the practice

Major topics covered by the practice: PédaGoJeux covers topics such as understanding video games, promoting responsible gaming, helping young gamers develop healthy habits, addressing challenges of video games, providing objective information, creating a positive gaming experience, and communicating on age selection and settings.

Specific tools used: PédaGoJeux uses several tools to achieve its objectives, including practical information sheets called "fiches pratiques," a website, a network of ambassadors, etc

External participants (stakeholders): Young people, parents, educators

Evaluation of practice:
PédaGoJeux excels in several areas:
- Promotes responsible gaming.
- Supports families with resources and advice.
- Offers a balanced perspective on gaming.
- Provides a wealth of information.
- Collaborates with various stakeholders.
- Introduces innovative initiatives.
- Contributes to safer internet initiatives.
- Conducts research and awareness campaigns.
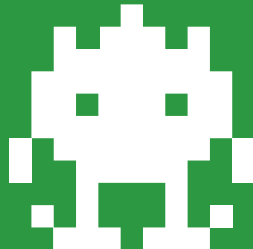
France (1)

Challenges and Innovation	**Challenges:** • Understanding the complexities and potential risks and benefits of video games. • Empowering parents and educators with knowledge and tools to support children in the gaming world. • Ensuring a pleasant gaming experience while addressing gaming challenges. • Promoting responsible gaming among children and adolescents. • Fostering healthy gaming habits and age-appropriate game selections. **Innovations:** • The website's approach is innovative because it recognizes the importance of video games in the digital landscape and aims to help parents navigate this complex medium
Useful links	https://www.pedagojeux.fr/

Best Practices

France (2)

Title	Gaming addiction amongst other addictions
Location/Geographical Coverage	Present all over France, CJCs are generally present in Specialised Centres for Support and Prevention in Addiction (CSAPA) or in locations specialised in serving young people (Adolescent Support Centres and Youth Listening Points.
Implementer	**Name of youth organisation (s):** Consultation Jeune Consommateur (CJC) – Consultation for Young Consumers **Type**: Addiction Prevention and Treatment **Short background/description:** CJCs offer free and anonymous assessments, information, advice, and assistance to those in need of help with substance abuse, addiction, and mental health issues. They address a wide range of psychoactive substances and non-substance addictions. **Funding/Sponsors:** French Ministry of Health and Social Affairs
Duration of Project	**2004**

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France (2)

Needs addressed & Objectives	The CJC aims to provide comprehensive and individualised support to address addiction-related issues among young people by • providing support and guidance to young people struggling with addiction • offering a free and confidential service available to anyone under the age of 25, including minors acting as • a pivot of earlyintervention • working in partnership and coordination with other institutions to provide comprehensive support to young people struggling with addiction
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** The aim of these consultations is to welcome young consumers who have questions about their consumption, as well as their families. The principle is to assess the situation, potentially offer assistance, before consumption becomes problematic.

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France (2)

Description of the practice	The initial session is typically devoted to evaluating the young person's situation and assessing their consumption habits. Beyond examining consumption-related concerns, the young person's overall situation is discussed. Topics such as education, family and social relationships, potential distress, health, and more may be addressed. Following this assessment phase, the professional and the young person jointly determine the most appropriate course of action. Quitting or reducing consumption may be considered. If other difficulties arise during the sessions, additional support may be offered. The support can continue for a variable duration depending on the young person's situation. The CJC is an anonymous service, and young people can access it without fear of judgement or stigma **Major topics covered by the practice:** The specific services offered by CJCs can vary from one location to another, but their primary goal is to provide a range of support and resources to individuals and their families dealing with addiction-related issues. **Specific tools used:** Assessment Interviews / Motivational Interviewing / Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy / Family Therapy / Group Therapy / Referral Services / Peer support programs / Community Resources. CJCs can be contacted by Phone, chat, In-person, online or email

France (2)

Description of the practice	**External participants (stakeholders):** Individuals, family members **Evaluation of practice:** The centres conduct a medical, psychological, and social assessment of the consumer's situation and identify any potential harmful usage. They provide personalised information and advice, as well as brief interventions for at-risk or harmful users based on their needs. The CJC supports and offers guidance to individuals in distress when necessary (e.g., somatic or psychiatric complications, dependence, long-term care, etc.). They offer a welcoming environment and information to the consumer's family and consider joint consultations with both the consumer and their family. The CJC proactively reaches out to potential individuals in distress and establishes relationships with partners and institutions such as the national education system, specialised education, and healthcare professionals, particularly in the community.

