



DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR INFORMATION, INTELLIGENCE DIVISION

# Insider Risk and Online Gaming

DEFENSE COUNTERINTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY AGENCY



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# PRESENTATION OVERVIEW



- Emergence of Online Games
- Who Are Online Gamers?
- Risk Vectors and Online Gaming
- What Can We Do?
- Questions





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# **EMERGENCE OF ONLINE GAMES**

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# THIRD-PARTY SOFTWARE





# THIRD-PARTY SOFTWARE



- Video games played by multiple players connected through the internet or other wide-area networks
- Typically incorporates in-game chat (text and/or voice-based).
- Players can type messages or transmit their voices through the game.



# THIRD-PARTY SOFTWARE



 **rocket.chat**

 **chanty**

 **SpeakApp**

 **slack**

 **Discord**

**wire**



 **flock**





# WHAT ARE ONLINE COLLABORATIVE GAMES?



TOM CLANCY'S  
**GHOST RECON**  
WILDLANDS

A HIDEO KOJIMA GAME

**METAL GEAR SOLID V**  
GROUND ZEROES  
TACTICAL ESPIONAGE OPERATIONS

TOM CLANCY'S  
**SPLINTER CELL**

★ **WAR** ★  
THUNDER

SPEC OPS®  
**THE LINE**

**BROTHERS**  
★ **IN ARMS** ★

**SNIPER ELITE**  
V2

**READY OR NOT**



# WHAT ARE THEY PLAYING?







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# WHO ARE ONLINE GAMERS?

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# GENERATIONAL COHORTS: DEFINITIONS



## DIGITAL NATIVES

- Grew up in the era of ubiquitous technology
- Comfortable with technology and computers at an early age
- Consider technology to be an integral and necessary part of their lives

## DIGITAL IMMIGRANTS

- Were not born in the digital era
- Later adopted the new technology



# GENERATIONAL COHORTS



## GENERATION ALPHA

- Born after 2010
- Ages 0 to 14
- 66% consider themselves a “gamer”
- *Spend nearly 80 hours per week gaming*
- Games are their primary source of entertainment
- *“True” digital natives*
- Most technologically savvy generation
- Will enjoy a longer life span than previous generations



# GENERATIONAL COHORTS



## GENERATION Z

- Born between mid-1990s and 2009
- Ages 15 to 29
- Make up 27% of the global workforce
- Will work 18 jobs across 6 careers
- Spend nearly 80 hours per week gaming
- *Digital natives*
- *Over 80% have played computer games in the past year*



# GENERATIONAL COHORTS



## MILLENNIALS

- Born between early 1980s and mid-1990's
- Ages 30 to 44
- *Make up 34% of the workforce*
- Very tech-savvy
- Spend 22 hours per week gaming
- *Digital immigrants*
- 77% play video games



# GENERATIONAL COHORTS



## GENERATION X

- Born between mid-1960s and 1980
- Ages 44 to 59
- *Make up 27% of the global workforce*
- Grew up with the very start of the gaming industry
- 60% of Gen X plays video games
- Gaming takes up 18% of their entertainment time
- *Digital immigrants*



