It is hard to believe we are in Week 6 of Term 4 already. As the end of the year draws nearer, teaching staff and I are working closely on the establishment of classes for 2015. All schools in NSW work within the staffing guidelines set by the NSW Department of Education & Communities. I wish to assure all parents that every placement is considered carefully and we will make the very best educational decision for your child/ren. Please trust our professional judgment and trust that we will make the best educationally sound decision for every student.

It is with absolute pleasure that I inform the CEPS community that Bron Brown has successfully been appointed as a permanent member of the CEPS staff. Bron has been appointed permanent School Learning Support Officer (SLSO) within our autism unit. Congratulations Bron!

Last Friday we farewelled our three pre-service teachers who had been working with 1P, 3/4T and 5/6W. We wish all three teachers the very best as they embark on their teaching journey. This week we welcome Miss Magnus who will be working in 1/2Red. We hope you have a great time Miss Magnus.
**Selective High School Application (2016)**

Applications for placement in Year 7 at a selective high school in 2016 are open to parents of students in Year 5 until **17th November, 2014**. The application information booklet is available at www.schools.nsw.edu.au/shplacement.

If you are looking to apply for a selective high school placement, please visit the website ASAP. Hard copies of the application form are available from the school office but online applications are preferred.

**From our Library**

As we are getting closer to the end of the year, this will be the last week for the borrowing of books from our library. We will then need ALL borrowed books returned to school as we begin the stocktake process. A reminder note of outstanding borrowed books will be given out next week.

**Note & Payment Reminders!**

- K-2 Botanic Gardens excursion $8.00 due by Friday 5th December.
- Year 6 Corrimal High visit notes (25th Nov & 2nd Dec).
- Final Camp payments due. All camp payments should now be finalised ($250 in total).
- Stage 2 Virtual Excursion, Community Facilities (Wollongong) and Fun Day permission notes and payment $10 due 12th November.

**Uniform Shop**

The CEPS Uniform Shop is open **Monday & Friday mornings from 8:30am - 9:00am**. An order form is included on our school website located in the P&C tab.

**Community Announcements**

**Northern Stars**

Quality Learn to Swim Lessons now at Corrimal Public Pool and Helensburgh Public Pool

*All levels, all ages.*

*Same great program, same great teachers.*

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@ Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre
Special thank you and congratulations to Mrs Duncan, Miss Gooden & Miss Bonney. Thank you ‘teachers’ for your efforts and commitment over the past 5 weeks.

P&C News

P&C Meeting Reminder
The next P&C Meeting will be held tomorrow, **Tuesday 11th November at 6.30pm** in the library. Attending a P&C meeting is a great way to have positive input in your child’s learning experience and to be a part of our schools community. We welcome all who are interested to come along and get involved.

End Of Year Family Fun Night
Save the date – The CEPS Twilight Christmas Family Fun Night, **Friday 5th December**. Just in time for Christmas. Come celebrate and have fun at the food and market stalls, then later get into the groove at the Family Disco. More details this Term. We look forward to seeing you there!

Market Stall Volunteers
If you would like to hold a market stall (or know of anyone who does) on the CEPS Twilight Christmas Family Fun Night, please contact the Fundraising Officer, Kelly Ramsey for further details.
Ph: 0413 018 631 email: ramsey22@optusnet.com.au.

Lorelle Longbottom | Carol Zecevic
P&C President | Secretary/Publicity Officer
0402 183 629 | 0401 093 475
lorellel@dgblaw.com.au | makeupgirlcc@yahoo.com.au
When does fun flip into addiction?

Gaming has come a long way since Space Invaders. Unfortunately with that growth has come an addiction to gaming in some young people. Catherine Gerhardt describes how to spot the signs and what to do about it.

Gaming addiction is a relatively new phenomenon. When I was growing up, video game addiction didn’t really exist. Kids played video games when they went to the arcade, and were limited to their pocket money. Then came the invention of home video game systems, and today millions of homes around the globe are equipped with both game consoles and personal computers. Remember Pac-Man and Tetris? My how gaming has changed.

What does fun flip into addiction?

Gaming gets into our deepest motivational drivers. As human beings we have a great need to be social. Gaming allows us to connect with others and gives us the feeling of control over our own social environment. This can be a key factor for those who feel like they have very little control over their daily lives. For those parents and others who always seem to be controlling them.

We are all driven towards pleasure, and the pleasure component in gaming is almost instant reward. This reward is random, it is not predictable, and it keeps us coming back for more.

Intermittent rewards are the same foundation that gambling is based on, and researchers are currently looking deeper into a potential correlation between gaming and gambling.

In massive multiplayer games there is often punishment for breaking off. Fear and pain are, again, major motivational drivers. Some games, like World of Warcraft, penalize players through loss of progress if they are turned off before a goal or the next level is reached. Now it is the game controlling the player and the other way around. These players’ involvement is so profound that it is the addicted responsibility to the online community, and when they log off they may be letting other players down.

Signs that your child may be developing a gaming addiction include:

- The inability to control the use of games
- Feeling it difficult to stop playing even if they want to
- Experiencing withdrawal symptoms—physical and mood related changes such as bad temper, loss of interest or feeling empty, frustrated or angry
- Exhibiting defensive behaviour when questioned about use
- Making social and recreational sacrifices such as cutting off real life friends and only having online friends
- Secrecy and solitude—playing alone and in secret, smoking it in when they can
- Lying about use—they tell you they spent one hour playing when really it was two.

What does this mean for parents?

How you react to gaming addiction with your child over the amount of time they spend gaming? Have you threatened to take their access away? Do you think there might be a problem, then there probably already is.

Many parents feel alienated in regards to their child’s problematic Internet use, but by adjusting your approach, parents and kids are beginning to find ways to help with this serious behaviour problem.

You can start to help your child by implementing some simple steps:

Set time limits — This will allow a certain number of minutes (not hours) per day. Consider requiring that your child earn game time through responsibilities. Once you set the rules, you must enforce them.

Limit content — Ratings are there for a reason. Exposure to elements such as violence and gambling are a risk. If you allow your child access to inappropriate or adult content, reads reviews or test the game yourself before you give it to your child. Although they may say “everyone else is playing it,” we know that is not the case.

Keep gaming out of the bedroom — This follows the basic rule of no media in the bedroom. Monitoring content and usage becomes very difficult behind a closed door. We want kids where they can interact with other people to help limit the solitude and security that can occur. Interaction with other family members, even while gaming, is a protection factor.

Gaming is a privilege, not a right. Other activities such as homework and chores must be done first. Having dinner with the family, doing some exercise or doing music practice takes priority over games.

Families have found it useful to use behavioural charts to clarify what needs to be done before gaming is permitted, and how much gaming is allowed. Gaming is about balance, and there is room for some negotiation. They want to earn more gaming? Perhaps consider an extra 15 minutes for every extra hour of physical activity they do.

Video games are not a babysitter — Too many parents are relying on technology to keep their children quiet and occupied. Children and youths must learn to socialise and fend for the “girl” required to get through social situations. There are other things kids can do to keep themselves busy besides relying on technology.

Search for a therapist — If your child’s gaming has already become too far out of control, you may want to search for a professional therapist or a treatment program that specialises in adolescent addictions. Recovery from video game addiction is possible.

There isn’t anything wrong with gaming itself — It’s a great way to have fun, to connect with others and to learn. However, when gaming becomes the priority over other areas of life, then an addiction may be brewing. According to www.video-game-addiction.org, “kids who are easily bored, have poor relationships with family members, feel like outcasts at school, or tend towards sensation seeking are more easily drawn into video game addiction because it fills a void and satisfies needs that aren’t met elsewhere”.

There is some debate as to whether gaming addiction is a diagnosable disorder, however the behaviour undeniably exists. The combination of intentional programming by designers and the predisposition some teens have to addictive behaviour means this is a real issue that parents, teachers, and friends should be aware of and may need to take action towards.

Catherine Gerhardt

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