France (2)

Challenges and Innovation	**Challenges:** • Limited resources, including funding, staffing, and access to specialised care. • Stigma and shame associated with addiction, which may make young people hesitant to seek help. • Lack of awareness about the CJC and the services it provides. • Coordination with other institutions, which may be challenging due to differences in policies, procedures, and resources. **Innovations:** • Use of digital tools such as online counselling, chatbots, and mobile apps to provide support and guidance to young people. • Peer support programs where individuals in recovery from addiction provide guidance and support to others facing similar challenges. • Collaboration with community organisations to provide additional resources such as vocational training, housing assistance, and legal aid. • Early intervention to prevent addiction-related issues from becoming more severe and difficult to treat. • Holistic and evidence-based approach to treating addiction-related issues, which includes individual counselling, group therapy, and family support to address the different aspects of addiction.

Best Practices

France (2)

Useful links	https://www.drogues-info-service.fr/Tout-savoir-sur-les-drogues/Se-faire-aider/Les-Consultations-jeunes-consommateurs-CJC-une-aide-aux-jeunes-et-a-leur-entourage

Best Practices

Greece (1)

Title	Safer Internet Day
Location/ Geographical Coverage	Greece
Implementr	**Name of organisation (s):** The Greek Safer Internet Centre **Type:** Public organisation **Short background/description:** Short background/description: The Greek Safer Internet Centre (SIC), which was established on July 2016 aims at promoting a safer and better use of the Internet and social media among children and young people. It develops tools and material to appropriately inform and educate parents, grandparents, guardians, teachers, and other sensitive groups of society of the role they ought to play in raising the new generation of children in the digital world. It is the official representative in Greece of the Paneuropean organisations INSAFE/INHOPE that hatch the European strategy for a safe and qualitative internet, as well as the recognised representative of Greece in the Expert Group on Safer Internet for Children of the European Commission.

Best Practices

Greece (1)	
Implementer	Funding/Sponsors: Greek Ministry of Education and Digital Governance.
Duration of the practice	Ongoing
Needs addressed & Objectives	Encouraging people to use digital media more responsibly and think about staying safe online.
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** In 2023, the Safer Internet Day was organised as a week-long celebration in the second week of February. There was a main event at the Ministry of Education, where high school students joined. They discussed being kind online, supporting, and standing up against negative things. Students at the event discussed with famous actors and influencers who shared tips on using social media safely. The also announced and rewarded the winners of two nationwide student competitions held by the Greek Safe Internet Centre. Throughout the week, there were online events for students of all grades. The results of a survey on AI in education in Greece (preliminary results) will be highlighted during SID 2024. This is part of an ongoing European-level survey.

Best Practices

Greece (1)

	New resources emphasising the use of AI tools by students, the opportunities they offer and the risks they present will be released before SID 2024 for use by educators in class but also for informing parents and the broad public in general.These include presentations, videos, and lesson plans released for all educational levels. Press releases with the helpline and hotline annual statistical data and the main conclusions derived, as well press releases with the main messages of SID 2024, will be disseminated to the press. **Major topics covered by the practice:** ●Cyber security ●Digital technologies in education **Specific tools used:** N/A **External participants (stakeholders):** celebrities, influencers, experts **Evaluation of practice:** N/A
Challenges and Innovation	**Challenges:** Schools do not always have the necessary equipment and infrastructure for taking part in the online events and seminars organised by the Internet Safe Centre

Best Practices

Greece (1)	
Challenges and Innovation	**Innovation:** Giving teachers useful and enjoyable tools and ideas to spark their creativity, helping them to teach kids how to be safe on the internet for a longer time.
Useful links	https://www.saferinternetday.org/in-your-country/greece

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Best Practices

Greece (2)	
Title	KETHEA's Prevention and Early Intervention Services Network
Location/Geographical Coverage	Greece
Implementer	**Name of youth organisation (s):** Treatment Centre for addicted persons (KETHEA) **Type:** Non-profit organisation **Short background/description:** KETHEA is the largest network of addiction and social reintegration services in our country. It is aimed at people with problems using legal or illegal substances or other forms of addiction, such as gambling and internet/gaming. With specialized units and services, the KETHEA also addresses adolescents and adults -mainly young people- who have developed a problematic relationship or are addicted on the internet/gaming. In Attica there is the Early Intervention Unit for Problematic Internet Use and a relative unit in KETHEA Plefsis and Nostos, while similar services are offered in Crete and the Dodecanese by KETHEA ARIADNI **Funding/Sponsors:** public funding and private donations

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Best Practices

Greece (2)	
Duration of practice/project	KETHEA was established in 1983
Needs addressed & Objectives	The aim of these initiatives is to prevent and treat problematic behaviours and addictions, including Internet abuse and gaming disorder, among adolescents and young people
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** KETHEA's Prevention and Early Intervention Services Network addresses the general population, individuals and groups with high-risk behaviours and professionals of various specialities, aiming at prevention and early intervention in the field of addictions. The Department of Primary Prevention in the School Community of the Network designs and implements prevention programs for students, parents and teachers in primary and secondary school communities . It also trains on theoretical and interactive base staff of the Ministry of Education, such as those in charge of Health Education, those in charge of Youth Counseling Stations, principals of school units and teachers, while it produces prevention material used in primary and secondary education.

Greece (2)

Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** The Prevention and Early Intervention Unit plans and implements programs on two axes: The first concerns information and prevention in the local community and higher education . The second is specialized interventions for individuals, families and groups of adolescents and young adults who are at increased risk of becoming involved in substance use and delinquency or are already experimenting with such behaviours

A regular intervention for community bonding is the Youth Meeting Point for up to 21 years of age, which operates daily in Exarchia, Athens, offering counselling services, creative employment and psycho-educational activities.

Through KETHEA PLESI , the Prevention and Early Intervention Network offers comprehensive counselling and treatment programs to adolescents and young adults who occasionally use psychotropic substances or abuse the Internet, as well as their families.
The Transitional School of the Network is addressed to children and young people who participate in the programs and actions of the Network, to members of therapeutic programs of KETHEA and of other recognized therapeutic institutions (18 ANO, Atrapos-OKANA), giving them the possibility to reconnect with education. |

Greece (2)

Description of the practice	**Major topics covered by the practice:** - Preventing and treating addictions among adolescents and young people - Internet abuse and gaming disorder among adolescents and young people - The role of family, school and community in preventing/treating addictions among children and young people **Specific tools used:** N/A **External participants (stakeholders):** Family members, school teachers, specialists working in the Ministry of Education **Evaluation of practice:** KETHEA is based on research for the continuous improvement of the quality and efficiency of its services, the formulation of a strategy and the documentation of the economic and social benefit from the operation of effective addiction and social integration programs. The evaluation research methods used at KETHEA include qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis and design, which follow the specifications developed by the World Health Organization in collaboration with the EMCDDA (European Monitoring Center for Drugs) and the Council of Europe.

Best Practices

Greece (2)	
Description of the practice	**Evaluation of practice:** The evaluation of services offered includes the Central Control System for Clinical Administrative and Financial Information (CMIS), the investigation of the degree of satisfaction of service recipients and the wider community, the evaluation of human resources, the evaluation of process and efficiency, the continuous improvement of the quality of services provided, cost-benefit analysis, social planning, as well as staff satisfaction.
Challenges and Innovation	**Challenges:** The aim is for to limit the time in front of the screen, to regain the balance between digital and real life, and enable young people to respond to the challenges and difficulties of their age. In the case of severe addiction, the aim is to complete withdrawal the young person from the addictive digital application. Innovation: The development of social skills is encouraged, through education, socialising with friends and engaging in other social and recreational activities. Personal skills and self-efficacy are also enhanced, and any mental disorders that may co-exist with addiction are examined.

Greece (2)

Challenges and Innovation	**Challenges:** To this end, the following is offered: • Individual and group counselling • Individual and group psychological counselling • Supportive self-help groups • Development of personal, emotional and social support groups • Vocational orientation and counselling • Psychosocial activities • Family meetings
Useful Links	• KETHEA Prevention and early intervention website: http://www.prevention.gr/ Informative brochures for young people and parents available on: • https://www.kethea.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/PC_PROG_11%CE%A721_PARENT_Diorth5_pages-1.pdf • https://www.kethea.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/PC_PROG_15%CE%A719_YOUNG_4_pagesSite.pdf

Ireland (1)