# GENERATIONAL COHORTS



## BABY BOOMERS

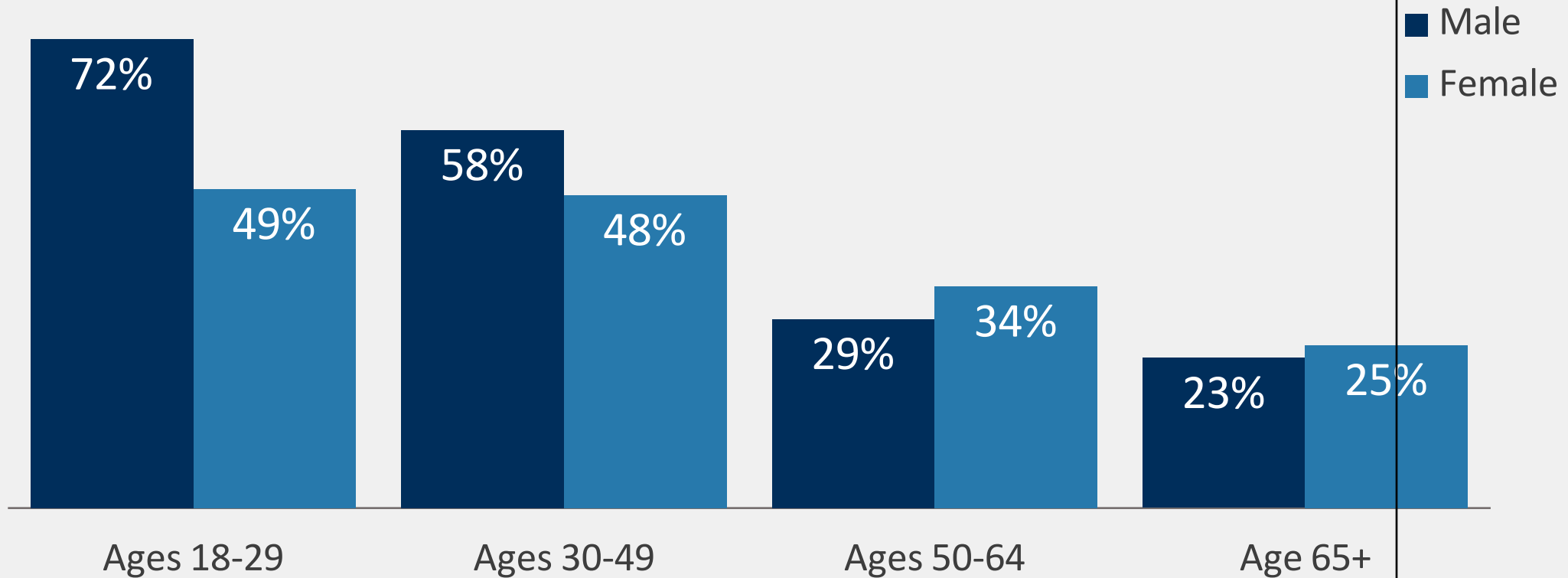
- Born between 1946 and 1964
- Ages 60 to 78
- Make up 12% of the global workforce
- Gaming takes up 10% of entertainment leisure time
- 53% of Baby Boomer gamers are women
- Spends about 2.5 hours per week gaming
- *Digital immigrants*



# SEX AND AGE COMPARISONS



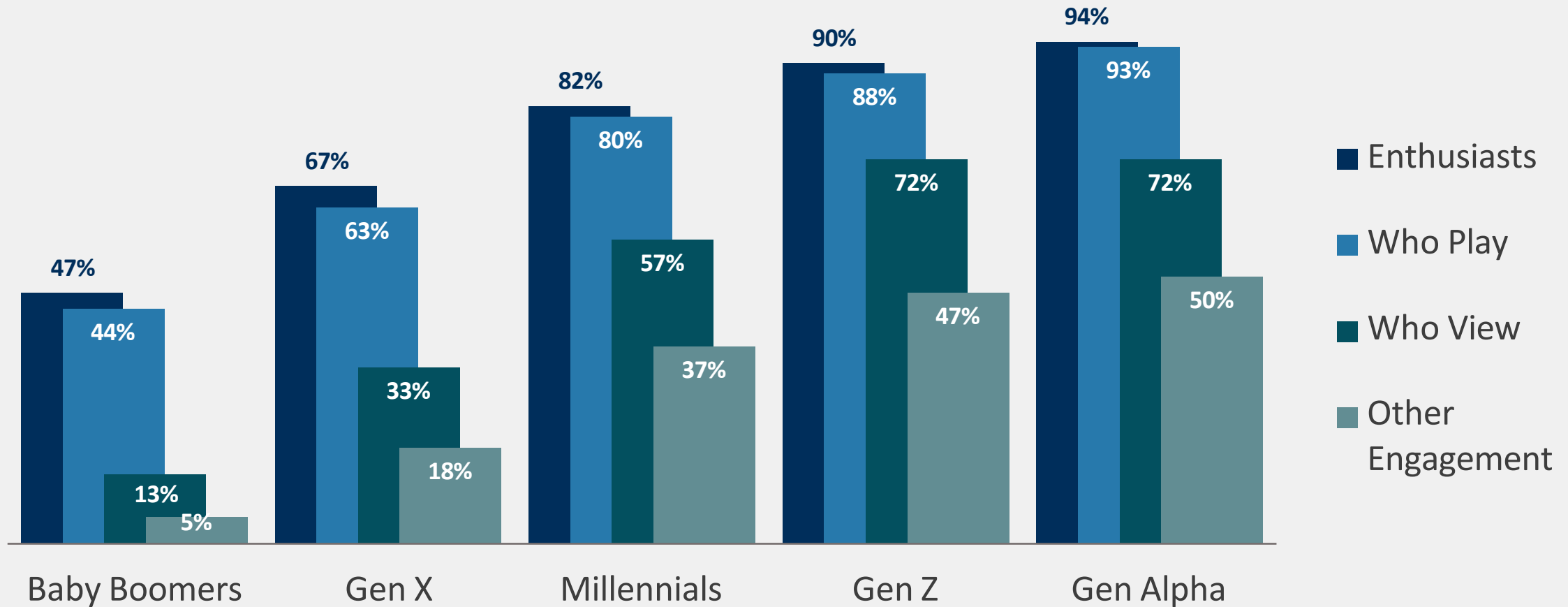
## Percentage of Adult Gamers Who Play Often



