

Mental Health, Social Media and Gaming

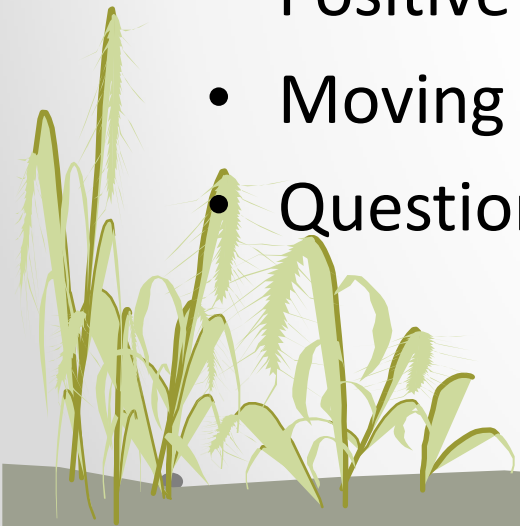


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Tonight

- How to spot unhealthy involvement in online activities
- Strategies to promote digital wellness at home (5 Tips)
- Where to get help
 - Resources for teens
 - Resources for parents and educators
- Positive aspects of online activities
- Moving forward: one challenge, one strategy
- Questions



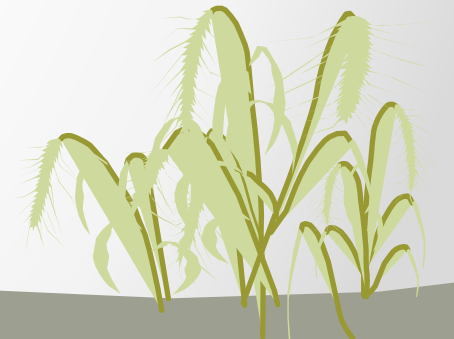
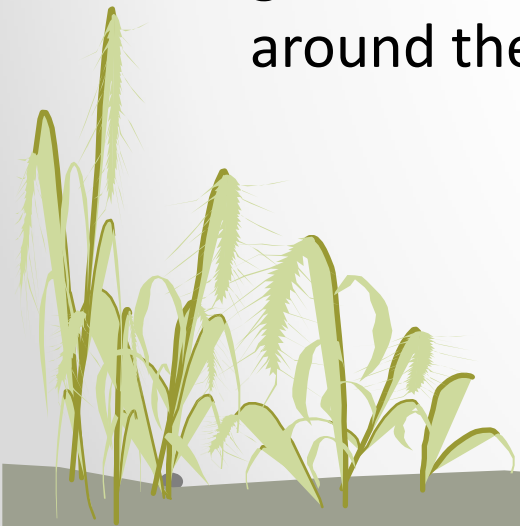
Technology and what it can access

What young people access with their technology includes:

- social media platforms and services (e.g., Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, Pinterest, Twitter, WhatsApp, Facebook, Tumblr)
- apps for everything from dating and gambling to Skype and Periscope
- online communities and virtual worlds (Second Life)
- games (from single-player games on their phones to multiplayer role-playing video games—MMORPGs— played on home systems with other people in real time around the world)

Source: CAMH, Youth, Family and Interactive Technology.

<https://learn.problemgambling.ca/PDF%20library/brochure-youth-family-interactive-tech-accessible-2017.pdf>



Video: *Social Media and Teenage Self-Esteem*

From a teenager's perspective



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxolrIIWEMQ>

Unhealthy involvement in online activities

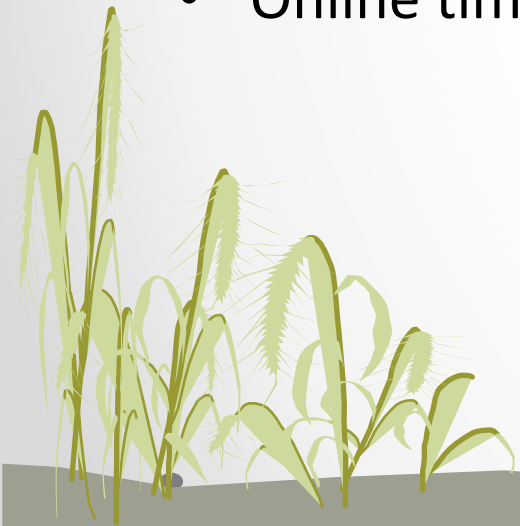
Is it interfering with the person's daily life?