Name	Gaming and Mental Health
Location/Geographical Coverage	Ireland
Implementer	**Name of youth organisation (s):** Jigsaw Ireland **Type:** Young Person's Mental Health Charity **Short background/description:** Jigsaw are the leading Irish youth mental health charity in the country. The charity works to raise awareness surrounding mental health in young people and provides supports to young people suffering from mental health issues. The charity aims to increase the participation of young people in seeking help for their mental health, while also working with large organisations to lobby national governments and raise awareness. **Funding/Sponsors:** As a charitable organisation, Jigsaw received their money through donations and a national service level agreement with the national Health Service Executive (HSE) of Ireland.
Duration of practice/project	Since 2006

Best Practices

Ireland (1)

Needs addressed & Objectives	Gaming addiction, mental health, impact of gaming
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** As the lead mental health charity for young people in Ireland, Jigsaw raise awareness about the impact that various parts of our everyday lives can have on young people's mental health. This includes gaming. While many youth work organisations in Ireland (including Jigsaw) recognise that gaming can have a powerful beneficial impact on your mental health, the organisation also recognises the dangerous allure of gaming for those who get addicted. Jigsaw provide resources and individualised help for young people whose gaming has had an impact on their mental health by helping them identify the dangers of gaming as an addiction. The organisation's clinicians are trained to specifically help young people and the issues that affect them and their mental health including isolation and all types of addiction including gaming and social media. The organisation also provides resources to young people through their website which hosts a variety of different articles that speaks about the impact of gaming on mental health, as well as some advice on how to combat gaming addiction. Individualised or group support (for mental health issues) can be provided at Jigsaw's in-person locations.

Ireland (1)

Description of the practice	**Major topics covered by the practice:** Gaming addiction, mental health, advocacy **Specific tools used:** Training workshops and one-to-one sessions **External participants (stakeholders):** Young people, psychiatrists **Evaluation of practice**: Jigsaw provide support to young people who think that gaming may be affecting their mental health or who may be suffering from mental health addiction. While Jigsaw also promote gaming as a healthy outlet for your mental health for young people who can game in moderation, they also provide specialised support to young people who cannot game in moderation. The core facets of the help provided to the young people who seek help for gaming addiction involve raising awareness, providing education and resources, offering counselling and therapeutic interventions, and fostering collaborations with relevant stakeholders.

Best Practices

Ireland (1)

Challenges and Innovation	While Jigsaw does not specifically focus on gaming, and more generally on mental health, Jigsaw continues to provide effective support and resources to young people whose mental health is impacted by gaming. Some of the challenges they can find is helping young people find a balance between the benefits of gaming on your mental health, as well as the dangers of gaming beyond moderation.
	The innovation that Jigsaw have that the clinicians that work with them are qualified to provide help to young people suffering from poor mental health, as well as the symptoms and causes of this, including gaming. As a charity that provides their own clinicians, they have an innovative service within the country to provide young people with mental health help that is specifically for them.
Useful Links	https://jigsaw.ie/gaming-and-mental-health/

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Best Practices

Ireland (2)	
Title	Gaming Addiction
Location/Geographical Coverage	Ireland
Implementer	**Name of organisation (s):** Rutland Addiction Treatment Centre **Type:** Addiction Treatment Course **Short background/description:** The Rutland Centre is a well-known addiction treatment centre located in Ireland that offers a comprehensive program for treating gambling and gaming addictions. Recognising the growing prevalence of gaming addiction and its detrimental effects on individuals and their families, the Rutland Centre has developed specialised services to address this specific issue. **Funding/Sponsors:** The organisation receives much of its funding through donations and minor governmental funding.
Duration of practice/project	Since 1978
Needs addressed & objectives	Mental Health services, impact of gaming, addiction recovery

Ireland (2)

Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** The Rutland Centre's gaming addiction program provides individuals with tools and support to overcome compulsive gaming behaviours and regain control of their lives. It combines evidence-based therapeutic approaches, individual counselling, group therapy sessions, and family support for a holistic treatment experience. Through a thorough assessment, the centre tailors the treatment plan to meet each person's unique needs, emphasising self-awareness, behaviour modification techniques, and healthy coping strategies. Group therapy sessions create a supportive environment for individuals to connect with peers, share experiences, and learn from each other. The centre's multidisciplinary team of experienced professionals employs cognitive-behavioural therapy, motivational interviewing, and other evidence-based interventions to address the psychological, emotional, and behavioural aspects of gaming addiction. **Major topics covered by the practice:** The most major topics covered by the practice is the dangers of addiction on people's lives, including loss of sense of self, and extreme isolation. The centre treats a variety of different addictions including alcohol, drugs, gambling, and gaming

