



Counselor's Corner

Summer 2019

Addictive Technology

Did you know that many games, apps, and social media outlets are intentionally designed to be addictive?

Technological devices, apps, games etc. lend themselves toward behavioral addiction.

Behavioral addiction draws us in with elements of human need such as social support, social engagement, and a sense of effectiveness.

Video games keep us hooked by creating compelling goals just beyond reach, positive feedback, and a sense of incremental progress. As tasks become more difficult over time, it creates unresolved tensions that demand resolution making it difficult to stop playing. Gamers have difficulty stopping because they are driven to complete certain missions, and because they form social ties that bind them to other gamers.

Social media can also lend itself to compulsive and addictive behaviors. Social media sites like FaceBook and Instagram are addictive because they capitalize on our human need for social approval. Getting a "like" or being "tagged" in a post is an indicator that someone is thinking of us. This leads us to obsessively check to see who is liking our posts and returning to the site to follow friends.

You may not be able to lose technology all together but you can limit it. Here are a few suggestions:

- Set boundaries (phones out of bedroom at night, no usage at dinner table, etc)
- Set rules that homework and chores are done first to earn time on screens.
- Keep technology usage to open areas of the home.
- Do not allow access to online gaming
- Be aware of the social media apps your child uses.
- Disable email/social media notifications and check your email on a desktop rather than mobile device so you are not tempted to check as often.
- Schedule some tech free family time (board games, puzzles, nature walks, sports).
- *Entertainment Software Rating Board App* (checks the appropriateness of game)
- *Demetricator App* (dulls feedback by eliminating friend counts of "likes" on social media)
- *Waste No Time App* (imposes time limits on sites, add sites to block list)
- *Forest- Stay Focused App* (assists with productivity)

Resources

"Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World," Cal Newport
"Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked" by Adam Alter
What Parents Can Do About Technology Addiction at Home: Parenting Guidelines: Rules for Every Age by Kimberly S. Young

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