Source: Pew Research Center



## Generational Gaming Engagement by Total Online Population







# **RISK VECTORS AND ONLINE GAMING**



# CONCERNING BEHAVIORAL ELEMENTS



- Computer-mediated communication
- Online behavioral disinhibition
- Dark triad behaviors and other related concerns



# COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION (CMC)



**COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION (CMC):** any human communication that occurs using two or more electronic devices

- People use CMC to foster relationships concurrent with and in place of face-to-face connections.
- CMC represents an evolution in human connection. Proximity and the cues associated with understanding and interpretation that comes with the incorporation of nearness.



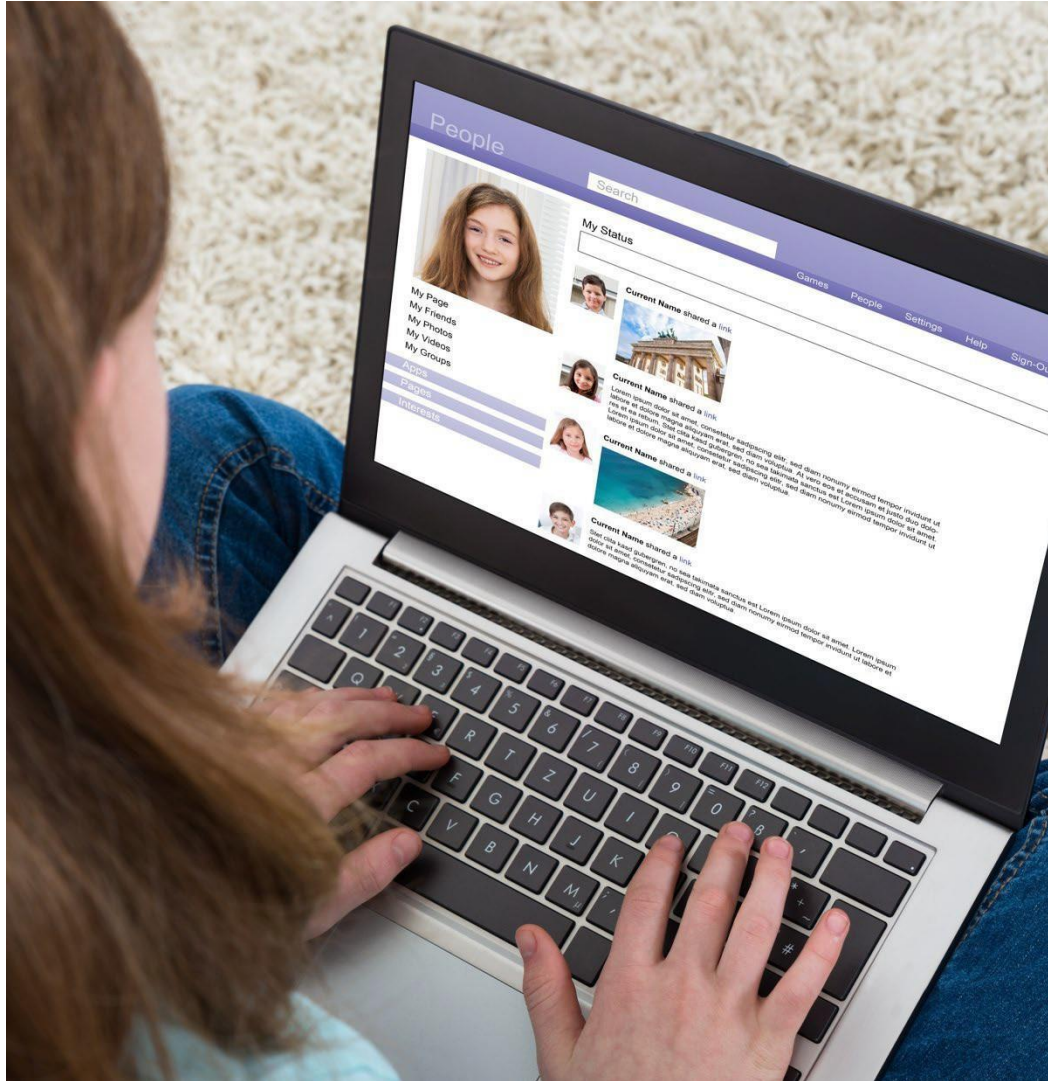
# ONLINE BEHAVIORAL DISINHIBITION



**ONLINE BEHAVIORAL DISINHIBITION:** when individuals in cyberspace do or say things that they would not say or do in “real-life” situations because they feel less restrained and able to express themselves more freely.



# NATURE OF ONLINE FRIENDSHIPS



Online friendships are:

- Just as real and felt as strongly as in-person friendships
- Connections
- Telemedicine analogy
- Can be similar to “bar room bragging”
- Seldom consider the possibilities that a friend could be an imposter





## THE DARK TRIAD THEORY

recognizes specific characteristics associated with each personality trait.

- Machiavellianism
- Narcissism
- Psychopathy



# DARK TRIAD IN GAMERS: MACHIAVELLIANISM



Traits associated with **MACHIAVELLIANISM** include duplicity, manipulation, self-interest, and a lack of both emotion and morality.

Machiavellians are motivated to have on-line gaming friends to manipulate and exploit.

Machiavellianism is linked to compensatory use of internet games, which is linked to addictive use of on-line gaming.



# DARK TRIAD IN GAMERS: NARCISSISM



Forms of **NARCISSISM** may present as grandiosity, entitlement, self-importance, fantasies of success, exploitative behaviors, conviction of uniqueness, and a high need for admiration and praise.

Narcissists in the on-line gaming context may be motivated to play with friends to seek and achieve admiration and praise as well as to target and exploit others.



