WHEN VIDEO GAMES CHALLENGE FAMILY LIFE



Advice and Tips for Immigrant Parents

Researchers:

Carol Azungi Dralega, NLA University College (Coordinator)

Håkon Repstad – NLA University College

Hilde G. Corneliussen – Western Norway Research Institute

Gilda Seddighi – Western Norway Research Institute

Illustrations: Viktoria Kurpas, Shutterstock

Pictures: Tor Magne Gausdal (NOMKUS)

A booklet with advice on how to handle video games for immigrant families

Contents

Why this booklet and for whom is it developed?		
A brief background of the project		
Partners and Approaches used in the project	6	
1. WHY are videogames popular among young people?	8	
2. HABIT among immgrant youth in Norway	10	
3. IDENTITY and what do the immigrant youth say about it?	12	
4. DO GIRLS play video games?	14	
5. WHY so problematic? What causes conflict over video games	16	
6. VIDEO GAME REGULATION in family contexts	18	
7. RED FLAGS – Things to watch out for as a parents	20	
8. IS IT REAL OR FAKE MONEY in video games?	22	
9. TABOOS and parenting	24	
10. PARENTS as role models	26	
11. INFORMATION and knowledge gaps	28	
Additional resources from the project	29	
Checklist	32	
Project overview - goals, methods and processes	33	
Acknowledgements		

WHY THIS BOOKLET?

FOR WHOM?

The booklet is a result of and an answer to findings from previous research showing:

- Parents often lack basic information on video games.
- Video game regulatory practices often create conflict in families.
- Lack of Information in a language and format understood by users.
- Lack of networks and alternative activities to engage youths.

This booklet offers (among other things):

- Information on video games and video game regulation in immigrant-family contexts.
- Materials in 5 languages to meet language challenges of informants.
- Audio and visual resources to reach often tired parents, some of whom have limited reading and written skills.
- Free access to online and printable versions.

PARENTS with children who are interested in video games are the primary target group.

YOUTH interested in video games

ORGANIZATIONS working with immigrant parents and children

SCHOOLS interested in helping parents and youth with immigrant background

MUNICIPALITIES who run out-of-school activities for (immigrant) youth

ANYONE interested in video games regulation in immigrant families and family contexts.

PROJECT BACKGROUND – 3 YEARS

2017

The project started with the researchers trying to understand video game habits and identity issues among immigrant youth in Norway. The focus here was just on the youth (boys and girls).

2018

The researchers explored video gaming in family contexts for immigrants by speaking to young people and their parents. Here, issues of conflict resolution came up.

2019-2020 – the current project

This project is a result of the previous projects, the aim was to find out more about parents and youth needs and develop informational resources to help them regulate video games more harmoniously in the family.

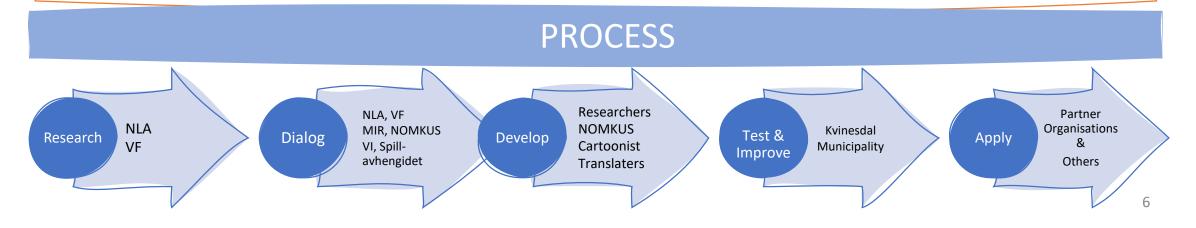
This project comes from previous research and aims to help and advice parents based on experiences from families with similar informational needs.

