#GameChanger

The definitive digest of policies, ideas, updates, and events

What's Inside?

Unfiltered: Passion Games Co-Founder on active self-governance

Auditors get ready to make sense of India's gaming industry

Responsible Gaming takes over Tamil Nadu

New Guard, New Rules: Social Activist on Digital Safety

CEO's Desk

Integrity in gaming isn't just about compliance, it's about conscience.

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter.

This time, we're shining a light on Integrity and Oversight, two pillars that will define the future of gaming in India. These are not just regulatory necessities; they are values that help us grow responsibly, build lasting trust, and create a resilient industry.

Earlier this year, the E-Gaming Federation (EGF), along with the All India Gaming Federation (AIGF) and the Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports (FIFS), launched India's first-ever Code of Ethics (CoE) for the gaming industry. This marked a pivotal moment, moving us from intention to implementation in our journey of disciplined self-regulation. With rising questions around integrity, fairness, and safety, the CoE, strengthened by third-party audits, serves as a credible anchor for all stakeholders.

Human behaviour, as psychologists tell us, is driven by either conscience or consequence. That is, individuals do something right because it is right or because there are mechanisms within which they can be assured they will get in trouble if they don't. At EGF, we think that both motivators have their part to play, but we are determined to create an industry driven largely by conscience and a deep-rooted sense of doing what's right, even when no one is watching.

Tools like third-party audits, compliance structures, and CoE are not reactive enforcements but proactive enablers, providing checks, building resilience, and strengthening trust where it matters most. Over the years, EGF has worked to establish a robust framework of trust. True credibility and consumer confidence stem from consistent ethical practices, even when no one is watching.

As we move forward, our vision remains clear: to shape a transparent, accountable, and conscientious gaming ecosystem where conscience, rather than consequence, is the guiding force.

Anuraag Saxena,
Chief Executive Officer,
E-Gaming Federation

"Hanuman: Boy Warrior" was India's first global hit game released for PlayStation in 2009.

#GameChanger Policy

1 | Industry adopts Code of Ethics

The E-Gaming Federation (EGF), All India Gaming Federation (AIGF) and Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports (FIFS) representing 200+ gaming operators jointly adopted the Code of Ethics in March 2025. This code aims to ensure uniformity and consistency in user safety across the industry through responsible gaming and advertising policies. As part of this code annual third party audits are mandatory for gaming operators.

2 | State Shift: Regulate not ban

Various States have signalled intent in exploring frameworks to regulate online gaming. Haryana has recently notified the public gambling law, exempting games of skills whereas Uttarakhand, Karnataka and Maharashtra are contemplating introducing gaming related frameworks.

3 | Industry & ASCI partner for safety

Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) has teamed up with gaming federations to address the rise of illegal offshore betting advertisements. This involves the establishment of a monitoring cell with an aim to protect consumers and ensure compliance with Indian advertising guidelines. ASCI successfully leveraged the partnership to highlight over 400 illegal offshore betting & gambling advertisements.

4 | MHA exploring gaming regulation

The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) under the Ministry of Home Affairs has been designated to prepare a report regarding the need for a new law to regulate online gaming.

#GameChanger Business

1 | India's Gaming Sector Powers Ahead

India's online gaming market, driven by real money games, is set to grow to $9.1 billion by 2029, says the WinZO-IEIC report. It could unlock $63 billion in investor value and 2 million jobs by 2034. With 591 million gamers and 1,900 gaming companies, India is emerging as a global gaming powerhouse.

2 | Indian Players Go Global

Nazara Technologies, a leading Indian gaming company, has acquired UK-based PC and console game publisher Curve Games for ₹247 crore (GBP 21.7 million), its largest international deal yet. The move aligns with Nazara's USD 100 million M&A strategy to expand its gaming IP, studios, and publishing footprint.

3 | India's Gaming IPO Boom

Driven by rapid growth and investor interest, India's online gaming sector is set to unlock USD 26 billion via IPOs by 2029, as per the WinZO-IEIC report, with valuation multiples mirroring global benchmarks and backed by strong FDI and user expansion.

4 | India's Play for Power

India's gaming industry, projected to hit $4.5 billion by 2025, is attracting major investments and creating 250,000 jobs. Fueled by tech adoption and growing talent, it's emerging as a key player in the $307 billion global gaming market.