For example:

- The amount of time spent online means that other activities are neglected (such as eating proper meals, getting exercise, socializing, and doing work)
- Excessive screen time leads to back or neck problems
- Online time is leading to sleep deprivation

Source: CAMH, Youth and Technology online course from Mental Health 101 Series

http://www.camhx.ca/education/online_courses/mha101/youthandtechnology/Youth_and_Technology_.htm

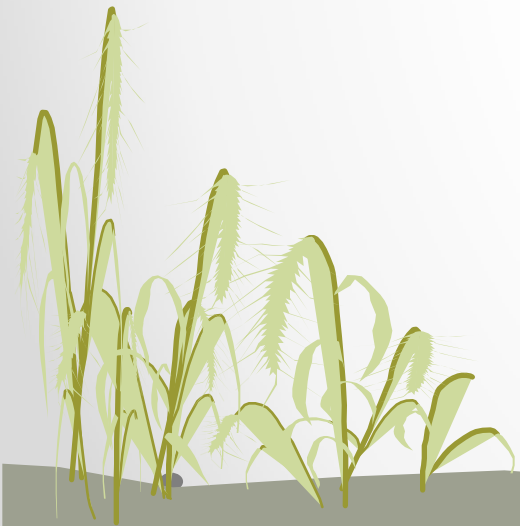


Questions to consider

- Where do teens use technology? (PLACE)
- What are they doing with it? (CONTENT)
- Has technology become central to their lives and do they use it to the exclusion of other activities? (TIME)

Source: CAMH, Youth, Family and Interactive Technology.

<https://learn.problemgambling.ca/PDF%20library/brochure-youth-family-interactive-tech-accessible-2017.pdf>



Signs your teen may be overusing technology

- decreased school performance
- sleep loss
- weight gain or loss
- decrease in social activities
- pre-occupation with games or computer use

Sometimes youth who use technology excessively do so as a way of coping with other things.

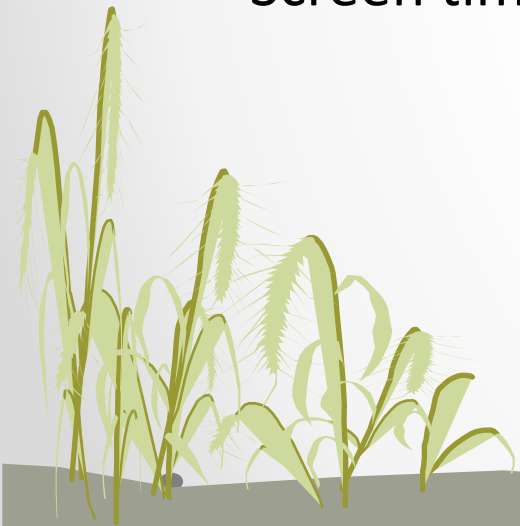
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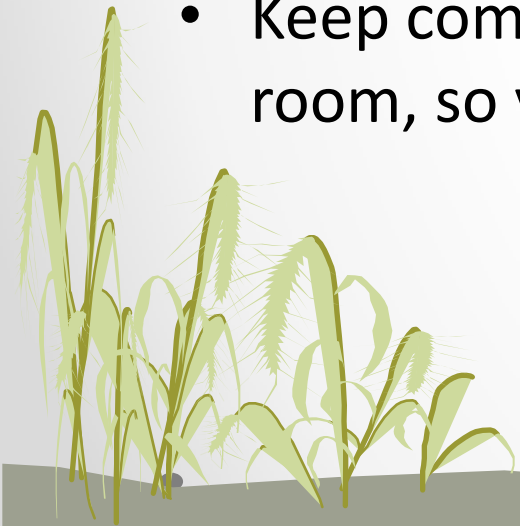
Tip #1: Learn more

