

We are all Connected: Working with Clients who Overuse Technology



Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers
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“Technology is neither *good* nor *bad*, nor even *neutral*. Technology is one part of the complex of relationships that people form with each other and the world around them; it simply cannot be understood outside of that concept.”

Samuel Collins



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Technology rates

- Radio 38 years
- Telephone 20 years
- TV 13 years
- Cell phones 12 years
- World Wide Web 4 years
- iPod 3 years
- Facebook 2 years
- YouTube 1 year
- Angry Birds **35 days**

Dr. Larry Rosen – Psychology of Technology



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2005

2013

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Getting information off the Internet is like taking a drink from a fire hydrant.

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Digital natives



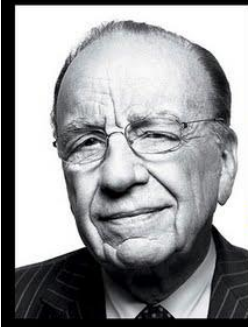
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"No, you weren't downloaded.
You were born."

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Like many of you in this room, I'm a digital immigrant... My two young daughters, on the other hand, will be digital natives. They'll never know a world without ubiquitous broadband internet access...

We may never become true digital natives, but we can and must begin to assimilate to their culture and way of thinking.

- Rupert Murdoch, April 2005

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Agenda

- Gaming and internet use rates
- Risks
- Impact
- Treatment
- Resources
- Questions/comments

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Are you up to a challenge?



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Ontario - Gaming & Screen Time

- 10% students spend at least 7 hours a day in front of a TV or computer
 - 23% students play video games daily and over ¼ of these players have gaming problems
 - 10% have gaming problems
 - Boys are 4x more likely to have a video gaming problem
- Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey, CAMH 2013



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Screen Time

- TV & video games more common among boys
- Surfing computer similar for boys and girls
- More screen time = **lower self-esteem**



Leatherdale & Ahmed, 2011.



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Who is Playing?

- 54% of Canadians are gamers
- The average gamer is 33 years old
- It is estimated that by 2017 revenues obtained from smartphones and tablets will be \$35,000,000,000



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Reasons Youth Play Video Games

- Fun
- Like to feel in control
- Releases tension
- Relieves boredom
- Develop gaming skills
- Feel a sense of mastery
- Escape/Fantasy



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When is it a problem?



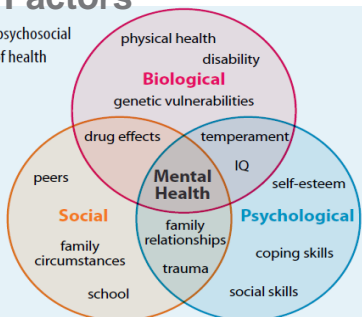
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Risk Factors

The biopsychosocial
model of health



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Vulnerability Factors

- ADHD
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Other excessive behaviours or addictions
- Low self-esteem
- Social difficulties
- Learning exceptionalities



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Signs there might be a problem

- Spends long hours on computer
- School difficulties
- Skips chores/responsibilities
- Spends a lot more money on games
- Conflict with parents
- Social isolation/withdrawn
- Few other activities and interests
- Appears down/anxious/irritable
- Sleep difficulties



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What makes video gaming addictive?

- Achievement
- Cyber socializing
- Games are infinite
- In game currency
- The brain gets hijacked (intermittent rewards)
- Virtual world continues when person is offline



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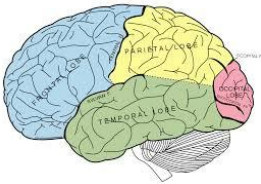




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Brain Development in Adolescence



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What to do?



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Screening and Assessment



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Treatment Options

- Modalities
- Available resources



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Supporting Families



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Communication tips

- Brief (30 seconds)
- One item at a time
- Choose the right time and place
- I messages
- Present focused
- More positive than negative



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Set limits



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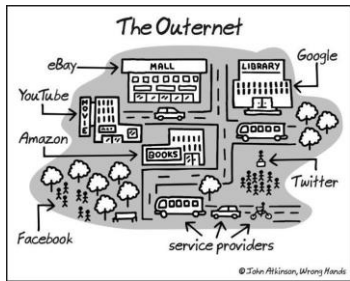
Self-care and balance



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Resources

Screeners:

Problem Video Game Playing Test
Internet Addiction Test
Internet Gaming Disorder Test

Online resources for clients:

Mediasmarts.ca
Online Gamers Anonymous
Problemgambling.ca



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Resources

Community of Practice/yahoo group for Problem Gambling,
Gaming and Internet Use
Colleen.Tessier@camh.ca



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