Ludo King was downloaded more in India than TikTok during 2020 lockdown.

#GameChanger Impact

1 | WAVES 2025

In partnership with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, EGF showcased the power of gaming for good at WAVES 2025. EGF's City Quest: Shades of Bharat is a game that blends education and entertainment, highlighting how gamification can drive civic awareness, SDG engagement, and foster a socially responsible, and informed digital India. The winners of this game were felicitated at the award ceremony in Mumbai by actor Vikrant Massey.

2 | E-Summit 2025

IIT-Bombay's flagship entrepreneurship event E-Summit 2025 was organised on the theme "Powering Innovation in Gaming & Emerging Tech." With over 30,000 attendees, the summit created a vibrant platform for ideation, collaboration, and the promotion of cutting-edge solutions at the intersection of gaming, technology, and entrepreneurship. EGF brought together experts & visionaries through a hackathon & a panel discussion on Plugging Start-ups in Emerging Technologies.

3 | IndiaTech Dialogues

At IndiaTech Dialogues, Hon'ble MPs Shri Praveen Khandelwal and Shri Sasmit Patra called for safe online gaming and balanced regulation, citing IndiaTech and Digital India Foundation's report "Responsible Gaming: A Scientific Approach to Mediate Potential Gaming Disorders and a Review of Global Practices".

Raji: An Ancient Epic was made by just 13 developers in Pune.

#GameChanger Events

EGF Manthan - Child Safety in a Connected World

The EGF Manthan in partnership with UNICEF was organised on February 11, 2025. The event featured Shri Nishant Kumar, Director (NCFL & NCEMU), Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C) as the Guest of Honour, among others. It fostered multi-stakeholder dialogue on child safety in online gaming, emphasizing collaborative regulation, responsible industry practices, AI safeguards, cybersecurity, and digital literacy to ensure a safe, ethical, and growth-oriented gaming ecosystem in India.

L to R: Mr. Amitabh Kumar (Social & Media Matters), Ms. Devhuti Bakshi (EGF), Mr. Kazim Rizvi (The Dialogue) and Shri Rakesh Maheshwari (Former MeitY)

L to R: Ms. Amrita Choudhary (CCAOI), Ms. Sonam Kapoor (Protsahan India), Major Vineet Kumar (CyberPeace Foundation) and Major Sadhna Singh (NITI Aayog)

L to R: Mr. Shubhrajyoti Bhowmik (UNICEF), Shri Rakesh Maheshwari (Former MeitY), Shri Nishant Kumar (I4C-MHA), and Mr. Anuraag Saxena (EGF)
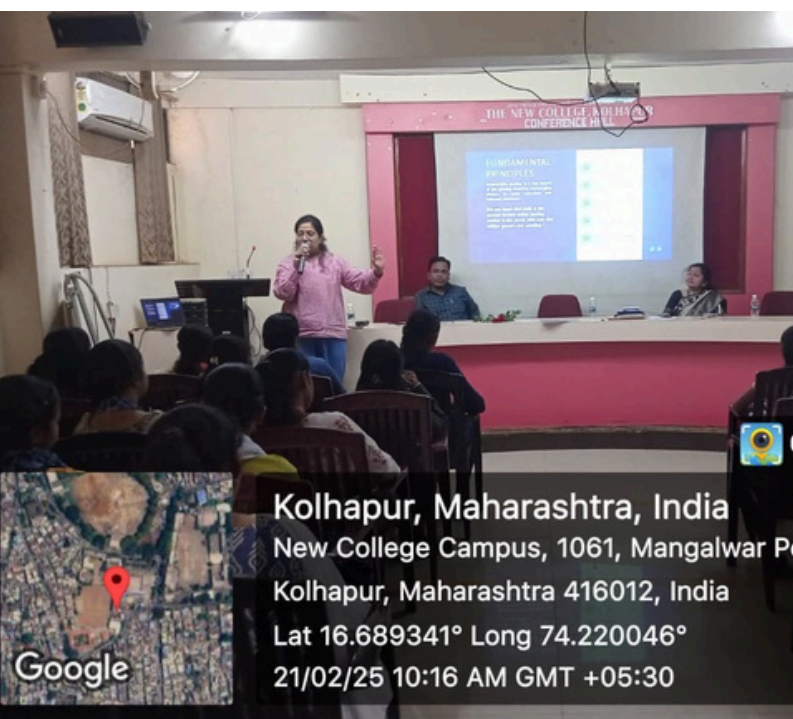
EGF's Responsible Gaming Campaign

The E-Gaming Federation in partnership with Social and Media Matters conducted Responsible Gaming workshops across 5 states in India. The campaign engaged over 4,600 students through 32 workshops between December 2024 to March 2025. The initiative aims to promote responsible gaming habits and digital safety.