Read findings from previous research. Family perspectives on video game regulation and conflict management in Norway: https://www.vestforsk.no/en/project/family-perspectives-video-game-regulation-and-conflict-management-norway

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

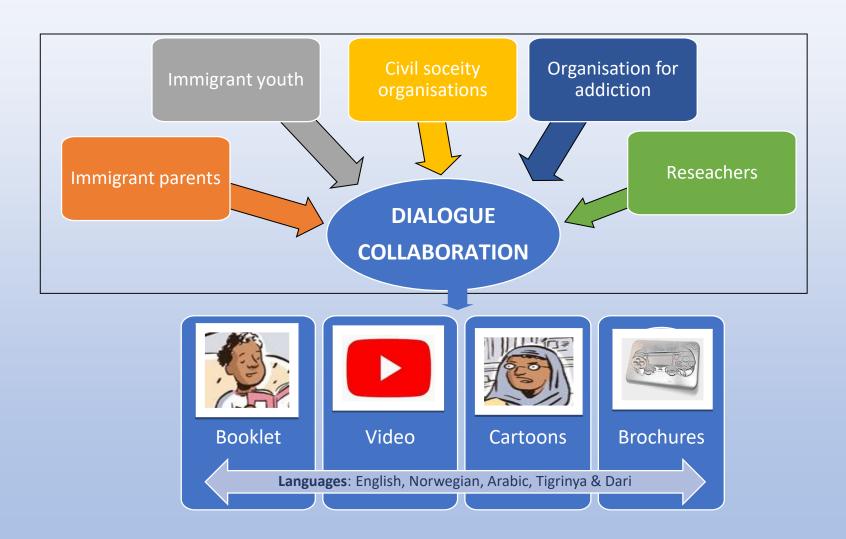
Main participants in the current project include:

- RESEARCHERS from:
 - NLA University College (NLA) Project coordinators.
 - Western Norway Research Institute (VF)
- IMMIGRANT ORGANIZATION:
 - Norges Multikulturell Senter (NOMKUS) in Kvinesdal
 - Multikulturelt Initiativt og Ressursnettverk (MIR) in Oslo
 - Vestland Innvandrerråd (VI) in Bergen
- PARENTS AND YOUTHS:
 - Parents and youth were recruited as informants from the 3 regions mentioned above.
- GAMING ORGANISATION:
 - The organisation Spillavhengighet participated in the dialogue.



APPROACH – MULTI ACTOR COLLABORATION AND DIALOGUE

Project partners collaborated to achieve the following outcomes







WHY ARE VIDEO GAMES SO POPULAR?

Our children are part of a global gaming culture

Global and national studies including our study on immigrant youth in Norway show that young people play video games to:

- SOCIALIZE with their friends
- LEARN languages (like English and Norwegian), history (like Arabic history); etc.
- DEVELOP skills like football, competitions, consentration on tasks, collaboration and strategic thinking.

A study in 2018 by the
Norwegian Media Authority on
media habits and experiences of
4805 young people between 9-18
years shows that 96% of boys and
63% of girls play video games in
Norway.

Why are video games popular?

Youth in our studies played video games:

- To escape into a fantacy world and also experiment with multiple identities
- Because they do not have friends
- Because video games are easy to access
- The reward system in video games have less serious consequences – like if you die, you can get right back up and continue playing
- Lack of extra-curricular activities especially in small towns
- Video gaming has become a hobby and a way to relax after school.

READ MORE from our previous projects about video game habits of immigrant youth: https://www.vestforsk.no/en/project/gaming-among-immigrant-youth-experiences-consequences-and-regulation

TO AVOID CRIMINAL ENVIRONEMENTS

Our research also shows that young people and their parents especially in the big city would rather the youth stay at home and play video games than get involved with criminal gangs and activities.





VIDEO GAME HABITS

What are the patterns of video gaming?

Our project shows youth, especially boys, spend a lot of time playing, but none of our informants were "problematic gamers":

- Time spent playing video games varied between 0-5 hours in the week and 4-16 hours during weekends or public holidays.
- Boys play more than girls, often online with their friends
- Boys play typical male games like war, combat, strategy andsport especially football (FIFA)

Studies show that for most youth in Norway, video gaming is a passionate hobby that does not necessarily interfere with their day-to-day lives – like school.

