



COMPUTER

ADDICTION The root cause of all addictions & what parents can do.

Take A Moment

I want you to think about how much time you spend watching TV, browsing the internet, using your mobile device, on Face book, and so on. Do you think you spend too much time using these technology platforms? Have you struck a balance with them?

Video Games, Face book, Cell Phones, Internet, Etc...

Technology and video game addiction is becoming more commonplace with many teenagers and while the addiction is not the same as a chemical one via drugs or alcohol, the psychological impacts it can cause is much the same because individuals still become withdrawn, lost, and depressed. So why is video game and technology addiction on the rise?

Boredom

Boredom has to be one of the most common reasons that people become addicted to anything. It's when people are bored that they want to ingest something (either physically, mentally, or emotionally) into their body to cover up the fact that they're bored. So why are people bored?

Lack Of Imagination

Imagination is the greatest gift to be bestowed on us when we were born. As children, we would use our imagination to make things up and play with our friends and toys. If you watch little children play and use their imagination, it's a beautiful thing to watch them "create their world" as they go along.

As we get older, many of us are guided away from using our imagination because it is time to “get serious”. For many teenagers, this happens during school where they are told that they need to focus on getting good grades and getting prepped for college. The “real world” starts to take over and the pressures and stresses that come with this starts to weigh them down.

Escaping Reality

When your teenager is playing a video game, on Face book, or texting, their mind enters a virtual world that distracts them from these pressures. It’s this distraction that they enjoy so much that becomes addicting for them psychologically. It’s their escape where they don’t have to worry about school, grades, and becoming an adult.

Just look at how many businesses have blocked YouTube and Face book from their office. There are so many adults that are bored out of their mind and they want to escape this boredom by watching videos or chatting aimlessly. Think about this phrase for a moment: “Killing time”

How many times have you heard people say that? If life were filled with joy and excitement, why would anyone want to “kill time”? Now think about this phrase for a moment: “Time is flying by”

Do you see the difference? Either people hate their life so much that they want to kill time, or they love it so much that they don’t even notice it and time flies by.

ADD & ADHD

All scientists have done by creating these ridiculous ailments is to categorize boredom. Rather than being open and honest with the fact that kids are bored, society feels better by “solving” the reason that so many people are not interested in life and school. Think about it – we have to drug our kids to pay attention to something! Life is supposed to be filled with so much joy that they should want to pay attention to their lives. If your child is not paying attention, it’s a sure sign that they’re not interested. Rather than drugging them, how about finding something that is more interesting for them to want to learn? Kids do want to learn. They just don’t want to learn the way they’re being taught in most

schools.

Here is another way to look at it: Do you have to drug kids to play video games, surf the net, listen to music, or play with their friends? Of course not, we only have to drug kids to do things they don't want to do.

Chemical Stimulation

When kids are using technology and are stimulated by this, there is a level of dopamine being released that can create a high for them (especially with video games). The mind does NOT know the difference between reality and alternate realities so when it's immersed in all the graphics and action taking place in games (or conversations and information on Face book or texting), as far as the mind can tell, it's real. So real that it stimulates the mind and creates some level of pleasure and euphoria.

Pleasure vs. Pain

The mind will always choose something that it believes is more pleasurable. Because most kids hate school and many aspects of their lives (chores, family, etc...) they would rather escape into technology because the mind sees this as something more pleasurable and the alternative as something painful.

The Solution

If you want to help your teenager not become addicted to video games or any technology escape, you need to be creative and help them see that THIS world is more pleasurable. The way you're going to do this is by figuring out what they're passionate about and creating a relevant education and environment to support their passion. Once they find their "thing" in life, the mind will define that as being more pleasurable and will not seek an escape refuge using technology.

Finding Balance

Our world is driven by technology and there is no way around this. The real issue here is finding balance between both worlds so that your teen doesn't want to abuse their technology as an escape. This is about "how" your teenager uses technology. Are they playing the video games but are also excited about the next thing they're going to do afterwards? Or, are they depressed and

playing video games so they don't have to face a life they're not enjoying? Helping your teenager to find their balance is going to be crucial especially as our world becomes more technologically driven.

Rules

Some people like the idea of creating and enforcing rules like, telling your child they only get X amount of hours to play video games or use Face book. Rules are great especially when you can enforce them. By telling your child that they only get one hour on Face book and one-hour playing video games, you're giving them some structure (but you need to be consistent in enforcing it).

However, rules only deal with the surface level issue and not the root cause. Wouldn't you rather your child find their balance and have a healthy perspective on life rather than having to watch over them all the time and govern your rules? Parents hate having to keep after their kids and the reason why they have to is because they're not helping their teenager find their own balance in life. So by all means, definitely set some rules and boundaries for them to follow and at the same time, empower them to be excited about life so they will naturally choose something else.

Talking With Your Teenager

It's also very important that you have an open and honest talk with your teenager about your rules and why you want them to follow them. Don't just say, "Because I said so" as that will get you nowhere fast. It's imperative that they understand the good you are trying to do for them and show them how other people are hurting their lives when they are totally consumed by video games, Face book, and technology. Help paint a picture for them as to why it's more pleasurable for them to maintain a balance with technology and real life.

Energy

Everything in life is energy and this means that when your child has a lot of it, it needs to go somewhere. If you don't help them discover somewhere they can put their energy, by default it will be directed to things like games and Face book. So be proactive, creative and excited to help them discover who they really are! I

promise that once they find something they're good at and want to do, they will naturally gravitate toward it.

Exercise

If you have not done so already, make sure your teen is getting at least 90 minutes a day of physical exercise. We all sit on our butts now and this is why so many people are lethargic, depressed, overweight, and so on. It's important that you instill in your teenager that they need to be active on a daily basis. Make sure they're in the sun for at least an hour a day as well because it helps to create a positive mood. You will notice that many people who are depressed are very pale because they never see the light of day. This is why people are much happier in tropical weather. So get them in the sun and make sure they are exercising and breaking a sweat!

Most importantly, "how" you go about getting them motivated or inspired is going to be crucial. You cannot force anything on your child. They must choose it for themselves

Lead By Example

And of course, make sure you're leading by example. It's going to be hard to swallow your ideas if all they see you do is watch TV, surf the net and play on your computer all day. If you too have an issue with spending too much time in front of any screen, this is your opportunity to find a way to bond with your teen outside of the house.