The campaign tackled pressing issues faced by students, such as excessive gaming, online scams, emotional distress, and limited awareness of digital safety and legal rights. Many participants were unfamiliar with key concepts like responsible gaming, self-regulation, and grievance redressal. Female students often felt side-lined in these discussions, and there was widespread confusion between gaming and gambling.

Through its workshops, the campaign led to a noticeable shift in awareness and behaviour. It encouraged young gamers to assess their habits, understand potential risks, and embrace healthier, more responsible gaming practices.

The campaign's success highlights the need for systemic integration of digital safety education in schools and greater collaboration between industry, civil society, and policymakers to ensure a safer gaming environment for India's youth.

An Indian artist designed the iconic cars in Forza Horizon 3.

Kolhapur, Maharashtra, India
New College Campus, 1061, Mangalwar Pe
Kolhapur, Maharashtra 416012, India
Lat 16.689341° Long 74.220046°
21/02/25 10:16 AM GMT +05:30
Google

Bengaluru, Karnataka, India
Hullahalli, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560083, India
Lat 12.823306, Long 77.618622
02/28/2025 11:51 AM GMT+05:30
Note : Captured by GPS Map Camera
GPS Map Camera

EGF's Responsible Gaming Campaign

Tamil Nadu - High levels of gaming activity, especially among boys, but very low awareness about mental health, grievance redressal systems, and responsible gaming tools. Fraudulent in-game currency sites were a major concern. A clear gender gap in participation and engagement was noted.

Andhra Pradesh - Students showed high exposure to online scams and a strong interest in learning about financial safety. Casual gaming was popular among girls, while real-money gaming was not widespread.

Karnataka - Students were digitally active but lacked awareness of self-regulation. Extended gaming hours and emotional outbursts were common. While familiar with mental health topics, students rarely connected them to gaming behaviours.

Maharashtra - Concerns centred around data privacy, scams, and peer pressure leading to impulsive spending. Female participation in real-money gaming was low due to financial dependence. Students showed interest in adopting self-regulation tools.

Uttar Pradesh - Real-money gaming was prevalent among family members rather than students. Poor internet access and digital divides shaped gaming habits. Girls had low participation in gaming, and emotional issues like anger and frustration were noted.

Each state revealed unique challenges and gaps, reinforcing the need for tailored interventions and localized awareness efforts.

India's first televised esports BGMI aired on Star Sports in 2022.

Responsible Gaming Campaign held at Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University, Mumbai, Maharashtra

