

TECHNOLOGY & TEENS – Tips and Resources 2017

Chatting/texting School work Emailing Assignments FaceTime/Skype/Research
Gaming of many types Creative pursuits Shopping Extracurricular activities
Twitter/Facebook/Instagram/Snapchat/Others Movies/Music Social Connections

Do we use technology the same way as our teens do?

Sometimes our teens:

- Cannot follow time limits and turn devices off
- Neglect chores, homework or studies
- Have more online friends than real-life friends
- Get "secretive" (private?) about their technology use

Research tells us:

- Children need enough nutrition, exercise, and sleep for healthy development!
- "Too much" screen time is linked to obesity, declining fitness, nutrition, and sleep problems
- Entertainment screen time should be limited to two hours a day for children ages 3-18.
- Teens should aim for at least 60 min moderate-to-vigorous-intensity physical activity daily
- Having at least 3 non-digital things you like to do that make you feel better is protective

How much is too much? Start talking with your teen if:

- They seem to need to spend more and more time online
- They experience withdrawal symptoms when not online
- They are not able to get to school regularly
- They stay awake all night on their devices and sleep during the day (change in pattern)
- You think they use digital activity to deal with uncomfortable emotion (anxiety, sadness)

What can parents do?

- Make peace with technology, it's here to stay!
- Teens need parental mentoring more than excessive monitoring
- It's about moderation, not elimination
- Help teens practice balancing sleeping, eating, physical activity, school work, and fun
- Set realistic limits around technology for everyone in the home
- Model good technology etiquette/behaviour
- Modify the patterns of digital use (get them back to sleeping during the night)
- Learn and explore what they do online and seek to understand (why do they like it?)

**Some parents negotiate agreements with teens and use digital/behavioural contracts.
Some examples:**

- https://www.common sense media.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdfs/phase3_customizabledevicecontract_design1_interactive.pdf
- <https://www.common sense media.org/research/technology-addiction-concern-controversy-and-finding-balance/resources>
- <http://www.pitcairn.com/electronic-device-contract/>

You can also check the following resources/websites for other ideas:

www.screenagersmovie.com Screenager is available for screening. Website has resources.

www.safeonline.ca Formerly SOLOS (Safe Online Outreach Society) offers sessions to PACs.

www.dalailamacenter.org The Heart-Mind conference (through the Dalai Lama Centre in Vancouver) 2015 on Human Connection in a Digital World. Keynote speakers were filmed and archived on the site.

www.keltymentalhealth.ca/about and www.familysmart.ca *In the Know* series is archived on their site.

www.cw.bc.ca/OnlineCourses/mediasite/FORCE/Internet%20Addiction%20QRS%2020-April-2012.pdf A tip sheet, put together by Kelty Mental Health, with various resources for internet addiction.

www.lastdoor.org/videos/video-game-and-internet-addiction/ Last Door Media Group is a focused therapy group for all media addictions.

www.alexandrasamuel.com/parenting/what-kind-of-digital-parent-are-you Researcher Digital Parenting

www.ted.com/talks/sherry_turkle_alone_together Sherry Turkle: devices redefine human connection

For immediate help, you can contact

- **BC Distress and Information Line** 310-6789 (no area code required); provides 24/7 skilled assessment, emotional support, information and referral, and crisis and suicide intervention
- **Kids Help Phone** is a free, anonymous and confidential phone and on-line professional counselling service for youth. Big or small concerns. 24/7. 365 days a year
- **Youth in BC** is an online crisis chat service, 1-on-1 with a trained, plus resources
- If you or a friend, peer or sibling have been involved in a self/peer exploitation incident—("sexting") NeedHelpNow.ca is there to help. This site provides guidance on steps to take to get through the issue of sexting and reputation slander. Information includes removing pictures, dealing with others, getting help, coping and reporting.

References:

"The Digital Diet: the 4 step plan to break your tech addiction and regain balance in your life". By Daniel Sieberg

"Video Game Play and Addiction: A guide for parents". By Kourosh Dini

"Just one more game!" Presentation by Tyler Black

"iMinds: How cell phones, computers, gaming, & social media are changing our brains, our behaviour, and the evolution of our species". By Mari K. Swingle