elaine uskoski
video gaming addiction speaker, author & coach

There's nothing more terrifying for a parent than the thought of losing a child. For Elaine Uskoski, this fear became all too real when she discovered her son, Jake, was battling a video gaming addiction—one that nearly cost him his life.

Elaine, a successful iridologist and nutritional expert, had been enjoying her life as an empty nester, with both of her sons away at university. But in 2014, her world was turned upside down.

Jake, living away from home for the first time, seemed to be managing university life well. But Elaine soon realized that Jake had been hiding a dangerous secret—he was becoming increasingly obsessed with video games.

Determined to help her son, Elaine channeled her energy and focus into learning everything she could about video game addiction. She studied the signs, symptoms, and consequences of the disorder, seeking to understand how something that started as a harmless hobby had spiraled into a life-threatening crisis. Drawing on her extensive experience in wellness and social services, she developed a holistic plan to restore Jake's physical and emotional health.

The journey to recovery was long, and Jake faced many struggles along the way. But as a mother and a wellness expert, Elaine learned invaluable lessons in how to support a child through addiction. She shared these lessons in her book *Seeing Through the Cracks*, reflecting on the warning signs she had missed and how her initial ignorance and denial had inadvertently enabled Jake's addiction.

Elaine's second book, *Cyber Sober: A Caregiver's Guide to Video Gaming Addiction*, further explores the challenges families face when dealing with gaming addiction. In 2026, Elaine published her third book, *Wired to Game: Neurodiversity & the Addiction Trap*, which examines the powerful intersection of video gaming, neurodivergent brain wiring, and the unique vulnerabilities that can place bright, capable individuals at greater risk of digital dependency.

Today, Elaine speaks publicly about her experience, raising awareness about the risks of video gaming addiction and offering guidance to other parents. Her story has been featured on numerous media outlets, including CTV W5, CBC's *The National*, *McLean's* magazine, CHCH TV, Global News, National Geographic, The Wall Street Journal, and CBC Radio.

In addition to her public speaking, Elaine coaches parents and families, providing them with the tools and strategies to manage technology use in their homes. Her approach is compassionate, candid, and focused on empowering parents to address their child's compulsive gaming and screen use.

Elaine is also a Clinical Partnership Specialist for Intenta Clinical Training for Gaming Disorder and, since 2022, has been a Family Coach for Game Quitters.

In November 2023, Elaine was invited to the World Esports Summit in Busan, Korea, where she participated in a panel discussion titled “Esports – Passion or Addiction?” highlighting the risks of gaming addiction and ways to implement preventive education from the grassroots level.

In June 2024, she traveled to London for an interview and filming session for an upcoming documentary by WeSee Education/Productions. The documentary focuses on positive parenting and mental health, with a particular focus on reconnecting with teens.

Elaine’s commitment to mental health education also led her to the Masters Series on Mental Health & Trauma at Oxford University in September 2024. During this trip, she met with the Cable Rock Film crew in Middlesex for an interview with neuroscientist Dr. Brian Pennie. Their conversation about her journey as a mother of a son battling gaming addiction became part of the documentary *Hooked: How Addiction Hijacks Your Brain*, which premiered in Ireland on RTE ONE in April 2025, with plans for international distribution.

In April 2025, Elaine attended the Women Changing The World Awards in London, UK, where she was nominated for two awards. She was honored to receive the Silver 2025 WCW Leadership Award for *Therapy & Counselling*.