

The Internet and Video Games

how the digital age impacts
children and adolescents

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Screen time

Screen time is the amount of time spent using digital screen technology...

- ▶ Videos on YouTube, Netflix, Vimeo, etc.
 - ▶ Texting or chatting on sites like Instant Messenger, etc.
 - ▶ Sites like Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook
 - ▶ Smartphone, pad, computer or console based video games
 - ▶ Shopping, dating, gambling, surfing randomly online
 - ▶ Email, school assignments, researching on Wikipedia
-
- ▶ More than 50% of teen screen time is with a smartphone

How popular are screens?

- ▶ Kids start younger
 - ▶ Average age of screen exposure in **2005 was 4 years old**
 - ▶ By **2012 it was 4 months old**
- ▶ Kids text a lot, usually for at least an hour a day
 - ▶ 60-100 texts daily
 - ▶ Up to **3000 texts a month**

Some children and teens may spend more time on devices than sleeping, eating, going to school, or spending time with family and friends

Side effects of excessive screen time

- ▶ **Increased inactive behavior**

- ▶ Less physical activity
- ▶ Poor nutrition
- ▶ Poor hygiene
- ▶ Obesity

- ▶ **Disrupted sleep**

- ▶ Elevated cortisol levels
- ▶ Lower melatonin levels

- ▶ **Physical injury**

- ▶ Repetitive motion tendinitis- carpal tunnel
- ▶ ‘Text neck’
- ▶ Eye strain and headaches
- ▶ Motor vehicle accidents



How much screen time is okay?

- ▶ No 'unsafe' amount of screen time, it depends on your child and your family
 - ▶ Some research shows the happiest teens spent more time in face to face social interaction and less on screen time
 - ▶ The 'sweet spot' may be 1-2 hours daily (1h max if 2-5years old)
- ▶ Particularly vulnerable kids may struggle with:
 - ▶ Setting limits on screen time
 - ▶ Sneaky or oppositional behavior
 - ▶ Aggression when device removed
 - ▶ Sleep habits
 - ▶ Unsafe behaviors online

Smartphones

Smartphones are popular

- ▶ Kids are getting phones at **younger ages**
 - ▶ 12y in 2012
 - ▶ 10.3 years in 2016
 - ▶ Bill Gates kids got phones at 14y
- ▶ More kids and teens own smartphones
 - ▶ % of teens in 2012
 - ▶ 73% by 2015
 - ▶ 89% by 2016
 - ▶ 92% of 15-17y by 2017
- ▶ Daily use of phones on school day:
 - ▶ 8-12y = 6 hours
 - ▶ 12-18y = 9 hours
 - ▶ 15-18y = 11.5 hours
- ▶ 78% of teens check phones hourly

Smartphones overall

- ▶ Smartphone use may make already existing problem more apparent or worse
- ▶ We are not sure what age is okay for a child to own a smartphone
- ▶ Texting and driving is very dangerous and becoming more common





Social
media

What is social media?

- ▶ Popular sites on the internet allow someone to create a profile and connect to other people, ex. Facebook, Instagram, etc.
- ▶ Once connected, people can directly share texts, ideas, pictures, videos, blogs, memes
- ▶ Most social media sites create their own culture based upon themes and preferred currency

Popularity of Social Media

- ▶ **3.48 billion people use online social media-1/3 of the world**
 - ▶ Average 2 to hours every day sharing, liking, tweeting and updating
- ▶ **Kids and teens are very busy on these sites**
 - ▶ iPhone release in 2007 correlates with less teens dating, less sex and less driving (Atlantic 2017)
 - ▶ 95% of teens in the US have access to a smartphone
 - ▶ 45% of teens say they are online almost all the time
- ▶ **75% of teens have at least 1 profile on social media**
- ▶ **71% of teens say they use more than one site**

Concerns with social media

- ▶ **Oversharing private information**
- ▶ A survey of over 600 teens found that nearly all shared **real name and photos of themselves, most shared their school name, birthdate and city or town where they lived.**
- ▶ Self esteem
- ▶ Social media bullying
- ▶ Displacement of other important activities
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Suicidal behavior

Social media may displace important activities

- ▶ Sleep disruption
- ▶ Less school work and homework
- ▶ Reduced exercise
- ▶ Less face to face interactions
- ▶ Less time outside





Video games

Popularity of internet games

- ▶ **Worldwide, roughly 700 million people play online games on a regular basis**
 - ▶ Recent study estimates that **160 million American adults** play internet-based games
 - ▶ **5 million** people in USA play at **least 45 hours** of video games weekly
- ▶ **The number of kids and teens who play video games is high and increasing**
 - ▶ 2015 study from Pew Research Center showed 59% of girls and 84% of boys 13-17 play video games
 - ▶ **By 2018 more than 90% of children in the US play video games, 97% of 12-17 year-olds**
 - ▶ **80% of teens have home gaming device, majority of those have 3-4**