Responsible Gaming Campaign held at Presidency University, Bengaluru, Karnataka

EGF's Responsible Gaming Campaign

In 2000s, pre-smartphones, India boasted 500+ gaming cafes offering Counter Strike & Dota.
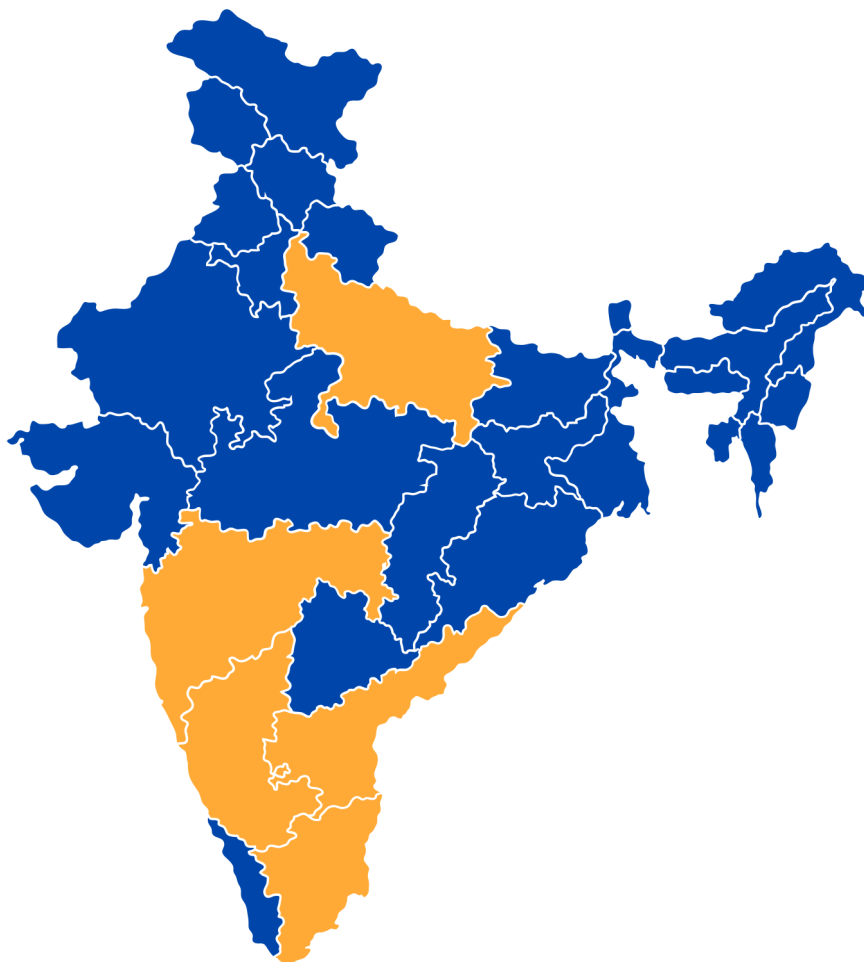
Workshops and Participation by State

States Engaged	Participation	No. of Workshops
Tamil Nadu	1728	08
Andhra Pradesh	610	06
Karnataka	450	06
Maharashtra	840	06
Uttar Pradesh	1014	06

#GameChanger Leaders

From Conformity to Leadership: India's Gaming Industry Charts a New Course

India's legal skill gaming industry has long been in a state of legal limbo, acknowledged by courts, but hemmed in by an indeterminate regulatory framework. Even though the industry is inherently different from gambling, both in nature and in its legal status, it has often been lumped together under one moral and policy spotlight.

The absence of a uniform national framework has browbeaten stakeholders into an erratic regulatory climate that is dictated by state-level bans, contradictory court interpretations, and sporadic focus on policy. This culture of reactive regulation, more of it driven by sentiment than a distinct demarcation between games of chance and games of skill, has threatened deserving operators.

These are organizations that stick to the rules, bet on innovation, and generate jobs, but are still exposed to instant swings in policy mood.

However, change is in the air.

A Collective Commitment to Ethical Standards

In a historic initiative, India's leading gaming federations have joined hands to sign a detailed Code of Ethics, a move that reflects the industry's willingness to shift away from piecemeal regulation and towards active self-regulation.

This code is more than a symbolic motion. It establishes precise guidelines on responsible

> This transition from passive obedience to active self-regulation is a watershed moment, not just for gaming companies, but for millions of Indian consumers who deserve a secure, safe, and enriching digital experience. Responsible gaming is not just a feature, but a cornerstone of a well-balanced digital environment.

**Bobby, Garg,
Co-Founder & CEO,
Passion Gaming**

#GameChanger Leaders

gaming, advertising standards, redressal of grievances, and protection of data.

What was earlier voluntary or fragmented on platforms is being codified now as standard industry practice.

The outcome? A cohesive voice that gains credibility with users, wins trust with regulators, and opens up the ground for formal policy acceptance at the national level.

From Compliance to Conscious Care
We view this transformation at our business not only as regulatory compliance, but as an ethical obligation to the individuals who use our services. Responsible gaming is not just a feature, but a cornerstone of a well-balanced digital environment.

We're leveraging technology to detect problematic behaviour, arm players with tools like cool-off periods and self-imposed spend limits, and give users access to self-reflection tools. We're working with mental health professionals to facilitate access to help when it is needed.

This is not a checklist task. We continuously monitor user awareness, uptake of these tools, and behavioural effects to make our systems better. We've also bolstered back-end processes, from identity verification to detecting fraud, to guarantee platform integrity.

#GameChanger Leaders

A Shared Agenda for the Future

The Indian gaming industry stands at a crossroads. Responsible innovation at the company level exists, but the future is about collective leadership. An industry voice can plead for reforms to clarify games of skill and chance, encourage whitelisting of compliant platforms, and ensure India's regulatory framework is in sync with international best practices.