Read more about the difference between what is 'problematic' gaming and what is 'big time' video gaming. https://medietilsynet.no/globalassets/publikasjoner/2015/problemspillingbrosjyre_bm.pdf

Video games habits among immigrant youth



Video games help integration

Our study showed that playing video games with friends, most of whom are from school, was important for immigrant youth.

Playing games therefore also contributed to the youths:

- proficiency in Norwegian language,
- socialisation and
- social anchorage in the local community

Video gaming patterns in Norway

Research shows that 7 out of 10 boys and 4 out of 10 girls in Norway play video games every day.

While boys spend around 2,5 hours, girls spend half that time playing, according to the campaign «Talk about games».

www.husfred.no

READ MORE on time-use in regulation of gaming – a 'non-western' immigrant family perspective. https://www.vestforsk.no/nn/publication/time-use-regulation-gaming-non-western-immigrant-family-perspective





Video games invite to a play with identities, sometimes multiple identities.

A 16 year old boy from Kenya told how he experienced multiple identities and various senses of belonging when playing FIFA17 football game:

- Kenyan when he plays in the Kenyan national footbal team although the local language 'Luo' is not included in FIFA17.
- Local when he plays in the virtual local football team with his local friends. He also plays for the local junior football-team (he is fluent in the local Norwegian dialect)
- Global and local: plays in the English Premier league (Arsenal) against his local friends, sometimes in English.



Multi-lingualism

The example illustrates that youth gain language proficiency through a combination of video games and real life. 3 languages for this boy.

Video games involve experiences of identity

What do the youth say about identity?

Ethnic identity construction

«I love my dark complextion and when ever I get the chance i make my avatars black» (18-year old boy from Somalia)

Connecting to country of origin

«I get to learn about Arabic history — something we are not taught here» (15-year old Syrian boy about Battlefield game)

Gender identity and exclusion

«My biggest challenege is that it is boys who play most, and they do not let me in becuase I am a girl...» (16-year old girl)

Religous identity

« When I play at my (ethnic norwegian) friends' homes, they usually get me a room in the loft or cellar to pray. Its never a problem» (18-year old muslim boy says of how accespting his friends and their families are of his religious practices)

READ MORE

Gaming and
Identity
construction
among immigrant
youth in Norway:
www.idunn.no/d

et-regionale-i-

<u>det-</u>

internasjonale



Do girls play video games?

Of course! (But not as much as boys)

Our study confirms that fewer immigrant girls play video games and spend less time playing on average compared to boys.

- We interviewed girls who are proud gamers who play different types of games, also "typical boy" games.
- Boys play mostly with boys and often prefer combat games (often violent), strategy games and sport games (FIFA).
- Most girls preferred other, less violent games.
- Platform choices also differ. Boys mainly played on Playstation (PS3/PS4) and most girls played on their smartphones, laptops and sometimes on old gaming consols they inherited from their older brothers.

Many girls like playing video games too but risk discrimination and sexism that parents ought to be aware of.

Gender in and through video gaming

What do the girls say?

No girls to play with

«I only play with boys because girls do not like playing»

Too violent

«I do not like the violence in most of the games thats why I dont play much»

Too sexist

«I do not like the way those boy-games depict women, it is always as sex objects, even the language is so sexist, i just dont like it»

No black, female avatars

«I like playing in the NBA and because it is a male team I play as a back man»

Studies show that video games are predominately picturing male, white and heteronormative.

Although there are statistically fewer women and girls who play video games, there are women and girls who challenge this stereotype including young immigrant girls in Norway.

Read more: Dralega C.A. and Corneliussen G.H. (2018) Manifestations and contestations of hegemony in video games. In Media and power in ternational contexts. Emerald Publishers.



WHY SO PROBLEMATIC?

What causes conflict over video games in immigrant families?

Our study among immigrant parents and youth indicated the following as some of the source of conflict in their homes:

- Too much time playing video games.
- Behavioral aggression and bullying especially among boys playing video games.
- Lack of sleep and forgetfulness due to much time spent playing.
- Problems at school, skipping homework due to long hours playing video games.
- Over expenditure through in-games purchaces.



Time-use as a big source of Conflict

TOP 10 online video games in Norway in 2017

FIFA (football), Call of Duty - Modern Warfare 3, Minecraft, Overwatch, Grand theft auto (GTA), Roblox, Fortnite, Pubg, Sims, Rocket League.

(Source: Barn og media 2018)

Boys	Girls
FIFA Football Minecraft Call of Duty	The Sims Tetris GoSupermodel

HOW TIME FLIES BY WHEN PLAYING! Exploration:

These games open up endless worlds that offer many endless exciting adventures and experiences.

Sense of Mastery:

The games give a player time to master new challenges and rewards efforts and achievements. Mastery takes time.

Progression

In the games, there is always a challenge with a better reward around the corner which motivates players to keep on playing.

... and before you know it, you have been playing for a long time.

Read more on when video gaming creates concerns for parents and other stakeholders:

https://medietilsynet.no/globalassets/publikasjoner/2015/problemspillingbrosjyre_bm.pdf



VIDEO GAME REGULATION

How is video game negotiated between parents and youth?

Immigrant families meet challenges that calls for various approaches for regulating video games:

- Engaging in dialogue with the youth on rules and expectations around video games.
- Collaboration with other actors like the schools, other parents among others.
- Parents being understanding about the role of video games in young people's lives today.



Video game regulation

Our study identified 4 ways that parents and youth negotiated about video game:

- 1. Self-regulation in which the youth decides when, how much, where and with whom to play.
- 2. Parents decide without talking to youngsters
- 3. Parents decide after talking to the youngster
- 4. Parents and young people decide the rules together

Which model do you think helps to solve conflict?

Read more: Dralega, C. A.; Corneliussen G. H.; Seddighi, G. og Prøitz, L. (2019) *From helichopter parenting to co-piloting: Models for regulating video gaming among immigrant youth in Norway*. Chapter 10. In Øyvind Helgesen, Richard Glavee-geo, Ghulam Mustafa, Erik Nesset og Paula Rice (red.) (2019) Modeller. Fjordantologien 2019.

Dialogue helps

Research shows that the most harmonious models are those that promote dialogue, trust and the participation of both parents and children.

Visit the campaign by the
Norwegian Media
Authority:
www.snakkomspill.no



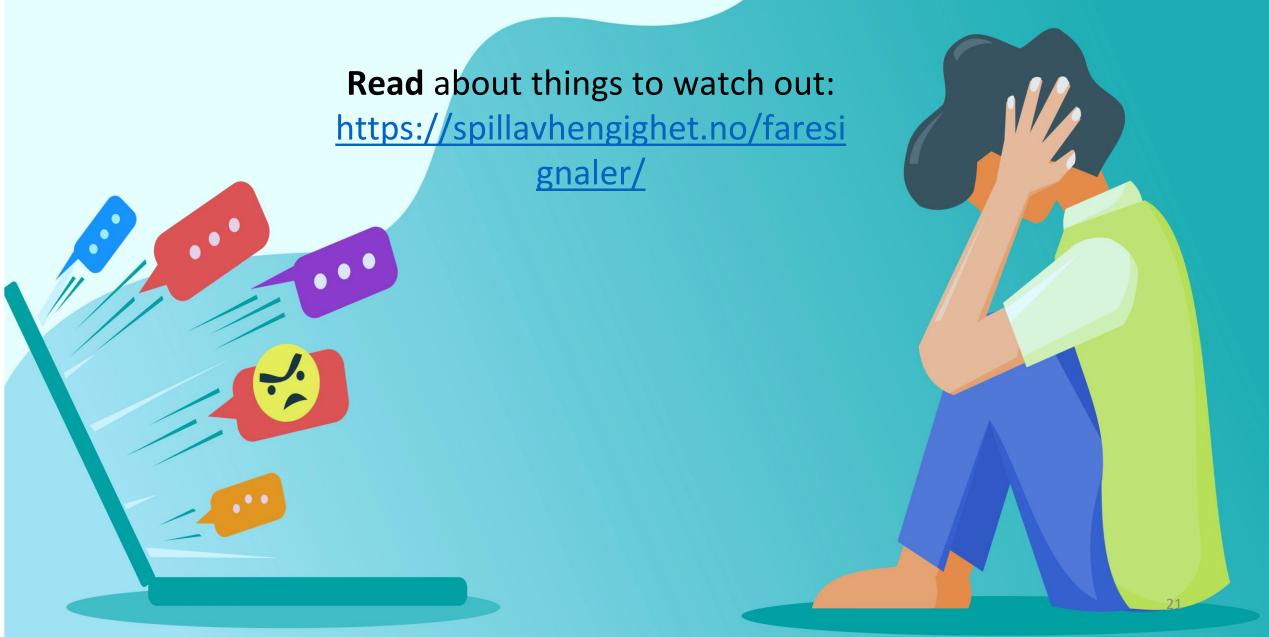
Signs that your child could be having problems related to video games:

- Stops participating in other activities other than video games
- Stops social activities with his/her friends and family members
- Dreads going to schools, forgets homework or assignments
- Plays video games at night and sleeps during the day
- Tries to reduce playing video games with little success
- Increased conflict with family about video gaming habits



Are video games a hobby or a problem in your family?

Find out more:





Are you sure that the children know the difference between real and in-game money?

Video games are increasingly commercialized. While some games are free to play, others charge for extras and special features like; special skills for your characters, better content or rewards. The challenge for many young players who end up spending more real money on video games is:

Thin line between real money and in-game money

The set-up of some games often make it difficult for players to distinguish between real money and in-game money.

Access to relevant information about in-game money

A lot of relevant information is not readily available especially for parents and youth in a language or format that they can understand.

Lack of guidelines about in-game money in the family

In some families, the nature and rules about video games expenditure has not been recognized or discussed as a family.



Do you give your children your credit card details? Are there agreed rules for its use?



J--

Check whether the video game has «Pay» options. Sometimes this appears as «Buy in app».

Often best to agree on rules for spending money in game:

- Talk about money in video games with the youth.
- Decide and agree on rules on how they will approach offers to buy while playing.
- Assess whether you wish to block or limit the chances for such purchases.

Tips on how to regulate real money purchaces in video games from the Norwegian Media Authority:

https://medietilsynet.no/barn-og-medier/snakk-om-spill/#anchor_8814

TABOOS AND PARENTING

Seeking help can be scary

Examples from our research shows that there were some parents (mothers) who felt anxiety about seeking for any kind of help and this was attributed to different reasons:

- Experience of conflict around video gaming as a taboo among some diasporic communities.
- Fear that they would be percieved as bad parents especially fear of child services.



What do you do when you need help with video game regulation?

It is not just you finding it difficult!

Parenting young people today is a challenge many families face around the world. It is not just you!

Remember to:

- Be involved with your child's video gaming early
- Be proactive talk to someone
- Get help It is okey to seek help (also anonymously) if you have serious concerns.
- Helpline options:
 - Test yourself: https://hjelpelinjen.no/fakta-om-spel/dataspill/
 - Call: 800 800 40 or chat with a specialist: https://hjelpelinjen.no/
 - Talk about video games in the family: https://snakkomspill.no
 - Specialists in your region: https://hjelpelinjen.no/behandling-av-spilleproblemer/behandling-der-du-bur/

Video game addiction is a mental health diagnosis according to the World Health Organisation.

"Addiction to (online video) gaming is harder to treat than addiction to alcohol or drugs because the internet is everywhere."

PARENTS AS ROLE MODELS What do parents' (social) media habits reflect?

