

Gaming Use and Adolescent Functioning Checklist

A clinical conversation guide for adolescents and families

Purpose: This checklist helps organize a conversation about gaming and its effects on an adolescent's daily functioning and family life. It is not a validated diagnostic instrument and does not establish a gaming disorder diagnosis.

Instructions

Complete the checklist based on the past three months. The adolescent and a parent or caregiver may each complete a separate copy and then compare patterns rather than argue about a single total score.

0	1	2	3	4
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost always

#	Statement	0	1	2	3	4
1	I game for longer than I originally intended.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	I have tried to reduce my gaming but have had difficulty maintaining the change.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	I think about gaming when I am supposed to be concentrating on other things.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	I become irritable, restless, or upset when I cannot game.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	I use gaming to manage stress, loneliness, anger, boredom, sadness, or anxiety.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	I continue gaming despite recognizing unwanted consequences.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Gaming has interfered with schoolwork, attendance, or academic performance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Gaming has reduced my sleep or disrupted my usual sleep schedule.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	I have neglected chores, exercise, self-care, or other responsibilities because of gaming.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	I spend less time with family or friends because I would rather game.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Activities I once enjoyed have become less important as gaming has taken their place.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Discussions about gaming tend to become circular, defensive, hostile, or avoidant.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	I have minimized, hidden, or been less than fully honest about my gaming.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	Parents, teachers, friends, or professionals have expressed concern about my gaming.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	I feel ambivalent: part of me wants change, while another part wants gaming to remain as it is.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16	I am willing to discuss one specific change or next step with my family or a qualified professional.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Clinical Review

Use the responses to locate patterns, differences in perspective, and the next clinically appropriate conversation.

1. Review by domain

Domain	Items	Clinical focus
Gaming-use pattern	Items 1-6	Look for loss of control, preoccupation, emotional reactions when gaming is unavailable, coping functions, and continued gaming despite consequences.
Everyday impact	Items 7-12	Look for effects on school, sleep, responsibilities, relationships, other interests, and the quality of family conversations.
Change and concern	Items 13-16	Explore concealment, outside concern, ambivalence, and readiness for one concrete next step.

2. Interpretation

This checklist intentionally has no diagnostic cutoff. A total score can obscure the most important information. Review which individual items were marked Often or Almost always, where adolescent and caregiver ratings differ, and whether the pattern indicates impaired functioning, concealment, escalating conflict, or a need for specialized assessment.

Clinical caution: Assess promptly when gaming is associated with threats or aggression, severe sleep deprivation, school refusal, self-harm or suicidal thinking, unsafe online contact, exploitation, or significant financial loss. Immediate safety concerns take priority over routine family discussion.

3. Discussion prompts

- Which response concerns you most, and why?
- What function does gaming serve when it is most difficult to change?
- What has gaming begun to replace in the adolescent's life?
- Where do the adolescent's and caregiver's ratings differ most?
- What has already helped, even briefly, to restore balance?
- What is one observable change that would improve functioning or family trust?

4. Notes and next step

Primary concern:

Difference in adolescent and caregiver perspectives:

Immediate safety consideration:

Agreed next step:

Follow-up date: