DPCDSB PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT
GAMING DURING COVID 19: GUIDELINES FOR MAINTAINING A HEALTHY BALANCE

Are all video/computer games bad? No. There are many positives involved with playing them, including:

- Fun and interactive learning through games
- Communities within online games that may promote socializing with others
- Staying connected with family and friends through playing together in-person or online

How can you help your child use technology and play games in a safe and healthy way? The following tips may be of value:

- For younger children, have an open area for computer use where you can monitor what is being viewed or played until children develop a sense of responsible media use
- Create house rules for gaming that are reasonable for the child's age
- Maintain a consistent daily schedule for gaming and consider writing it down and posting it in a communal space
- Emphasize the need for daily exercise, and family engagement for a healthy balance
- If you feel that the house rules with respect to gaming are not being respected, consider reviewing them and developing a contract (set of expectations for behaviour and consequences) to reinforce setting a limit on game time

What are the best types of video/computer games for young children (ages 5-11)? For this age group, the best games:

- Reward creativity and planning
- Help your child learn about rules and strategy
- Have different levels of difficulty, so that games can evolve and your child can progress through stages
- Have simple controls - younger children can get frustrated if they can't work the controls
- Have positive messages about gender and diversity

What are the best types of games for older children (ages 12 and up)? For tweens and teens:

      Focus on encouraging healthy gaming habits rather than looking for a specific game
      Games that give your child a way to work with other people in a team can be a good choice
      Look for games that have a positive message about equity, inclusiveness, and collaboration

How do you know when gaming is interfering with your child's well-being? As parents, we are always