The government has a crucial role in creating a national regulatory environment that encourages good actors and safeguards users without stifling innovation.

Leading with Trust

As the gaming scenario in India transforms, it has to be constructed on fairness, trust, and transparency. This transition from passive obedience to active self-regulation is a watershed moment, not only for the concerned companies but also for millions of Indian consumers who deserve a secure, safe, and enriching gaming experience.

The way ahead is simple: make what's good, champion what's responsible, and lead with integrity.

Let's create the gaming future, not by waiting for legislators to step in, but by establishing the standard ourselves.

India's female gamer base now exceeds 120 million.

#GameChanger Ideas

> **Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** during his address at the WAVES 2025 Summit said, "Artists, innovators, investors, policy makers from over 100 countries have gathered here. WAVES is not just an acronym. It actually is a wave. It is a wave of culture, creativity and universal connect. On this wave are riding films, animation, gaming, the whole universe of creativity. Every creator can join the creative world with a new idea."

> **Shri Priyank M Kharge, Hon'ble Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj and Information Technology & Biotechnology, Government of Karnataka,** while discussing the legal framework to regulate online gaming in Karnataka, said, "the intent of this legislation is to curb online gambling, betting, and games of chance, and protect consumers from fraud while supporting innovation and the sustainable growth of the skill-based gaming industry."

"Gaming at its core is not just about the play but is also deep storytelling. It is even bigger than the movies. And there is no better medium to explore storytelling than in the wonderful world of ancient India." **Mr. Amish Tripathi, Author, Shiva Trilogy**

In a world where gaming is becoming a cultural and economic force, India is no longer just a consumer market, but also becoming a maker. With scale, talent, and strategic capital, Indian companies are rewriting the rules, growing from local leaders to global powerhouses." **Nitish Mittersain, CEO & Joint MD, Nazara Technologies**

"Gaming now constitutes 30% of this $12.5 Bn market. There has long been a perception that the market is dominated solely by real-money or skill-based gaming. However, a more holistic view reveals significant growth driven by in-app purchases and ad-based revenue." **Salone Sehgal, Founding General Partner, Lumikai Fund**

![E-Gaming Federation Logo] EGF | E-GAMING FEDERATION

#LensChanger

● **Time taken for 1 Human Breath**   ● **Time taken for 170 visits from India to a illegal gambling website**
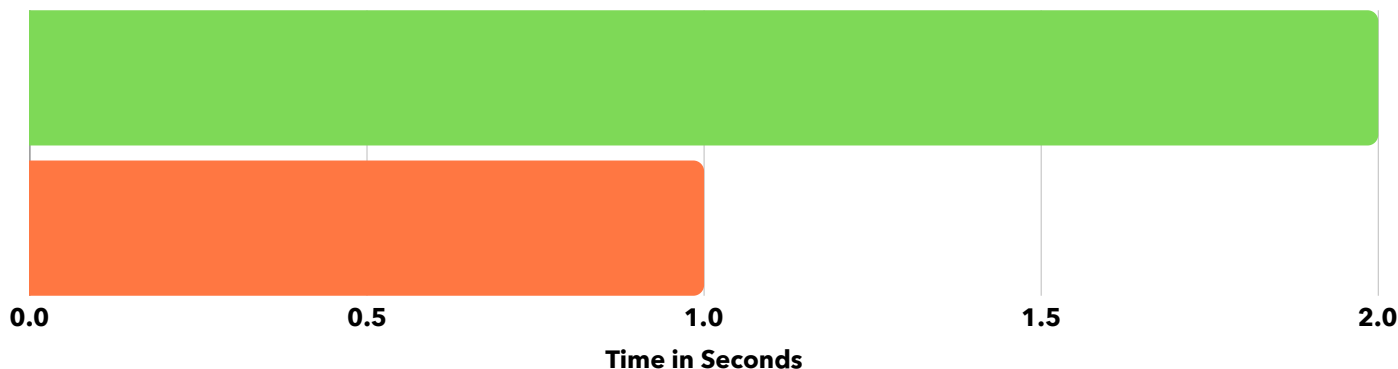
Time in Seconds

Source: CUTS Fixing the Odds : A Policy Blueprint for Curbing Illegal Online Gambling (May 2025)

