



Teens Technology Obsession

7 Simple Steps to Avoid Addiction

Society today is moving at an ever increasing pace. Teens think they are experts at multi-tasking. It appears they can do their homework, listen to music, talk to 20 of their friends on Facebook, text another group of friends and watch a YouTube video all at the same time! However the research is clear – we cannot multi-task, what we actually do is ‘switch task’. Which then dilutes our attention and ability to focus and do good work.

People, not only teenagers, are becoming techno-junkies. They are afraid to be away from their computer or phone for too long. A new report warns that technology addiction among young people is having a disruptive effect on their learning, worsening their spelling and concentration, encouraging plagiarism, and disrupting lessons.

I encourage parents to teach kids and teens the importance of balancing real life with screen time. Connected technology should not overshadow or replace face-to-face communication at any stage of life.

Computer games are dangerously immersive, as they are designed to be, and players quickly begin to feel pressure to get ahead, or not to let down their teammates. It is important to point out that although there are millions of game players and Internet users, only a small percentage (10-15 percent) develop problems. But if you do suspect there is a problem in your family, here's how you can spot signs of a computer addiction:

- missing meals
- losing sleep
- dropping activities
- skipping showers
- missing homework assignments at school
- not interacting at all with the family

When you think your teen has a problem you may be tempted to rip their computer or phone out of their hand and ban it from them completely. This often backfires, as you have now taken away



the only thing they feel connects them to the rest of the world. It is time to have a serious conversation and make some agreements.

7 tips to avoid technology addiction

- 1.** Keep the computer out of their bedroom. This is harder if they are in the senior high school years as it is used regularly for school work
- 2.** Make agreements around their responsibilities. Household chores must be done before computers/phones/playstation etc are turned on
- 3.** Set clear guidelines about what, when and how long the technology can be used.e.g. no phones in the bedroom once it's lights out
- 4.** Get to know the games they play - some are more addictive than others. Play games with your kids
- 5.** Use software that can limit time, games, types of drives that are used.
- 6.** Get kids involved in other activities that are active and include other people
- 7.** Model the behaviour you want to see e.g. no phones answered or texts sent/received during dinner time

Check out this [government](#) website for more tips

Your call to action

Take an inventory of your own technology use. Are you suffering from a similar addiction to your phone?! Learn to use the OFF button, especially during dinner time.

"Children are unpredictable. You never know what inconsistency they're going to catch you in next."

Franklin P Jones