- Learn about the apps, games and platforms your kids are using
- Sit down and observe the content and process of a video game, online activity or other technology your child is involved in
- Download them on your phone and teach yourself how to use them
- If your child plays games, set aside time to play the game with them
- Let your children help teach you about technology
- Screen time doesn't need to always be alone time



Tip #2: Set boundaries

- Agree on a clear set of rules for online activity, including when and where screens are and are not allowed
- Don't always have screens on in the background
- Consider using alarm clocks instead of phones and keep devices out of the bedrooms at night
- Consider parking all of the family's devices in one spot to recharge overnight
- Keep computers and gaming consoles in common areas, such as the family room, so you can keep an eye on activity



Tip #3: Encourage other activities

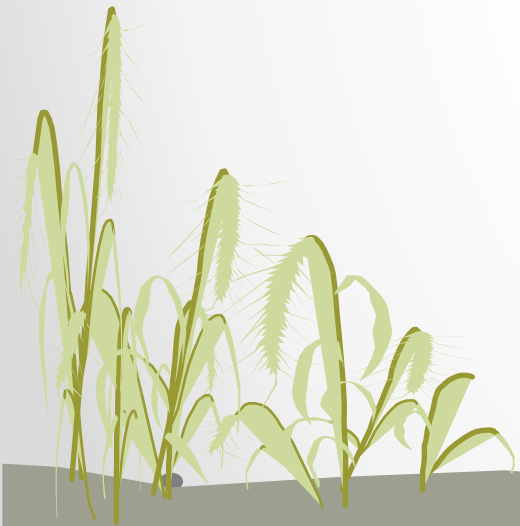
- Encourage kids to daydream, create, explore, play, be curious
- Encourage your kids to do other (offline) things they love to do
- Join in – consider opportunities for family time

Brainstorm: Ideas for offline activities



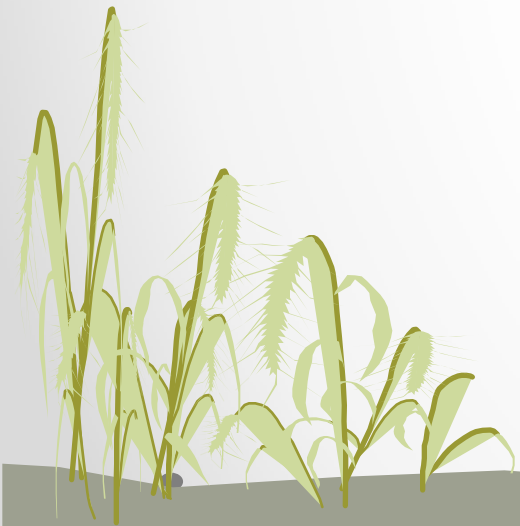
Tip #4: Communicate

- Engage in family discussions about online safety as you would on other topics (drinking and driving, safer sex)
- Chat with your child about what they do online
 - What are their values and how does their online activity align with that?
 - What do they like about their online life, and what drains them?
 - Being intentional about what they're doing and why



Tip #5: Put down your phone

- Modelling behaviour is the most powerful way to influence your child's behaviour
- Notice and reflect on your own online habits
- Consider screen time notifications so you can track and limit your own use
- When you're with people, really *be with* people
- Leave your devices in another room, leave them home if you're out, or put them away so you won't be distracted



Video: *The Problem with Parents, Kids and Social Media*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAFSrGX0mxk>

Where to get help

Talk with your children if you have concerns about their use of technology. This includes listening to what they have to say. If you are still concerned, seek help from a health care professional such as your family doctor.

If your child is in crisis, take them to your local hospital.

Here are some services designed for young people that you may also find useful.

- **CAMH Problem Gambling and Technology Use Treatment Services**
(for 16 and older)
416 535-8501, press 2
- **Children's Mental Health Ontario** www.kidsmentalhealth.ca

Source: CAMH, Youth, Family and Interactive Technology.

<https://learn.problemgambling.ca/PDF%20library/brochure-youth-family-interactive-tech-accessible-2017.pdf>



Resource for teens:

NeedHelpNow.ca™

NeedHelpNow.ca helps teens stop the spread of sexual pictures or videos and provides support along the way. If you or someone you know has been negatively impacted by a self/peer exploitation incident, we are here to help offer guidance on the steps you can take to get through it and [#ChangeTheStory](#).



CANADIAN CENTRE for CHILD PROTECTION®
Helping families. Protecting children.

More resources for teens

what's up
walkⁱⁿ

Big White Wall[®]

 mindyourmind



1 800 668 6868
KidsHelpPhone.ca
Kids Help Phone

Resources for parents and educators



CANADA'S CENTRE
FOR DIGITAL AND
MEDIA LITERACY



12 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR CHILD'S DIGITAL HEALTH

The following ways to foster digital health increase children's self-awareness and help them understand how technology impacts their well-being.

1. **Manage screen time.**
By managing screen time for your children, you will help them create a balance between interacting with technology and developing real-life relationships with humans.
2. **Promote physical activity.**
A growing body of research shows that excessive screen time contributes to the inactivity and obesity crisis in today's youth. Encourage your children to be physically active.
3. **Monitor mental wellness.**
Being well-informed about childhood trauma and the symptoms of mental illness can help you act more quickly to help your children if they are in need.
4. **Practice stress-reduction.**
Introduce your kids to mindfulness meditation and various techniques for stress-reduction and relaxation. This can boost their digital health and well-being.
5. **Foster peer friendships.**
There is a growing sense of loneliness in today's children and teens. Encourage your children to become involved in shared activities that provide social interaction in real time.
6. **Use online health resources.**
You can find an abundance of reputable health resources online that will help you investigate physical and emotional health symptoms of concern and learn about prevention.
7. **Explore wellness apps.**
Use digital resources to your family's advantage by exploring wellness and exercise apps that help promote healthier lifestyles.
8. **Set rules for bedtime.**
Improve the digital health of your whole family by establishing rules that require devices to charge outside of bedrooms overnight.
9. **Talk about distraction and safety.**
Young drivers are at much higher risk of driving while distracted. Help your children understand that their health and safety come first, before technology.
10. **Discuss the differences between productivity and technology.**
Advances in technology have not coincided with increases in productivity. Help your child learn how to set goals and seek feedback and support.
11. **Discuss digital health, ethics, and citizenship.**
Talk about and set guidelines on what kind of personal information is shared, how to communicate, how to debate important issues, etc.
12. **Cultivate and nurture the human spirit.**
As technology rapidly advances, real-world human experiences are declining. Encourage your children to play, create, be curious, and dream.