Ireland (2)

| Description of the practice | **Specific tools used:** One-to-one support, rehabilitation

External participants (stakeholders): Individuals, family members

Evaluation of practice: The centre's approach to treating gaming addiction serves as a great example of treating gaming disorder due to its holistic and evidence-based methods. It includes individual counselling, group therapy, and family support to address the different aspects of addiction which helps recovering people feel less isolated and encourages shared recovery. These different forms of treatment centre the individual at the centre of their own recovery and promote healthy attitudes towards responsible use of addictants. |
|---|---|

Best Practices

Ireland (2)	
Challenges and Innovation	The core challenge facing the Rutland Centre in relation to gaming and mental health is the lack of support and understanding the issue of gaming disorder. Gaming addiction is normally classified or treated as a form of gambling addiction, when the facets of game addiction that constitute gambling are minor. Another challenge is the lack of funding for non-substance related addictions. Rutland receives much of its funding for its substance-related addiction treatment programmes. This makes it difficult to improve the gaming-related addiction programmes as much of their funding needs to go to improving the programmes that are being funded.
Useful Links	https://www.rutlandcentre.ie/addictions-we-treat/gaming

Best Practices

Poland (1)	
Title	Online Portal: www.uzaleznieniabehawioralne.pl
Location Geographical Coverage	Poland
Implementer	**Name of youth organisation:** Health Psychology Studio Foundation (Fundacja Studia Psychologii Zdrowia) **Type:** Foundation **Short background/description:** The foundation operates in the field of health protection, including supporting and conducting initiatives of a health, preventive, educational, scientific, and charitable nature. **Funding/Sponsors:** Ministry of Health
Duration of practice/project	Ongoing

Best Practices

Poland (1)	
Needs addressed & Objectives	- Increasing access to behavioural addiction specialists through a constantly updated database of support facilities and offering online clinics. - Expanding access to support channels for addicted individuals and their families by running online clinics and email consultations with specialists - Ongoing updating of specialist and practical knowledge in the field of behavioural addictions - Continuous updating of information regarding training workshops, gatherings, and conferences in the area of behavioural addictions - Promoting knowledge in the field of behavioural addictions by operating a portal. - Engaging young people in the topic of behavioural addictions through social media activities.
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** - Facilitating access to information and knowledge on behavioural addictions by consolidating news on the subject into a single, interactive portal. - Increasing public awareness of behavioural addictions through regular content updates on the portal.

Best Practices

Poland (1)	
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** • Enhancing accessibility to specialists in behavioural addictions and expert counselling through online clinics and email consultation opportunities. • Increasing access to behavioural addiction treatment facilities through updated facility databases. • Expanding access to specialist news in the field of behavioural addictions by publishing the latest research reports and news. • Broadening specialists' knowledge by publishing practical materials for professionals. • Making it easier to access specialist training paths, gatherings, and conferences in the field of behavioural addictions by publishing information on a single platform **Major topics covered by the practice:** • Behavioural addictions in youth • Raising awareness on behavioural addictions • Information and training courses for specialists **Specific tools used:** Webpage, web portal

Best Practices

Poland (1)	
Description of the practice	**External participants (stakeholders):** The portal serves all interested parties, e.g. individuals with addictions and their families, children and teenagers, their parents and guardians, as well as professionals – therapists, teachers, psychologists, and educators.
Useful Links	https://www.uzaleznieniabehawioralne.pl/

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Best Practices

Poland (2)	
Title	Rymcerze
Location/Geographical Coverage	Poland
Implementer	**Name of youth organisation (s):** Don't Waste Your Life Foundation (Fundacja Nie Zmarnuj Swojego Życia) **Type:** Foundation **Short background/description:** N/A **Funding/Sponsors:** N/A
Duration of practice/project	2013-ongoing
Needs addressed & Objectives	• addiction prevention • awareness of the dangers of addiction • attitude change in young people • encouraging you to develop your interests • presentation of universal values

