

## Session 10

Title: Convergence between Gambling & Gaming

Date: 2/18/2025

9 am-12 pm

Presenter: Dr. Stephanie Diez-Morel, Ph.D., LCSW, IGDC, BACC, MCAP

### Description:

In 2022, more than 215 million people of all ages and identities in the U.S. reported they play video games regularly. As we have more people engaged in gaming, game design has shifted to a monetization model as there has been an immense growth in gambling mechanics purposely included within video games across all platforms.

In this presentation, we will discuss how gambling and gaming intersect to affect individual's behaviors towards higher engagement for problematic use. Knowing how gaming can convert from leisure to problematic by understanding the many intentional factors and intersections between gambling and gaming can aid those working with individuals and families to prevent and treat disordered levels of behavior. While many can enjoy video games without developing any consequences, there are a proportion of those who stray from responsible levels of play to areas of problematic play. Those who often progress to problematic gaming and gambling reach a point where several areas of their lives are impacted in a negative way. Participants will learn how to identify when gaming is problematic by using evidence informed screening tools. Also, participants will identify co-occurring mental health issues that place individuals at higher risk of developing gaming and/or gambling disorder. Participants will be provided with approaches for clinical work that can be applied for direct treatment work as well as targeted prevention work that can be utilized prior to individual's behavior reaching disordered levels.

### Learning Objectives:

1. Foster awareness of the facts and clinical features of gaming disorder and the continuum of problematic behaviors
2. Describe the psychological, physiological, social, and environmental issues and beliefs associated with gaming and gambling disorder
3. Develop awareness of the convergence with gaming and gambling including game design elements, monetization models, and common gambling mechanics intentionally included within video games across all platforms

4. Identify co-occurring mental health issues to be aware of and screen for at intake/initial session
5. Identify valid screening and assessment measures to assess for gaming & gambling disorder
6. Identify clinical approaches and techniques that can be utilized as points of intervention and/or prevention for working with individuals and/or families

Presenter Bio:

Dr. Stephanie Diez-Morel, Ph.D., LCSW, MCAP, IGDC, BACC Dr. Stephanie Diez-Morel (pronouns: she/her) is an associate professor of graduate social work at Pennsylvania Western University, Edinboro Campus. She is an international trainer and speaker and has presented clinical courses to helping professionals all over the world. Dr. Diez-Morel has authored numerous scientific presentations and journal articles, as well as appeared in international media on a variety of radio, podcasts, and media outlets to discuss the topics of addictions, gaming disorder and other behavioral health concerns. In 2013, Dr. Diez-Morel founded Reboot & Recover, a nonprofit organization dedicated to finding solutions for a balanced living in a technology driven world. She established education, prevention, treatment, and research on gaming disorder and other problematic technology-based behaviors for children, youth, adults, and

families. Dr. Diez-Morel earned her Ph.D. from Florida International University where she was awarded a student scholar in Health Disparities Research Fellowship offered through the Center for Research on US Latino HIV/AIDS and Drug Abuse (CRUSADA) funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). As a C-SALUD Student Scholar in Health Disparities Research Fellow, Dr. Diez-Morel's research contributed to the reduction and prevention of health disparities affecting youth and families in the United States. As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Dr. Diez-Morel has worked within nonprofit community organizations and in community hospitals providing direct clinical services to children, families, and adults experiencing addiction. In addition, she has provided clinical training, education and consultation to address addictions among various communities including medical professionals, counselors, healthcare workers, educators, caregivers, and school aged children. Dr. Diez-Morel utilizes her expertise in behavioral health and addictions to serve in various roles at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels to enhance the field. Dr. Diez-Morel is the vice president of the International Gambling Counselor Certification Board (IGCCB) and through this role, is the lead in developing the world's first International Gaming Disorder Certification for helping professionals. She serves the state of Pennsylvania as a member of the Behavioral Health Commission for Adults Mental Health a Governor appointee. Dr. Diez-Morel is also the co-lead for the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) Gaming Disorder Taskforce where she coordinates an interdisciplinary group of international experts in Gaming Disorder on proposing up to date criteria for the diagnosis of Gaming Disorder in the DSM. As a social worker, she serves as the National Association of Social Work's (NASW-PA) NW Division Chair and Executive Committee member. She also serves as a gaming expert consultant with the telehealth company Kindbridge and digital health wellness company DigiPanion. Dr. Diez-Morel continues her clinical practice as she is dually licensed in the states of Florida and Pennsylvania. Her clinical practice areas include behavioral addictions, substance use disorders, behavioral health, co-occurring disorders, and mental health. Her research interests center on the intersections between technology use behaviors, health, and wellness among adolescents and adults.