# DARK TRIAD IN GAMERS: PSYCHOPATHY



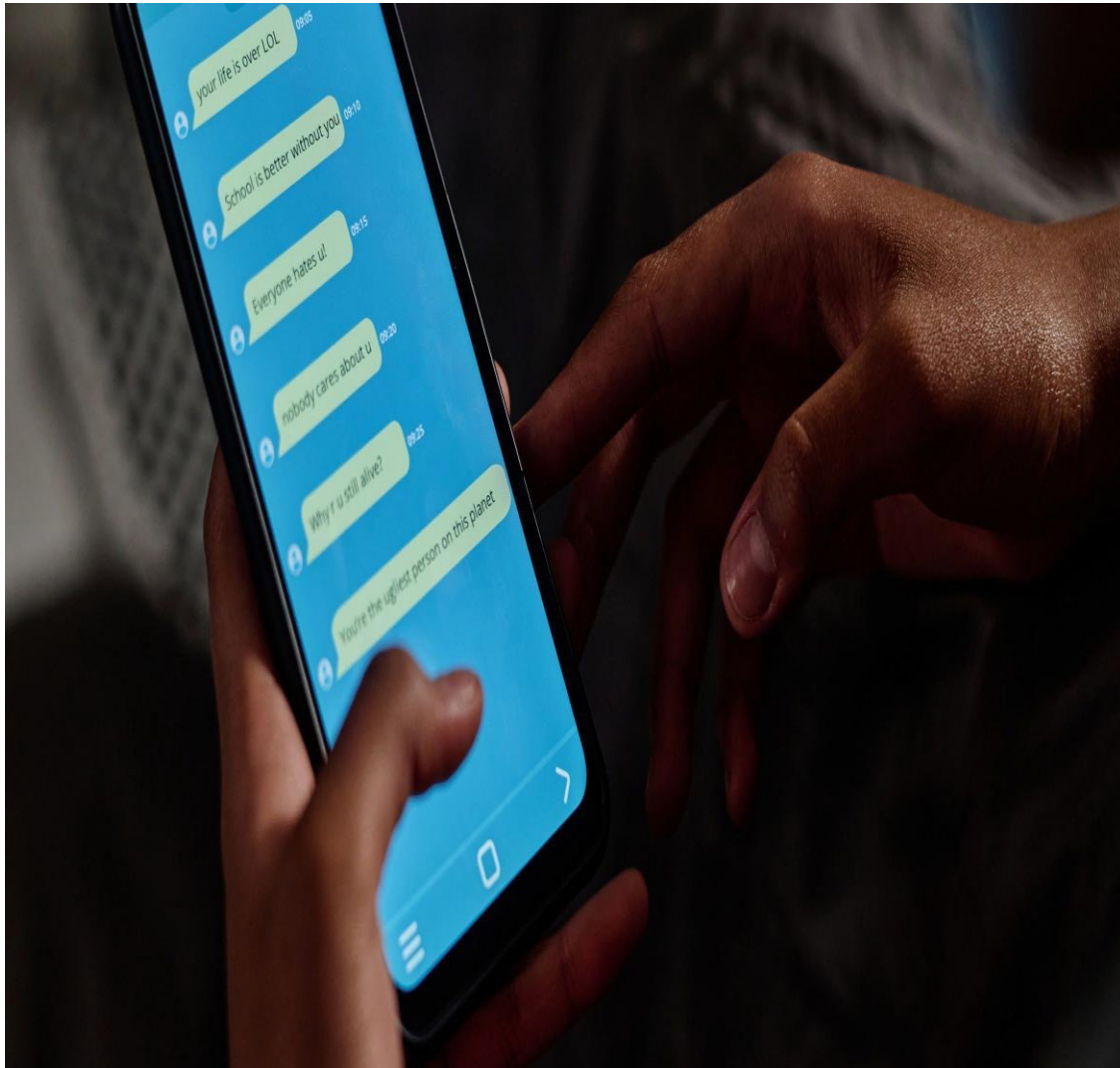
**PSYCHOPATHY** is marked by deficient emotional responses, lack of empathy, and poor behavioral controls, commonly resulting in persistent antisocial deviance and criminal behavior, impulsiveness, and thrill seeking.

Psychopaths seek impulsive thrill seekers in online gaming communities.

Like Machiavellians, psychopathy is linked to compensatory use of internet games, which can lead to addictive use of online gaming.



# CYBERBULLYING, TROLLING, AND ELICITATION...



**Cyberbullying** includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or other content designed to hurt, embarrass or humiliate a person or a group of people. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.

**Trolling** in the world of online gaming, is intentional undesirable acts that create angst and disorder such as killing teammates, verbally abusing peers, and misdirecting community members.