On Average, Every Time You Took a Breath, Illegal Gambling Websites Received Minimum 340 hits from India (April 2024 - March 2025)
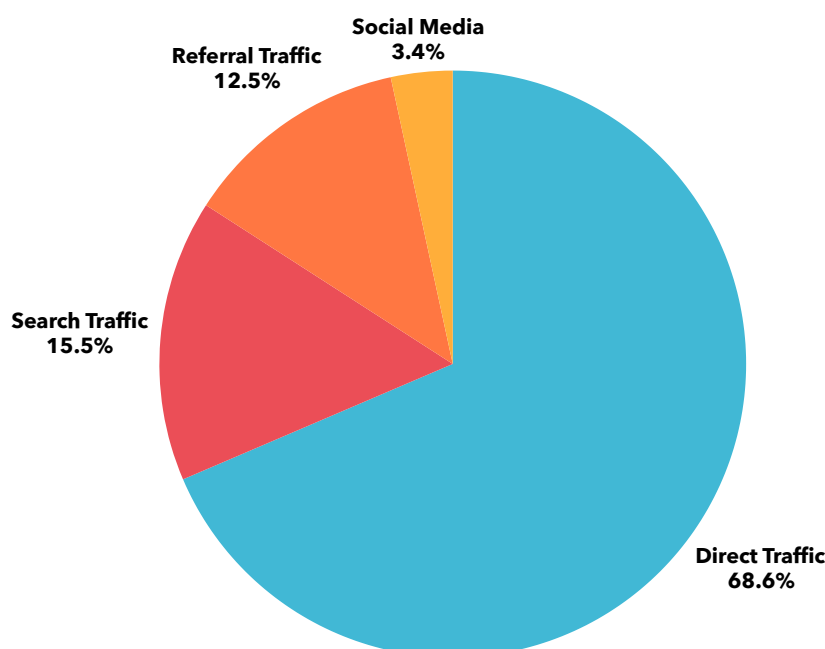
Social Media 3.4%

Referral Traffic 12.5%

Search Traffic 15.5%

Direct Traffic 68.6%

Source: CUTS Fixing the Odds : A Policy Blueprint for Curbing Illegal Online Gambling (May 2025)

Total Website Traffic Originating From India to 40 Illegal Gambling Websites (Period April 2024 - May 2025)

High Direct Traffic suggests significant recognition and retention of illegal gambling websites by users

#GameChanger Mic Drop

Mindful Gaming Practices for Young Gamers in India: A Call for Responsible Play

India's gaming industry is growing at an unprecedented pace, and we increasingly see young people engaged with their favourite games while commuting, during leisure time, or even as part of their daily routine. And in today's digitally dominated world, gaming has become an integral part of a child's life. It serves as a source of social connection and emotional extremes like joy, frustration, or anger.

However, in the middle of this engagement, we often forget to pause and ask: Are we playing safely? Are we protecting our personal information? Are we aware of the risks that come with unchecked gaming habits?

Recent incidents have shown us the darker side of unregulated online gaming. In one tragic case, a 16-year-old child lost their life after an online gaming task went too far. In another case, a young girl from Mumbai fell prey to the psychological grip of excessive gaming.

**Pratishtha Arora,
Co-Founder & Chief Executive Officer,
Social & Media Matters**

> Gaming has the potential to build skills, confidence, and community among young people—but only when it's designed with safety at its core, supported by informed parents and educators, and driven by a culture of responsibility, regulation, and awareness. The goal isn't to restrict play, but to ensure that play is safe.

These incidents are not isolated — they are alarm bells that demand immediate attention from all stakeholders: families, policymakers, game developers, and the gaming community itself.

The Missing Piece: Safety by Design

While gamers must exercise responsibility, the lack of guidance and built-in safeguards has created a dangerous gap. Digital safety in online gaming is not optional—it is essential. Studies suggest that in India, between 1.3% and 19.9% of adolescents suffer from gaming addiction, significantly higher than the global average of 1% to 3%. The mental health implications are severe, and we must not turn a blind eye.

What's missing is Safety by Design. Many games still fail to incorporate safety features that protect users from harm. Developers must prioritize safety in the conceptualization and design phase of games. Features like time-limit prompts, warnings against oversharing

The Indian Air Force's game 'A Cut Above' lets users simulate flying jets like the Tejas.