Reported health problems of gaming

- ▶ **Displacement**
 - ▶ Gaming reduces time spent in healthier activities
- ▶ **Social isolation**
 - ▶ Reduces well-being by less quality time interacting with friends
 - ▶ High quality of social interactions are essential for health
- ▶ **Obesity**
 - ▶ Sedentary lifestyle
 - ▶ Internet-based games could lead to lower levels of exercise



Video games and sleep

- ▶ **Displacement by taking time away from sleep**
 - ▶ Lose track of time while playing
 - ▶ Need to complete one more levels
- ▶ **Stimulating or intense game before bed & Insomnia caused by blue light reducing melatonin**
 - ▶ Lead to irritability, less organized
 - ▶ Poorer academic function
 - ▶ Daytime sleepiness



Violent video games and aggression

- ▶ Studies indicate violent video game playing is related to aggressive behavior, stress, agitation, less prosocial behavior, empathy, and moral engagement



Online gaming overall

- ▶ **Enjoyable for most people**
 - ▶ Young males in particular report gaming makes their lives better
- ▶ **Majority of players demonstrate the ability to control gaming behaviors without developing problems**
 - ▶ Very small group of individuals playing online games develop problems (1-2%)
- ▶ **Online gaming may cause distress in those people with:**
 - ▶ Underlying mental health challenges such as anxiety, ASD or ADHD
 - ▶ Those genetically more prone to addiction
 - ▶ Those with poor supports



Can devices lead to
'addiction?'

Parents often wonder if their child is 'addicted' to the screen

- ▶ **They act like they are addicted**
 - ▶ See them using device constantly
 - ▶ Normal life seems flat compared to using device
 - ▶ Complain of craving, withdrawal, phantom vibrations/notifications
- ▶ **Are screens the cigarettes of our era?**
 - ▶ Are they an addiction that we intuitively know is unhealthy- even without the confirmation of hard evidence- but continue because everyone's doing it?
- ▶ **Can these devices cause psychological or medical problems?**

Screens and addiction

- ▶ *iPads, smartphones, gaming devices and computers are not themselves 'addictive'*
 - ▶ There is, technically, **no such thing as internet or phone addiction.**
 - ▶ Some in the psychiatric community have proposed a new disorder called **internet gaming disorder**, to recognize unhealthy patterns of game-playing.
 - ▶ But to **rise to the level of a disorder**, the behavior would be very **extreme, and seriously impairing to a child's life.**



Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD)

- ▶ Video game addiction is termed Internet Gaming Disorder
 - ▶ Excessive or compulsive game playing
 - ▶ Gaming addiction, problematic/pathological gaming, ‘gamer’
- ▶ Symptoms are very similar to substance abuse or dependence
 - ▶ Tolerance, withdrawal, unable to stop, social problems
- ▶ In some countries it has become a significant public health problem



Warning signs

- ▶ Change in school work or **behavior**
- ▶ Change in **sleeping** patterns
- ▶ Change in social or family involvement such as **isolation and withdrawal**
- ▶ 'I am afraid of what my child or teen would do if I took away their device'



10 ways to improve screen use



1- Find out what your child is doing online

- ▶ **Talk to your child about:**

- ▶ Typical daily schedule
- ▶ Devices and sites
- ▶ Types of interactions

- ▶ **Help your child choose media that is worth their time**



2- Parents need to be involved

- ▶ **Recognize parental behavior has a powerful influence on child's behavior**
 - ▶ Parents need to assess their own relationship with technology
 - ▶ Parents use of screens and smartphones significantly influences how kids and teens use them
- ▶ **Try to use the device for reward instead of punishment because it's more effective**
- ▶ **Play, work, read and surf alongside your child or teen and know the sites they use and all their passwords.**



3- Be proactive

- ▶ **Prepare your child or teen for**
 - ▶ Confusing or uncomfortable situations
 - ▶ Sites asking for personal or financial information
 - ▶ Cyberbullying or exclusion
 - ▶ Adult themed content
- ▶ **Review situations where they should ask for help**
 - ▶ Check in regularly or daily if you are concerned
- ▶ **Discuss texting and driving**
 - ▶ Treat the behavior similar to drinking and driving
 - ▶ Recipients of text and passengers in vehicle object until phone away or vehicle parked
 - ▶ Parents don't respond to texts
 - ▶ 'Don't text n drive or else we will take the car away'



4- Actively offer alternatives

- ▶ **Become involved in your child's non screen life**
- ▶ **Offer more attractive alternatives**
 - ▶ Do things your kids like to do
 - ▶ Take them places they like to go
 - ▶ Make it easy to see, host or visit friends in real life
 - ▶ Do any activity inside or outside without holding a phone
- ▶ **And don't just get involved in their lives; let them get involved in yours**
 - ▶ Have your kids help you plan the next family vacation
 - ▶ Ask your kids to give you advice
 - ▶ Discuss a problem you're facing and ask how they would solve it



4- Actively offer alternatives

- ▶ **Create a real time living list: 100 things to do without phones**
 - ▶ Reading a comic, magazine, book
 - ▶ Board games, arts or crafts
 - ▶ Listen to music or play instrument
 - ▶ Dance or play with their toys
 - ▶ Exercise together
 - ▶ Help them learn a sport
 - ▶ Enroll in organized sports
 - ▶ Attend religious or spiritual events
 - ▶ Meditation and or yoga
 - ▶ Invite them to join your activities