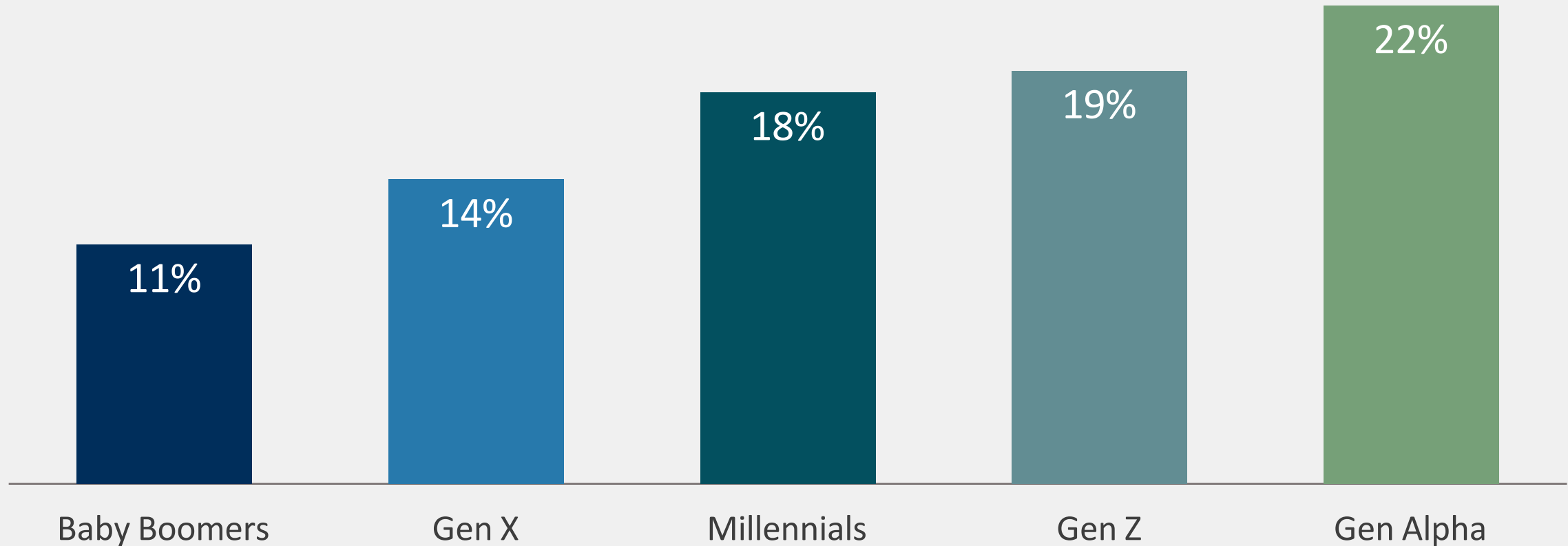
**Elicitation** is a technique used to collect information that is not readily available and do so without raising suspicion that specific facts are being sought.



