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The Impact of Game Transfer Phenomena on cravings in IGD-ADHD adolescents

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Background: The adolescent prefrontal cortex, combined with ADHD, has even greater vulnerability to cravings (sugar, gaming, etc). Game Transfer Phenomena (GTP) may exacerbate these cravings in adolescents with comorbid Gaming Disorder (GD). GTP is defined as recurrent sensory or cognitive intrusions, such as seeing images or hearing sounds from games, changes in perception, or in self-agency. Methods: Two clinical cases of GD-ADHD diagnosed males, ages 14 (P14) and 15 (P15), demonstrated the influence of GTP on cravings to play. Measures include: GTP Scale, IGD-20, Conners Scale, daily reporting on cravings. *Results:* Both patients reported GTP events that had varying influences on cravings to play. Each patient's most frequently-occurring GTP event also triggered the most craving. For example, moving from dark to well-lit rooms after playing triggered visual hallucinations for P14, increasing their craving to play. P15's most frequent GTP was an auditory misperception of the "Victory" sound from Fortnite. This was triggered by their sibling's white noise machine, causing a "rush of excitement" and a strong desire to maintain this emotion. P14 and P15's reported cravings and incidents of parent discipline were positively correlated. Conclusions: Analysis suggests that GTP can induce cravings that are highly difficult for those with ADHD and GD to control. GTP presents as cue-induced craving, maintaining a dysfunctional cycle: Initial GTP experience, euphoric recall of gaming, craving to play, and then immediate, impulsive play. It is therefore crucial for clinicians to assess GTP in individuals with ADHD and GD to better understand and address these cravings.

Keywords: gaming disorder, ADHD, Game Transfer Phenomena, cravings

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