Digital Addictions: A Parents’ Guide to Prevention and Treatment

CAISL is a student-centered educational community in which we challenge ourselves and each other to do our best and to make positive contributions to our diverse and ever-changing world.
Let’s Define Terms...

Addiction is a condition in which a person finds themselves unable to stop using a substance or engaging in a behavior.

(Medical News Today)

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“Social Media is about sociology and psychology more than technology”

-Brian Solis
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How online addiction is formed

1. Internal trigger - What does the user *really* want?
2. External trigger - What gets the user to the product?
3. What is the simplest behavior in anticipation of reward?
4. Is the reward fulfilling, yet leaves the user wanting more?
5. What is the ‘bit of work’ done to increase the likelihood of returning?
Neuroplasticity: we become what we do

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Variable reward: dopamine boost

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The pull of dopamine is so strong that studies have shown tweeting is harder for people to resist than cigarettes and alcohol.
Instagram makes me depressed

Instagram makes me feel ugly

Instagram makes me sad

Instagram makes me feel insecure

About 9,140,000 results (0.49 seconds)
1.47 billion daily users

60 billion messages are sent a day

187 million daily users

500 million people use Instagram stories every day

4.2 billion Instagram likes per day

Every week 1 billion hours are watched on Netflix

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Examples

→ **Snapchat** turns conversations into streaks, redefining how children measure friendship.

→ **Instagram** glorifies the picture-perfect life, eroding our self worth.

→ **Facebook** segregates us into echo chambers, fragmenting our communities.

→ **YouTube & Netflix** autoplays the next video within seconds, even if it eats into our sleep.
Internet users spend an average of 135 minutes per day on social media.
homodistractus
Constant online choices distract us from making decisions.
• We can’t choose if presented with too much choice (Sheena Iyengar)

• The mere presence of your smartphone makes you distracted (University of Texas)

• Insignificant choices deplete our problem-solving skills (Stanford)
“Social media is about people, not about your business. Provide for the people, and the people will provide for you.”

-Matthew Goulart
The Use of Color

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87% of Android and 47% of iOS users opt in to receiving app notifications on their smartphones

(Kahuna Q4 2015 report)
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"The Infinite Scroll"

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Helpful Strategies

- Reduce the number of apps
- Restrict notifications
- Monitor and limit device time... it may seem counter-intuitive, but there are apps to help with this

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The four principles

Your digital control strategy

**Time management**
1. Disable notifications/use blocking apps
2. Delay checking devices
3. Define start and finishing working time (Volkswagen)
4. Longer time slots with no interruptions (Virgin)
5. Plan for distractions
6. Limit multitasking

**Space management**
1. Devices-free areas in house (i.e. bedroom ->, buy an alarm clock)
2. No phones in the meetings (mobile spa)
3. Eat outside of the desk without a screen
4. Hide phones from sight when need to focus

**Relationship management**
1. Manage expectations of senior stakeholders and clients
2. Minimize number of channels you use
3. Do you things first before checking your messages/news
4. Focus on how not to distract others

**Self-management**
1. Allow time to be bored
2. Do more things that boost natural dopamine
3. Don’t rely on willpower
4. Regularly get into the nature
5. Meditation/mindfulness
6. Read a book/play an instrument

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