# IS HEAVY GAMING A POTENTIAL RISK INDICATOR?



## Percent of Leisure Time Spent Playing Online Games by Generation

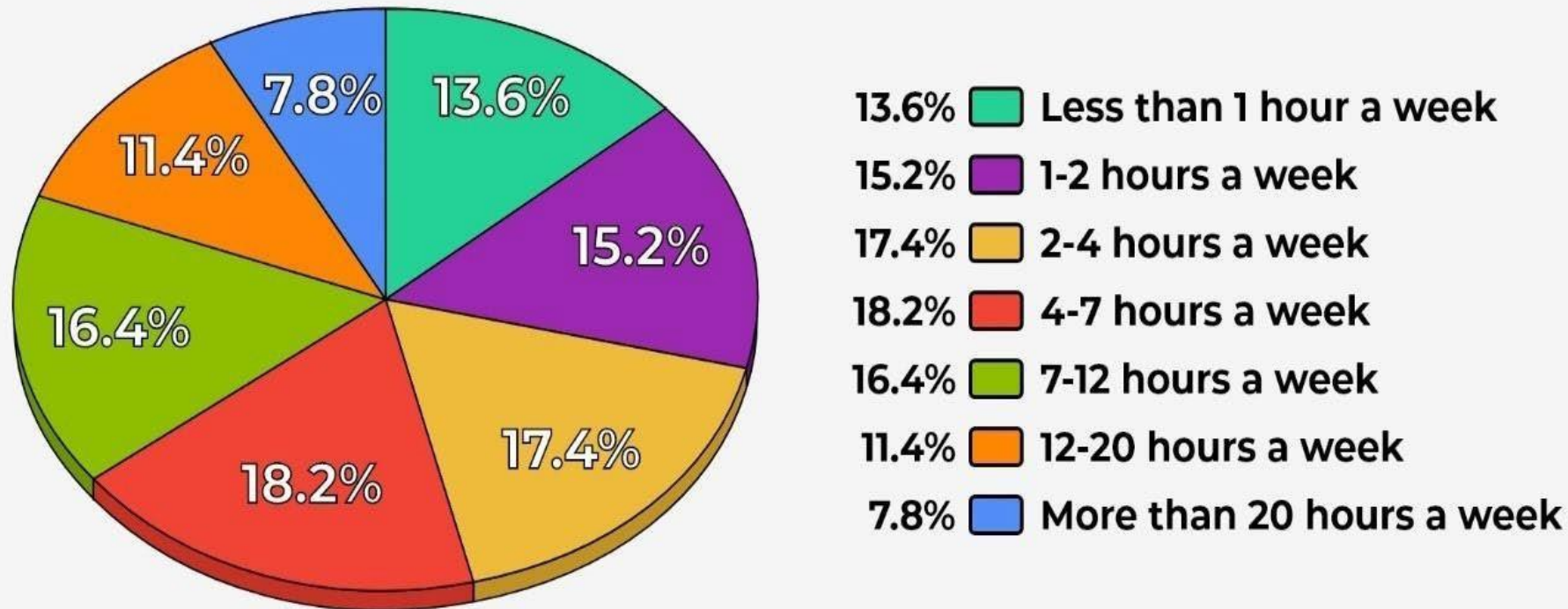




# HOW MUCH GAMING TIME IS TOO MUCH?



## Time Gamers in the United States Spend Playing Games



**The Average Hours Each Week: 6.76**

[Online Gaming Statistics in 2023: Interactive Entertainment in the New Decade \(internetadvisor.com\)](https://internetadvisor.com)



