



# INFO-PARENTS



## INTERNET & VIDEO GAMES

### Is your child's screen use becoming a problem?

There's no denying that the internet has a lot to offer. It's easy to use, it's always available from virtually anywhere, and it's affordable – if not free. It's also full of apps, platforms and games that can quickly monopolize our time and energy without us even realizing it. There are, however, some pitfalls to avoid.

You may have heard of terms like “device addiction,” “cyberaddiction” or “internet addiction.” They all refer to the excessive or problematic use of screens, whether it be the internet, social networks or video games – all widespread phenomena in our society today.

**Are you worried about your child's screen use? Should you be? The following questions can help you better gauge the situation:**

- ✔ Does your child have other sources of enjoyment in life besides video games or the internet?
- ✔ Is your child able to limit the amount of time he or she spends on the internet when there are more important things to do, like homework, or when there are opportunities to spend time with friends (such as going to the movies or playing sports)?
- ✔ Is screen time starting to affect your child's grades?
- ✔ Would your child rather be in the virtual world than doing family activities or hanging out with friends?

The problematic use of technology (device addiction) is no different from any other type of addiction. Once it sets in, it causes feelings of discomfort, anxiety and sometimes, even pain. It is linked to an overwhelming need to be online or to play games in order to relieve negative emotions.

### Recent statistics show that:

- > 42% of children under the age of 9 and 55% of young people between the ages of 10 to 13 have their own smartphone with an internet connection.
- > This number jumps to 77% for teens over the age of 14.
- > What's more, 1 in 5 Quebecers between the ages of 12 and 24 spends 35 hours or more per week in front of screens for entertainment purposes alone.
- > It is estimated that nearly 18% of high school students are at risk of developing problematic internet use.



## TAKING THINGS FURTHER *with your teen*

### Here are some tips to avoid abuse:

- ✔ Set up the computer in a busy place;
- ✔ Limit screen time;
- ✔ Do activities as a family;
- ✔ Keep an eye on what your child is doing on devices;
- ✔ Set a password on devices.

We invite you to consult this website for further information:  
[ProtectKidsOnline.ca](https://ProtectKidsOnline.ca)



**SOURCE :**  
L'utilisation problématique d'Internet : de la prévention à l'intervention, Programme de formation continue en toxicomanie, 17 mars 2023

### Help is at hand:

If your child or someone you know is having difficulties with screen use at home, or if you would like more information on the subject, do not hesitate to contact the addiction prevention worker from your local school or Health Services. People can also contact us anonymously for support or an assessment of the problem.

If your child or someone you know is having difficulty asserting themselves or expression their emotions, or if you would like more information on the subject, do not hesitate to contact the addiction prevention worker at the school. You can also anonymously refer someone for support.

Material developed by Action Toxicomanie, a non-profit organization that actively works to prevent addiction in young people between the ages of 10 and 30 living in the regions of Mauricie and Centre-du-Québec, by encouraging them to adopt healthy life choices and by providing support to their parents and others in their life.

Tel-jeunes (youth hotline):  
1.800.263.2266

Parents' Line: 1.800.361.5085

If you have questions or need help, please reach out to: