

References

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INTERNET ADDICTION AMONG TEENAGERS

Introduction. When we think about addiction, we usually associate it with alcohol or illegal substance abuse. However, addiction is more intertwined with our daily lives than we think. For example, most of the world's population is addicted to caffeine. Although caffeine is known to be addictive, many people around the world don't start their day without a cup of coffee.

We are so absorbed in our daily lives that we may even become addicted to everyday activities, such as surfing the Internet. In particular, for the younger generation, being online scrolling on social networks, watching videos and reading articles takes up most of their lives. As the Internet is constantly becoming more advanced, there has been an increase in Internet addiction over the past few years. Although Internet addiction is spreading more and more, it has not yet been officially recognized as a mental disorder. But as more and more people use the Internet uncontrollably every day, additional research is constantly being conducted to understand this condition.

Main part. Internet addiction is called addiction, i.e., a deviation in behavior in which a person's sense of reality is disrupted, a sense of time is lost, critical thinking is lost, and control of their actions is limited. The child becomes less active, the sleep/wake cycle is disrupted.

Internet addiction is a constant desire to go online and spend as much time there as possible. There are several types of Internet addiction:

1. Surfing — aimless flipping pages, clicking on different links and reading unnecessary information.
2. Gaming addiction is a constant hang-up in online games.
3. Financial dependence — there is a constant desire to buy something in an online store.
4. Gambling — frequent participation in auctions, lotteries, sweepstakes, online gambling.
5. Communication addiction is characterized by a large number of correspondence, participation in chats, forums, too many friends and subscribers on social networks that the child is not even familiar with.
6. Cybersexual addiction — frequent visits to sites with pornographic content, watching videos and photos of a sexual nature, intimate correspondence.
7. Video addiction — watching a large number of movies, TV series, videos of various subjects on the Internet. Often the viewer can't even tell what the video was about.

Recently, this addiction is increasingly observed in children and adolescents. The main symptom is the desire to go online at any free moment. The eye is glued to the smartphone for a very long time or a lot of time is spent at the computer without a specific purpose. Often the reaction to irritating factors around disappears, and any attempts to distract the addict from this activity causes aggression or hysteria.

On average, teens spend nine hours a day online, which is about six hours a day more for children aged from eight to twelve. Even teenagers themselves worry about how much time they spend on their phones. A study organized by Pew found that 60 % of teens aged 13—17 consider Internet overuse a “serious” problem for their age group, and 54 % say they spend too much time on their phones. This data shows that not every teenager glued to their phone is addicted to the Internet. However, there are some teens who take their Internet use to the extreme, spending more than nine hours online and turning their smartphones into life-saving tools.

Internet addiction can be difficult to diagnose, as many young people use the Internet every day. In addition, the Internet is beginning to become a major part of primary and secondary school education. However, there are some common signs of Internet addiction in adolescents.

If your child exhibits any of the following signs or behaviors, they may have an Internet addiction:

1. The child conceals the amount of time they spend on the Internet.
2. The Internet is positioned above other hobbies.
3. The daily routine is ignored.
4. The child expresses joylessness or irritability without the Internet.
5. Most often they spend their free time at the computer and rarely go outside.
6. The child does not tell the parents about their interests, may lie to them.

7. Memory and attention deteriorate.
8. The child doesn't respond to requests.
9. The child stops taking care of themselves, becomes sloppy.

The first step to getting rid of Internet addiction in a teenager is to admit that the problem exists. Then it's important to talk to them about the problem. Make sure they know that you are not attacking them, but are worried about their health. Coordinate an action plan with your child and start creating boundaries, without excluding the Internet from their life completely.

After the conversation, it's time to act. Talk to your child's doctor about the next steps for your teenager. Ultimately, a doctor may discover underlying mental health issues that require treatment. Therapy can also be a useful form of treatment in helping teens understand their Internet addiction.

Conclusion. The problem of Internet addiction is one of the most urgent at the moment. Teenagers are in great danger when interacting with the Internet, as they represent the most vulnerable audience. They are less able than adults to filter the amount of information that the Internet gives them. There are several factors influencing the development of Internet addiction. Especially among them, the personal factor stands out: an unformed or unstable psyche, lack of self-control skills, dissatisfaction with real life, the desire to compensate for unrealized life needs make a person more susceptible to the development of dependence on the Internet. Most of these qualities are inherent in a teenager who does not fully know how to control their needs and desires. Computer culture education, proper time allocation, self-education of users — this is the antidote to Internet addiction.

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