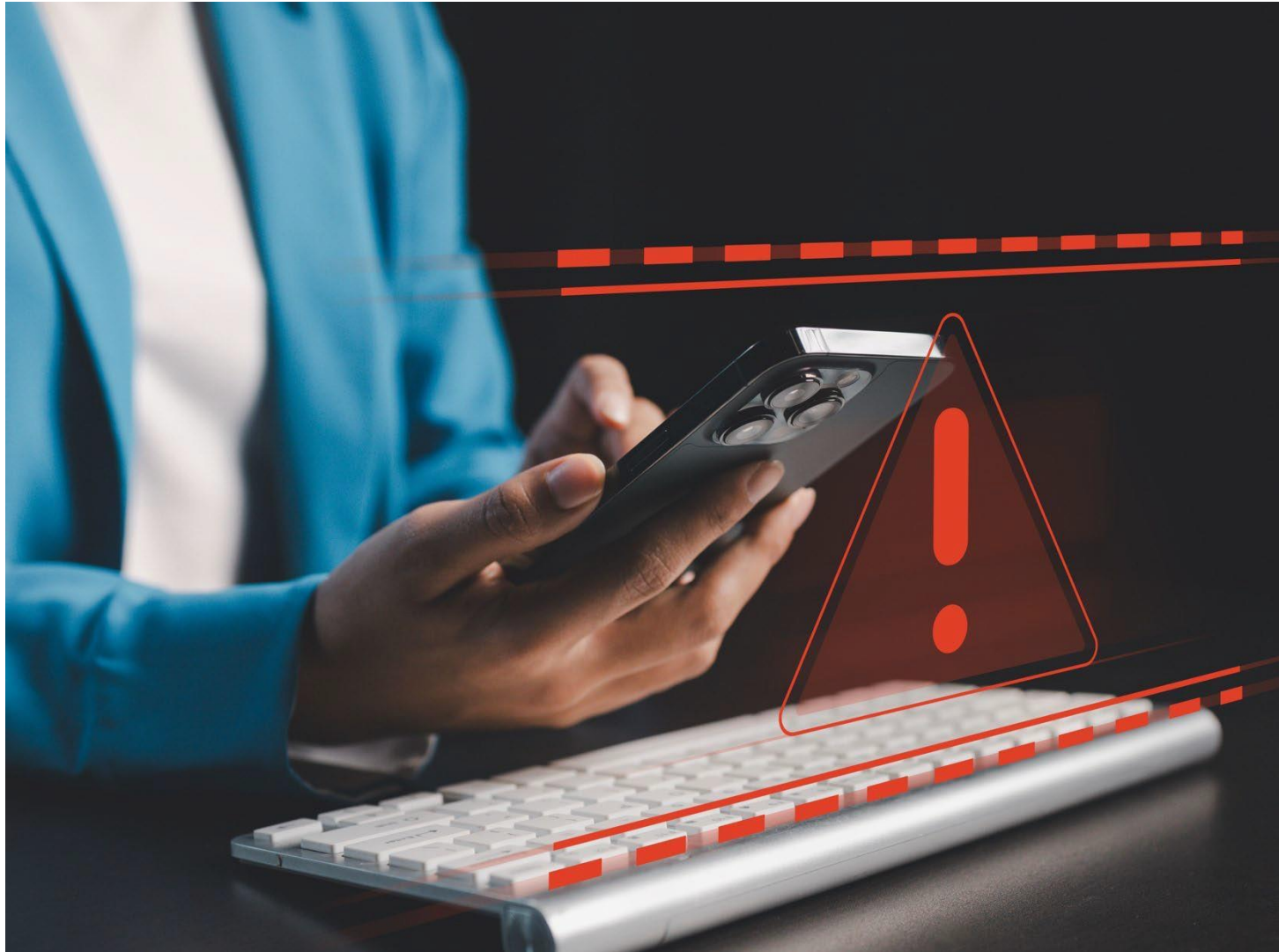
# INTERNET GAMING DISORDER



- **INTERNET GAMING DISORDER (IGD)** is included in the APA Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5-TR).
- IGD is listed as requiring further research, along with caffeine use disorder and other conditions.
- Distinctions between passionate engagement and pathology (illness/addiction) have not been well studied.
- Adding video gaming to the list of recognized behavioral addictions could help millions in need. It could also pathologize a normal behavior and create a new stigma.



# A BIG QUESTION



Given the risk vectors, is heavy internet game play a  
**POTENTIAL INSIDER THREAT  
RISK INDICATOR?**

**Should it be?**



# SOMETHING IS HAPPENING...



PERIODIC TABLE OF INSIDER THREAT ELEMENTS										Potential Consequences to Organizations		
Behavior Indicators of a Person Becoming a Potential Threat	1 HB Hostile Behavior									2 LL Loss of Life	3 LI Loss of Information	
	4 MA Misplaced Anger	5 SA Substance Abuse					6 I Introversion	7 WSC Weapons Systems Compromised	8 CCI Compromise of Classified Information			
	9 IVT Increasing Violence Tendencies	10 PFD Pattern of Frustration and Depression					11 LE Lack of Empathy	12 G Greedy	13 EL Economic Loss	14 LTS Loss of Technological Superiority		
	15 RSV Repeated Security Violations	16 IARA Inability to Assume Responsibility for Actions	17 IPE Interest in Purchasing Explosives	18 FND Financial Need and Difficulties	19 SPVEP Self-Perceived Value Exceeds Performance	20 SE Sense of Entitlement	21 NT Narcissistic Tendencies	22 M Money	23 EG Ego Gratification			
	24 AMMF Always Minimizes Mistakes and Faults	25 ECTWN Engaging in Classified Talks Without Need	26 AARA Attempting Access to Restricted Areas	27 AUW Acquisition of Unexpected Wealth	28 OOF Out-of-the-Ordinary Foreign Travel	29 CDB Compulsive and Destructive Behavior	30 EA Easy to Anger	31 DPES Disaffected Political / Extremist Sympathies	32 CIO Conflicting Ideologies with Organization			
	33 UCSM Unnecessarily Copies Sensitive Materials	34 ALE Aversion to Law Enforcement	35 TTIA Tendencies Towards Illegal Activities	36 PMH Poor Mental Health	37 UFCT Unreported Foreign Contacts or Travel	38 EF Ethically Flexible	39 RP Rebellious Personality	40 EDE Exaggerated Desire for Excitement	41 ATO Anger Towards Organization			
	42 IMOSD Interested in Matters Outside Scope of Duties	43 WOH Working Odd Hours	44 VWPT Viewing Websites Promoting Terrorism	45 UWA Unexpected Work Absences	46 ASTG Advocating Support for Terrorist Groups	47 EBT Exploitable Behavior Traits	48 UL Unknown Loyalties	49 PAT Passive Aggressive Tendencies	50 IC Intolerance to Criticism			
With Insider Threats. Every Element Matters!						Personal Characteristics of Potential Insiders						
										Insider Threat Motivating Factors		

...but we're just not sure what!





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# WHAT CAN WE DO?

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# INCREASE AWARENESS



- Leadership awareness
  - Generational differences and disconnects
  - Exploitation by adversaries
  - Elicitation and recruitment
  - OPSEC violations
- Personal awareness for gamers
  - Addiction awareness and Intervention
  - Strategies to maintain good online hygiene in the gaming space
  - Increase awareness of the evolving use and vulnerabilities of online gaming
  - Recognize differences and risks between in-person and online connections



# QUESTIONS?