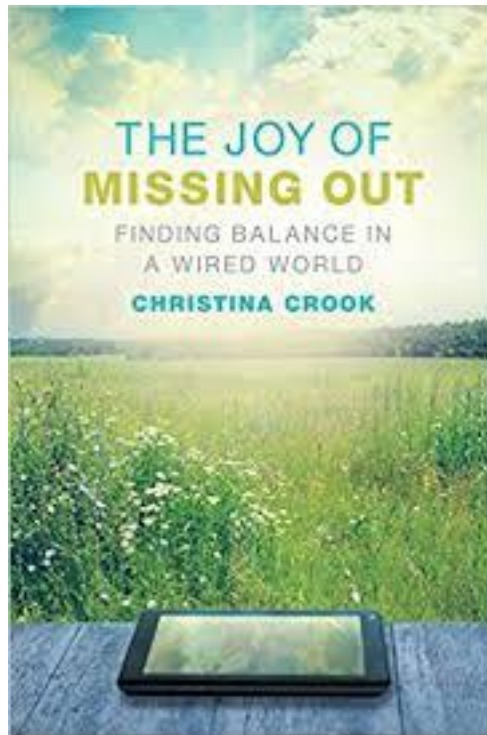
SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.ROOTSOFACTION.COM/DIGITAL-HEALTH-FAMILIES/](https://www.rootsofaction.com/digital-health-families/)

Resources for parents and educators

12 Ways to Improve Your Child's Digital Health

Printable Infographic:
www.rootsofaction.com

And even more resources...



<http://www.experiencejomo.com>

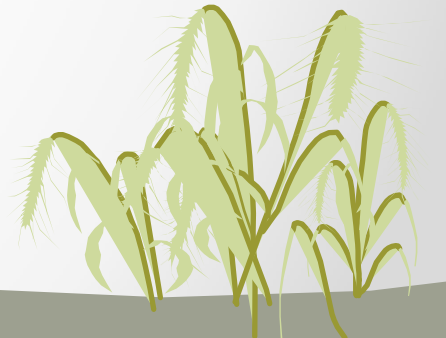
Brainstorm: Positives



What are some positive aspects of gaming and social media use?

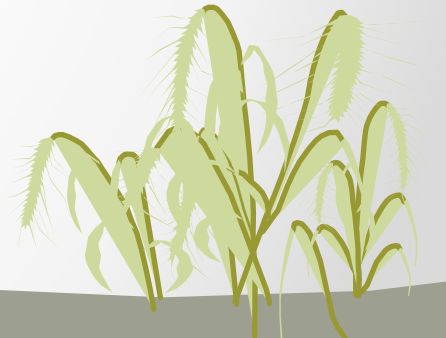
Positive aspects of social media use

- identity exploration and formation
- community building
- connection opportunities for kids who might be isolated in other ways
- social skills practice
- opportunities to broaden/deepen perspective
- social movement connections – finding like-minded folks
- creativity and expression



Positive aspects of gaming

- community building
- development of technical skills, hand-eye coordination
- physical movement in some games
- collaboration and team-work
- problem-solving
- communication skills
- new social connections, and strengthening existing connections



Technology can also be a tool for mental health support

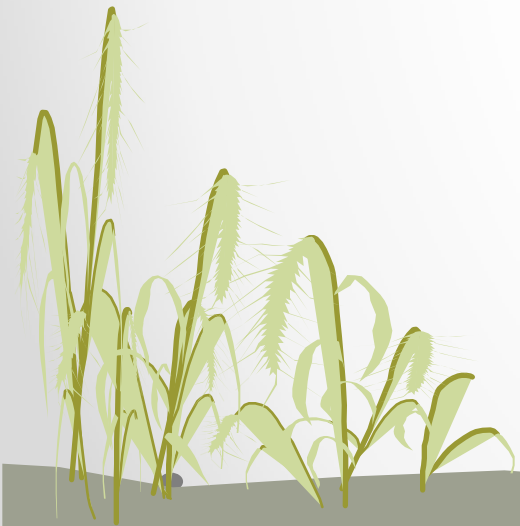
Technology can help connect teens with mental health and emotional support that they might not be willing or able to access in person

- wellness and prevention
- coaching
- peer-led support
- intervention and treatment
- online self-help
- monitoring
- crisis support
- recovery



Moving forward: one challenge, one strategy

1. What is one challenge you've faced with your teen's online activity?
2. What is one strategy to address that challenge? This can be one you've tried, or one you'd like to try next.



Questions?



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Thank you so much for joining me tonight.