

Navigating Digital Stress



We're more interconnected than ever with cell phones, laptops, apps and DMs. There's a mountain of information at our fingertips. You want to keep up! So you're constantly checking devices – at practice, while you're doing homework, and at three in the morning.

Some can handle this, but others experience what's called digital stress, which can negatively affect our minds and bodies. Digital stress is related to balancing the use of phones, social media, screen time,

video games, and other "instant" media. It's important to monitor how technology affects our health and well-being. It can alter sleep, mood, cause addictive behaviour, and damage relationships.

Before Video

Prior to watching the video, you may wish to engage in a discussion about what "digital stress" is. To prompt deeper thinking prior to watching the video, you may ask questions such as:

1. *When someone says "digital stress" what does that mean to you?*
2. *How many digital devices do you have in your house (cell phones, Ipads, laptops, connected devices, game devices)?*
3. *Which digital devices do you use the most?*
4. *How much time do you think you spend on your digital devices?*
5. *How does your digital time break down – schoolwork, social media, personal use, internet, etc.?*

You may ask students to brainstorm some positive ways digital technology impacts our lives. You may also want to discuss with them some of the challenges digital technology has on daily life.

After Video

You may wish to discuss how much the students use digital technology in school (classroom, during lunch, school events) and outside of school (home, friend's house, bus, etc.). Reviewing the information with your students may spark deeper reflection. You may also want to ask how many digital devices are being used in the house by other family members. Here are some questions that may prompt further discussion:

1. *What are healthy ways we use digital technology?*
2. *What are some unhealthy ways we use digital technology?*
3. *How would you know if your digital device usage is getting in the way of school, personal life, family or your health?*
4. *How do you feel when you do not have access to your digital device?*
5. *If you have difficulty putting down your devices, what could you do or where do you think you can go for help?*

Resources

Here are some additional resources that you can share with your students:

1. *For immediate support, reach out to school staff such as your teacher or school counsellor*
2. **Kids Help Line:** 1.800.668.6868 or text CONNECT to 686868
3. **Fraser Health Crisis Line:** 604.951.8855 or 1.877.820.7444 (toll-free)
4. www.erase.gov.bc.ca
5. www.foundrybc.ca
6. www.keltymentalhealth.ca