Do you practice 'do as I say, not as I do'?

Many parents are spending a lot of time themselves on smart phones with social media or watching television.

Do you present alternative activities?

The youth in the study (and other studies) complained about their parents not offering options when they limit the time spend on video games.

Do you have clear rules?

Some families did not have clear rules guiding media use (screen-time).

Sometimes, one just needs to relax...

In their defence, parents have shared that they are often tired after a full-day's work and just need to relax.



Do you have clear rules and tasks for your children to help them with structure and develop good habits?

Leading by example — some tips!



Have a reward system for when rules and regulations are followed and this does not have to be big or expensive. It could even be just encouragement and praise.

Set clear rules and be consistent

Find activities organized through the municipalities, organizations, sports organisations, church, mosque and national associations, etc in your area.

Invite the whole family out for something fun.

Check how you spend your free time! Are you a good role model for the family policy?

This research shows:

There was limited collaboration between parents on video game regulation. Parents indicated a desire for meeting other parents to share experiences and good practices. We hope parents can take the initiative in their communities.

Another observation from this study (2019) is that there were mostly mothers who participated in the focus group discussion (i.e. out of 16 parents 2 were fathers). There is a need for mother and fathers to work together for the good of their children and families

INFORMATION

What information exists and where to find it?

One of the biggest challenges from this study was the lack of Information and knowledge about video games – both positive and negative and about harmonious conflict resolution.

We also found that some parents:

- Lacked proficiency in Norwegian most relevant information was in Norwegian and they desired information in languages they understood.
- Had challenges reading and writing and desired relevant information through audio and visual formats.

How do you find information related to video game regulation in Norway?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM THE PROJECT

CARTOONS









READ THE COMICS in English, Norwegian, Arabic, Tigrinya and Dari. wwww.nla.no/dataspill

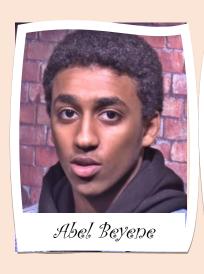
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM THE PROJECT

YOUTUBE VIDEO

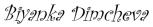
Young people share tips for parents and peers





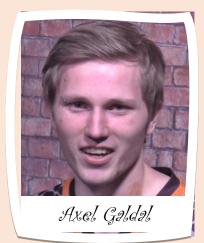








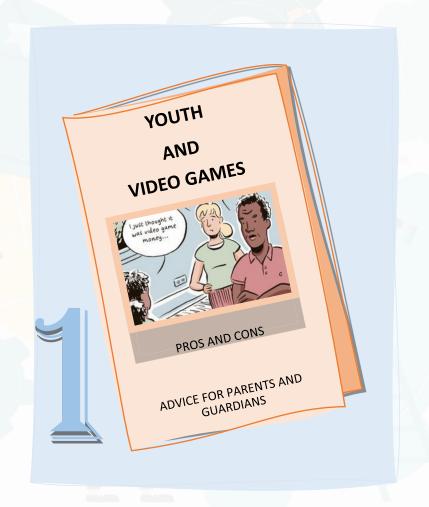


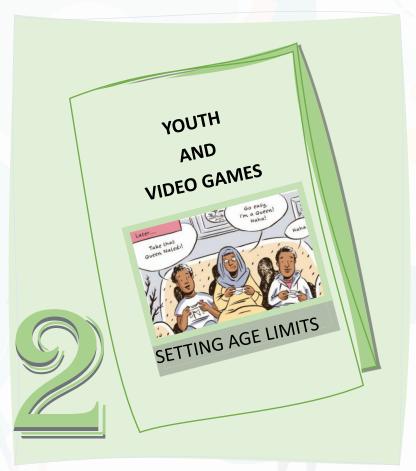


READ, LISTEN AND WATCH in English, Norwegian, Arabic, Tigrinya and Dari. wwww.nla.no/dataspill

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM THE PROJECT

BROCHURES





READ, LISTEN AND WATCH in English, Norwegian, Arabic, Tigrinya and Dari. wwww.nla.no/dataspill

CHECKLIST

Some of the things to consider when regulating video games include:

- Have clear rules and regulations
- Talk to your child
- Ask for help from friends, school, municipality, your organization, etc
- Parents and guardians work together
- Investigate and learn about the games your child plays
- Play with your child
- Get off the screen as you seek to lead by example

Research shows that dialog between parents and children produces best results



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Main goal: COMBATING CHALLENGES AROUND VIDEO GAME REGULATION

The goals of the project:

- Assess immigrant parents' needs around video game regulation
- Collaborate with relevant actors to develop resources to help parents better understand how to regulate video games.
- Disseminate tested and improved resources to wider publics.
- Avail resources in several languages and formats.

Literature review

The researchers started by exploring existing knowledge around the issue of conflict and regulation.

METHODS AND PROCESS

Focus Group Discussions

- 16 parents (14 mothers and 2 fathers) participated, from Kvinesdal, Oslo and Bergen.
- These were facilitated by the 3 organisations working with immigrant families: MIR in Oslo, VI in Bergen and NOMKUS in Kvinesdal.

Surveys

• Through a survey, boys and girls, between 13-19 years, whose parents participated in the FDGs above, shared with us their views on video games regulation in their families.

Dialogue

• These findings were all considered in the discussions during the dialogue phase with relevant participants

Development

Informational resources addressing the challenges the families faced were deveped considering their needs and competences.

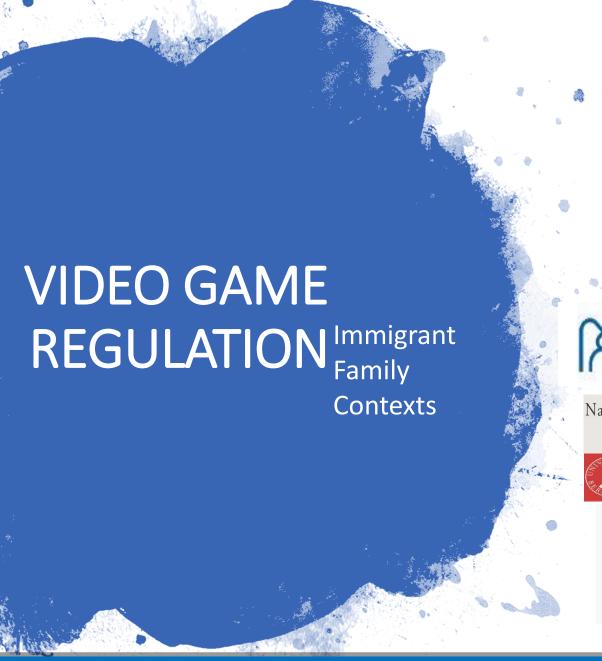
Testing and implement ation

The materials were tested in Kvinesdal municipaly and are now available to all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NLA Mediehøgskolen and Vestlandsforsking wish to thank:

- The Norwegian Media Authority (Medietilsynet) for financing the R&D project (2019).
- Nasjonal Kompetansesenter for Spillforskning, Universitetet i Bergen for funding the project (2019-2020).
- Norges Multikulturelle Senter (NOMKUS) in Kvinesdal for contributing to data-collection, dialogue meetings, development and testing of the resources.
- Multikulturelt Initiativt og Ressursnettverk (MiR) in Oslo for contributing to data-collection and dialog that enriched the project.
- Vestland Innvandrerrådet (VI) in Bergen for contributing to data-collection, dialog and invaluable feedback.
- Spillavhengighet for taking part in the dialogue that added rich insights to the project
- Parents and youth in Oslo, Bergen and Kvinesdal who offered their valuable experiences that formed the foundation of this booklet and the other resources.
- The brave and generous youth who share advice and tips for their parents and peers in the video.







Nasjonalt kompetansesenter for spillforskning (SPILLFORSK)



UNIVERSITETET I BERGEN









