

EMPOWERING TEENS THROUGH DIGITAL DETOX

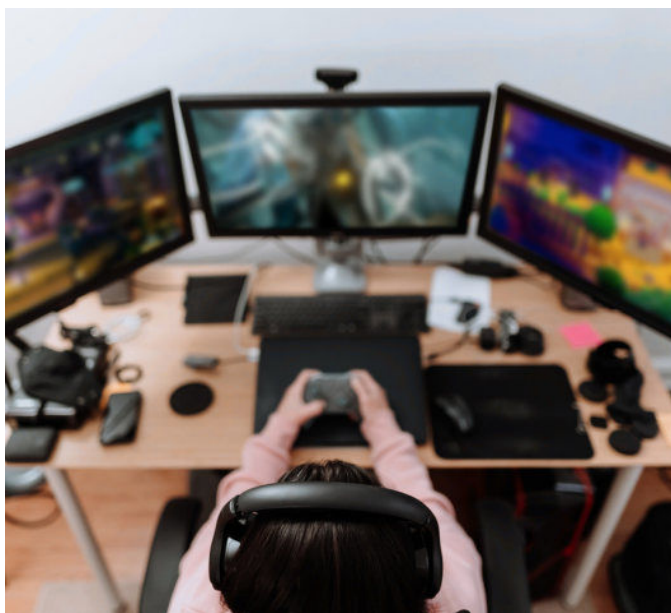


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Nowadays, we live in a world full of screens and digital gadgets. The idea of a "digital detox" for teens is important to parents, teachers, and health experts. Teens are using technology more from a young age. People worry about how this may affect their growth, happiness, and how they get along with others.

Teens' addiction to digital gadgets can stem from various factors, including:

- Digital devices give quick rewards, like social media likes or game points. This can make you feel good and keep you coming back, leading to addiction.
- Social Pressure: Teens want to feel accepted by their friends. Many of their friends use digital devices often. This makes teens spend a lot of time online or on screens too.



- Escapism: Digital gadgets escape boredom, stress, or other negative emotions. Teens may turn to screens as a coping mechanism to avoid dealing with real-life challenges or emotions.
- Endless Content: The internet has unlimited entertainment, information, and interactive activities. It's easy for teens to become absorbed and forget about time.
- Lack of Boundaries: Parents or caregivers sometimes don't set clear limits on screen time. This can cause teens to form habits of using devices too much.
- Design Features: Digital platforms and apps use addicting features. These include notifications, autoplay, and infinite scrolling. They keep teens engaged for a long time. This makes it hard for teens to stop using them.

· **Parental Influence:** Teens often model their behaviour after their parents or caregivers. Teens are likelier to emulate this behaviour if adults frequently use digital gadgets.

· **Educational Use:** Even educational content can become addictive if not adequately balanced with other activities. Teens may become overly dependent on digital devices for learning, neglecting other important aspects of their development.



Knowing these factors helps parents, educators, and caregivers. They can act early to lower the risk of teens getting addicted to digital devices. They can also encourage better tech habits.

This practice aims to balance teens' lives. It offers them chances to do activities that grow their creativity and imagination. These activities also encourage physical activity and talking with others face-to-face. It helps them reduce stress and understand the importance and liveliness of social interaction in the physical world. It can be useful for their holistic growth and development to lead a blissful, contented life.



Let's talk about how addiction to digital devices harms teens. This includes their physical, mental, and social-emotional health.

- **Increased Screen Time.** Teens are using digital devices like smartphones, tablets, and computers more than ever. They spend a lot of time on activities that involve screens.
- **Physical Health Issues and Sleep Disruption:** Excessive screen time can lead to various physical health problems, including eye strain, headaches, neck and back pain. Due to exposure to blue light emitted by screens, especially before bedtime the sleep patterns get affected. Using digital devices late at night can harm sleep quality. This may cause tiredness and irritability. It can also make it hard to focus during the day.

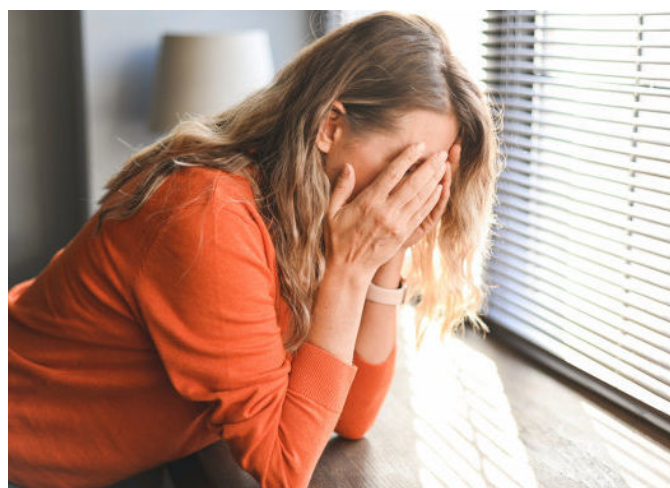




- **Sedentary Lifestyle:** Sitting and looking at screens for long hours lowers the amount of physical activity teens get. This increases their risk of becoming obese and facing related health problems.
- **Impact on Brain Development:** Using digital devices for a long time can impact how the brain develops. This mainly affects attention, memory, and decision-making skills. These changes can harm cognitive abilities and school performance.
- **Decline in Social Skills:** Too much time on screens can slow the growth of important social skills. These include understanding others' feelings, talking well, and solving disagreements. Teens might not spend enough time talking directly with others. Instead, they often end up alone, focused on their devices.



- **Emotional Distress:** Digital addiction can lead to emotional issues like stress, anxiety, and depression in teens. This occurs for a few reasons. People feel negative when they compare themselves to others online. They may also experience cyberbullying. Or, they fear they are missing out on online activities, known as FOMO.
- **Poor Academic Performance:** Too much screen time can harm learning and attention. This can lower grades and make it hard to concentrate on tasks, both in school and elsewhere.



Several factors drive this trend. Digital content is easy to access. Technology has become a part of daily life, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, peers and media have a significant influence.

These effects show why it's important to set healthy limits on screen time. It's key to balance digital activities and real-world experiences. Also, it's crucial to offer guidance and support. This helps teens build responsible and mindful technology habits.

A digital detox for teens involves:

- Choosing to limit or avoid using electronic devices and screens for a set time to encourage better habits.
- Fostering real-world connections.
- Encouraging alternative forms of play and learning.
- Digital Detox is a time when someone stops using electronic devices. This includes Smartphones, video games, and Computers.
- Let's work towards setting a new trend **"Break free of your devices and go on a digital detox"**



First Detox rule:

Go slow. Don't set unachievable targets

Detox Steps:

- Make a gadget list and check whether they are needed
- There is a lot of time for only required gadgets
- Try 'phone stacking' in a social meeting or family meal.
- Make an effort to teach teens to give attention to others.
- Find a detox buddy for teens, or you can be the buddy.
- Leave your gadgets at home when not necessary so that teens will follow you.
- If nothing helps don't shy away from taking a counsellor support. Their therapies work well for severe addiction cases. This is when parents or teens can't detox by themselves.



Conclusion

Digital Detox is a slow-down. It leads to inner peace and a healthier life.

Parents have the power to give their teens the gift of balance in the digital age. They do this through careful guidance and thoughtful decisions. Together, we can start this journey. Our goal is a future where our teens do well both online and offline. Though the parents need to be the change they want to see in their teens.



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