Best Practices

Poland (2)	
Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** • 90-minute (two lesson hours), dynamic meeting of two rappers (Bęś and DJ Yonas) with young people in the gym or auditorium • an awareness-raising meeting where you present your own stories, preventive mini-lectures and hip-hop music (RYMCERZY songs) • interactions with young people – freestyle competition (brave ones always win posters or mugs or CDs) • lesson plans (15 scenarios) for Teachers extending the subject of the project • emphasizing the authority of the Pedagogical Team • promotion of universal values in life • promotion of hip-hop with values **Major topics covered by the practice:** • Behavioural addictions in youth **External participants (stakeholders):** The project is aimed at young people aged 13-19 **Evaluation of practice:** 1,500 schools and educational institutions in Poland and abroad 500,000 young people at least 9,000 teachers and school principals
Useful Links	https://rymcerze.pl/

Best Practices

Portugal (1)

Title	Serious Game "Eu e os Outros" (Myself and Others)
Location/ Geographical Coverage	National
Implementer	**Name of youth organisation(s):** Centro Internet Segura (Centre for Safe Internet) developed a game, in a joint effort with the Ministry of Health entity SICAD (Intervention Service on Dependency and Addictive Behaviours) and Centro Nacional de Cibersegurança (National Centre of Cybersecurity) **Type:** Health and government organisations **Short background/description:** State-run organisations **Funding/Sponsors:** State-sponsored
Duration of practice/project	Continuously available
Needs addressed & Objectives	Develop group and individual dynamics that improve decision-making and strengthen information research related to gaming and the use of social media

MINDSET

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Best Practices

Portugal (1)

Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** a serious game that unfolds through an interactive digital narrative that covers non-substance addictions and the harmful use of the Internet. It is directed at young people between 12 and 18 years old and it can be used within groups, in schools, in youth associations or at leisure activities centres. **Major topics covered by the practice**: Adolescence and the enlargement of the social network and how peer pressure can change family dynamics. Specific situations related to gaming and social media. The game has 10 more interactive narratives with other pertaining subjects to the youth like sexuality, drugs, etc. **Specific tools used:** Smartphones **External participants (stakeholders):** Teachers, students, Youth Associations, Leisure Activities Institutions **Evaluation of practice:** N/A
Challanges and Innovation	There's a Master of Game who must complete a form to be directed to a training that will enable them to apply the game with their group.
Useful Links	https://www.internetsegura.pt/cis/eu-e-os-outros

Best Practices

Portugal (2)	
Title	Hotline "Linha Vida" (Life Line)
Location/Geographical Coverage	National
Description of the practice	**Name of youth organisation(s):** Serviço de Regulação e Inspeção de Jogos (entity responsible to regulate and inspect gambling) **Type:** Public organisation **Short background/description:** A hotline to provide free, anonymous, and confidential psychological support in the area of addictive behaviours and dependencies related to gambling and gaming. **Funding/Sponsors:** public funding
Duration of practice/project	Continuously available
Needs addressed & Objectives	Provide psychological support to people with addictive behaviours and dependencies related to gambling and gaming

Portugal (2)

Description of the practice	**Methodology and syllabus/curriculum:** N/A **Major topics covered by the practice:** Addictive behaviours and dependencies related to gambling and gaming **Specific tools used:** Service provided through a telephone line **External participants (stakeholders):** N/A **Evaluation of practice:** N/A
Challenges and Innovation	N/A
Useful Links	https://www.srij.turismodeportugal.pt/pt/jogo-responsavel/protecao-ao-jogador/

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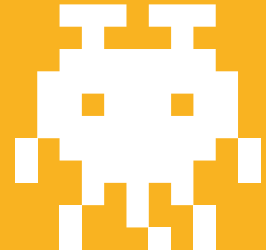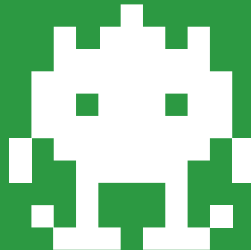
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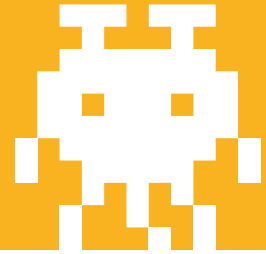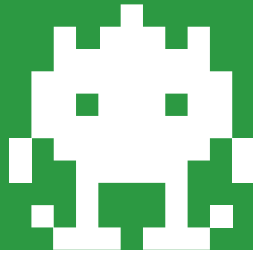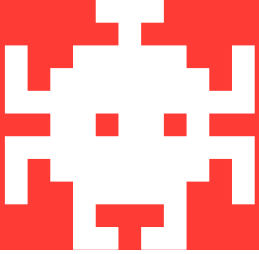
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