#GameChanger Mic Drop

personal information, and alerts about potential scams or in-game grooming should be the norm, not the exception. Online gaming platforms are now being used as channels for grooming and, in some cases, have led to the dissemination of Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM).

Fortunately, there are examples of active governance, such as Tamil Nadu's efforts to regulate online gaming. However, there is a need for more dialogue & greater involvement of stakeholders to strengthen safety measures and highlight the urgency of implementing regulatory frameworks along with awareness campaigns. Special attention must also be given to Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns in India, where online gaming is rapidly growing, but awareness and support systems remain limited.

That said, it is essential to bring stakeholders together—not just to identify challenges and concerns, but also to explore the positive aspects of gaming and how its potential can be further harnessed. Convening diverse voices will foster constructive dialogue and help promote a narrative around responsible gaming. The goal is not to call for bans, but rather to advocate for protective measures for users, especially those who engage in gaming for extended periods.

Towards a Culture of Responsible Gaming

At Social & Media Matters, in collaboration with the E-Gaming Federation, we launched a Responsible Gaming program aimed at raising awareness among college students. We believe that gaming, when approached mindfully, can foster skills,
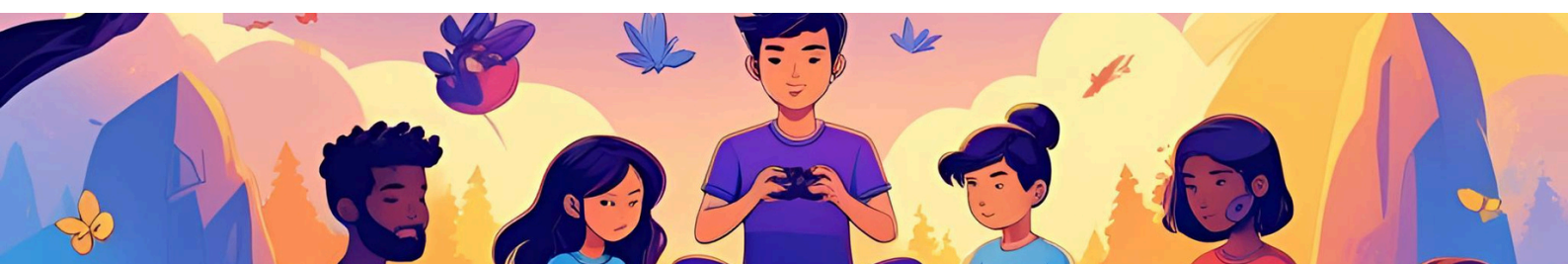
#GameChanger Mic Drop

confidence, and community. It can be a positive force – but only if it is safe.

To build a culture of responsible gaming, here are a few key recommendations:

For Gamers:
- Set Time Limits: Allocate specific hours for gaming to prevent overuse.
- Be Alert to Scams: Never share personal information. Be cautious with in-game purchases.
- Seek Support: If gaming starts affecting your daily life, don't hesitate to speak to a mental health professional.

For Parents and Guardians:
- Monitor Habits: Know which games your child is playing and for how long.
- Start Conversations: Talk openly about online safety and the risks of excessive gaming.
- Use Parental Controls: Leverage tools to manage screen time and restrict inappropriate content.

For the Gaming Industry:
- Implement Robust Age Verification: Ensure that age-appropriate content is accessible only to the intended audience.
- Build in Prompts and Warnings: Integrate reminders that encourage users to take breaks and play responsibly.

Engage with Experts:
- Collaborate with mental health professionals to design safer, more empathetic gaming environments.

In a mission to create positive gaming practices, I urge all gamers, developers, parents, and educators to come together and have dialogues with gamers. Let us support our young gamers not just with exciting platforms to play on—but with the right tools, knowledge, and care to ensure their well-being.

Gaming can be a powerful tool for building confidence and community—but only when it is safe, responsible, and guided.

India's game localization industry is growing at 20% annually.
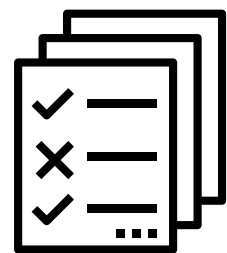
HAVE A GAME PLAN?

Gaming Operators

Write to us with your gameplan at contact@egf.org.in to understand how EGF can help you:

Operate Safely

Grow your network

Understand Rules

Remain updated

Unlock opportunities