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Policy Recommendations for Gaming Companies and Developers

To effectively address gaming addiction and promote healthier gaming habits, we recommend the following policy changes for gaming companies. These changes are based on the proposed tools and ideas aimed at enhancing user experience and supporting balanced gaming practices.

Customizable Break Reminders

Gaming companies should introduce tools that allow players to set personalized reminders for breaks. These reminders could be based on playtime history or specific activity patterns, and players could have the option to customize their preferences, such as the timing, tone, and visuals of the reminders. The goal is to encourage regular pauses in a way that feels engaging and non-disruptive.

Dynamic Breaks

We propose a tool that analyzes playtime patterns and recommends dynamic break schedules based on gameplay duration, intensity, and the time of day. This tool would adjust break timings to make sure players are taking necessary pauses based on how long and intensely they've been playing.

Wellness Goals

To encourage healthy gaming habits, wellness goals can be introduced. These goals would allow players to "unlock" rewards for taking breaks, exercising, or logging off at designated times. Players could earn badges or points for meeting these goals, making it a fun and rewarding way to promote wellness.

Enhanced Parental Controls

Current parental controls should be expanded to include:

- Detailed playtime analytics, providing parents with insights into their child's gaming habits.
- Multi-level access controls that adjust based on the player's age or maturity.

- Notifications to alert parents when their child is nearing or exceeding time limits, promoting balance between gaming and other daily activities.

Game Pause Alerts

Introducing game pause alerts at natural stopping points in gameplay could prompt players to take a break. Messages like "Time to take a break!" or "Great progress! Take a quick 5-minute stretch" would encourage breaks without disrupting the flow of the game. These alerts could trigger after long play sessions or indicate when it's a good time to rest.

Daily Play Reports

Gaming companies could provide daily reports on gameplay. These reports would summarize total playtime, number of breaks taken, and offer sleep reminders. Players could receive personalized tips based on their play patterns, like recommendations to reduce late-night gaming for improved rest.

Mood Alerts

By utilizing AI to detect frustration or fatigue during gameplay, mood alerts can be triggered to suggest breaks. This tool could monitor in-game behavior (e.g., speed, repetition, or aggression) and interactions to gauge when a player is becoming overly stressed, prompting a break.

Sleep Mode

To prevent late-night gaming, we propose an automatic sleep mode that disables the console during predetermined hours. An override option could be included for emergency access, but with a cooldown period to encourage better sleep hygiene.

Family Goals Tracker

A shared dashboard where families can set collaborative gaming and wellness goals would encourage accountability. Examples could include goals like "2 hours of gaming max today" or "complete chores before gaming," ensuring that gaming doesn't interfere with other important activities.

Positive Reinforcement

To further encourage balanced gaming habits, players could earn trophies, points, or in-game rewards when they meet agreed-upon time limits or health goals. This positive reinforcement would foster motivation to maintain healthy habits.

Focus Mode

A "Focus Mode" feature could lock the console for a set time, helping players focus on other responsibilities such as homework, chores, or family time. This tool would promote a healthy balance between gaming and other important activities.

