

Behavioral Addiction in Children

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Editorial

About fifty years ago, we were sharing a lot of playing entertainment with other children. We could communicate together, talk together, share ideas and at the same time enjoyed playing together.

Our kids nowadays, play alone, think alone and spend a lot of time lonely.

Addictive behavior is a condition characterized by compulsive engagement in rewarding non-drug related behavior stimuli [1].

Video games is one of such a problem

Originally, video games were designed for children to play and enjoy.

Some children spend many hours per day in watching television and playing games as an entertainment.

No consensus agreement is established to consider video games as a mental disorder.

But, prolonged use of video games is associated with abnormal eating habits, obesity, hand and wrist pain, poor academic performance and sleep disorder.

According to The American Academy of Pediatrics, children should limit the time spent playing video games, using the computer, or watching television and movies to one or two hours per day [2].

More than 2 hours per day watching television or playing video games is consider a type of behavioral abnormality with its negative effect on school performance and required some action to correct the concurrent dysfunction.

Video games on the other hand is associated with symptoms of addiction such as spending more money and time from a person to feel a high mode. By playing games kids can skip homework. They will spend a time thinking and talking about game play. They will complain

that they are trying to play less but they usually fail to do. The most important is stealing money to buy or play games. Other symptoms of addiction are present like craving, impaired control over the behavior, tolerance, withdrawal, and high rates of relapse [3].

Such children need to be investigated well for associated psychological problems like attention deficit, hyperactivity disorders, depression and anxiety.

We have to do our best to help these children to improve their academic performance and to practice their day in a balanced manner.

Parents can help their children by limiting screen time and offering educational media and non-electronic formats such as books, newspapers and board games, and watching television with their children.

It is advised that keep children's bedrooms free from televisions, computers or video games, and to turn off the TV during dinner [2].

The overall goal is to help the children to live a balanced life style, to spend their time in a valuable way and at the same time to satisfy their natural childhood desire to play and enjoy.

It is a big battle to help our kids, our real future to perform well and to be as active and productive as possible in their life since early childhood.

Can we succeed? I hope so.

References

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