



Volume 4, Issue 6

# Email Alert

May 5, 2009



Updating you about current events in the battle against addictions

## Nearly 10% of Youth Gamers are Addicted

For years adults have been claiming that some kids are "addicted" to video games. They may be right.

A recent study conducted by an Iowa State University psychology professor has shown that some youth do show pathological patterns consistent with addiction to video games. In a study involving nearly 1,200 American youth between the ages of 8 and 18, Douglas Gentile Assistant Professor of Psychology at ISU found that 8.5% of youth gamers actually meet the criteria for pathological gambling meaning that their gaming habits cause family, social, school or psychological damage. Gentile says "...this is the first study to tell us the national prevalence of pathological play among youth gamers, and it is almost 1 in 10."

Using data collected in a Harris Poll survey in January 2007, Gentile compared respondents' video game playing habits to the symptoms of pathological gambling outlined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Video game playing behavior was classified as pathological if it met at least 6 of the 11 criteria. He found that the "pathological gamers" played video games 24 hours per week which was twice as non-pathological gamers. They were also more likely to 1) have game systems in their bedrooms, 2) report trouble paying attention, 3) receive lower grades in school, 4) feel addicted and 5) report stealing to support their habit.

Gentile says that although this study provides scientific evidence for the existence of pathological gaming behavior further research is needed to determine how best to treat it.

Source:<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/04/090420103547.htm>

Email Alert is a bi-weekly newsletter distributed by  
*Southeastern Regional Action Council*  
Visit us on the web at [www.sectrac.org](http://www.sectrac.org)