5- Create protected time

- ▶ **Turn off notifications in general and remove social media apps from phone**
 - ▶ Check for updates from laptop or home computer at end of the day
- ▶ **Turn off devices at certain times of the day**
 - ▶ Meals, studying, driving
 - ▶ Schedule device use to specific times, such as 15 minutes, instead of 'open ended'



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6- Scaling down

- ▶ **Create smartphone/internet free hours/days during the week**
 - ▶ Cut off Wifi to home after 9pm
- ▶ **Treat screen time like dessert**
 - ▶ Something you can have once in a while, but shouldn't be part of your everyday

7- Consider going 'tech free'

- ▶ ***Wait until 8th*** movement urges parents to delay giving kids smartphones until just before high school
- ▶ 7 day no screen challenge for entire family
- ▶ Technology free schools do exist
 - ▶ San Lorenzo High worked to restrict smartphone use during school hours- 'the changes were profound- kids are more focused and engaged during class and student journals suggest high schoolers were feeling less anxious and more relaxed'

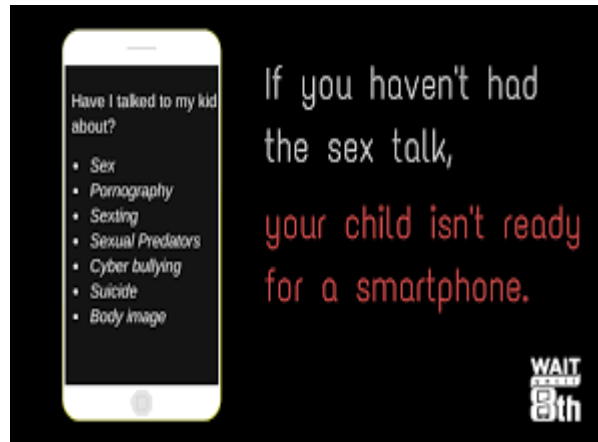


8- Addressing sexting

- ▶ Open attitude without judgment

- ▶ Topic areas to discuss

- ▶ Healthy dating relationships
- ▶ Peer pressure
- ▶ Digital security
- ▶ Sexuality
- ▶ Citizenship



- ▶ Ongoing conversation as opposed to a single lecture

- ▶ Be proactive rather than protective and reactive

- ▶ Taking phone away or preaching abstinence are usually not effective

9-Treatment for problem gaming

- ▶ **Help your child to cut down**
 - ▶ Wean gaming down over weeks to 1-2 hours daily, more on weekends if transitions are good
 - ▶ Schedule other activities, structure play time, use earned game time and other incentives
 - ▶ Expect resistance, slow gradual changes, regression around weekend and holidays, sneaky or angry behavior
 - ▶ Teach the gamer how to live a balanced life even though games are readily available
- ▶ **Psychotherapy-** Individual or family therapy may be helpful
- ▶ **Medication** currently being studied
 - ▶ Melatonin to correct sleep-wake reversal
 - ▶ SSRIs like Prozac (Fluoxetine) and Wellbutrin (Bupropion or Zyban)
- ▶ **Treatment Centers:**
 - ▶ 12 step programs such as Online Gamers Anonymous, Private clinics, Wilderness Therapy

10- online resources

- Use the internet to get more information

<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/05/31/teens-social-media-technology-2018/>

<https://www.pcmag.com/news/how-teen-and-adult-social-media-usage-has-and-hasnt-changed>

<https://childmind.org/article/is-internet-addiction-real/>



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF CHILD & ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY

FACTS *for* FAMILIES

No. 100 November 2011

Children and Social Networking

Social Networking Sites play an important role in the lives of many young people. Over 60% of 13-17 year olds have at least one profile on a social networking site, many spending more than 2 hours per day on social networking sites.

Social networking sites can present opportunities to youth who participate with them but like any activity there are also associated risks and it is important for parents to help their children use these sites wisely.

Some potential benefits are:

- Staying connected to friends
- Developing new social contacts with peers with similar interests
- Sharing content of self-expression such as art work, music and political views
- Developing and expressing your individual identity

Online social networking can involve new risks such as:

- Bullying online "cyber bullying"
- Sharing too much information
- Vulnerability to predatory adults
- Sharing photos or video that you later regret
- Exposure to large amounts of commercial advertisements which may not be age appropriate
- Risk of identity theft
- Reduced amount of time for physical activity

If your child is thinking about using social networking sites there are many ways to help them use them safely and appropriately. **Discuss freely with your child and guide them in their usage of social networking sites by suggesting they:**

- Keep control of their information by restricting access to their page
- Keep their full name, address, telephone number, social security number and bank or credit card number to themselves
- Post only information they are comfortable with everyone seeing
- Talk to their parents before considering meeting anyone face to face they have met on line and review the risks involved

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Any questions?

Thank you!

Please fill out the evaluation sheet.

Stella Kostopoulos



Thank you!

Please fill out the evaluation form.

Stella Kostopoulos

Presenter