
July 2024

Embracing the Digital Detox: Navigating Mental Wellness in the Digital Age

Mental Health Series



When was the last time you were without your phone?

What teens have to say... In today's fast-paced digital age, a digital detox is more than just a temporary escape from screens; it's a mindful choice to recharge and foster healthier digital habits. Teens today are increasingly recognizing the need to step away from their devices. A digital detox is simply taking a break from digital devices for a set period of time. It could be for a few hours a day, a whole day, or even a weekend a month. The aim is a break from screen time to create healthier digital habits and less smartphone dependence. Teens and youth are joining the digital detox trend as they notice or become aware of their dependence on devices. More and more kids say they need to be maintaining a healthy relationship with technology. Some of today's youth are doing this to reclaim their mental well-being, strengthening relationships, and rediscover the joys of the offline world.

Unplugging for wellness: Many youth, teens and parents are discovering that too much screen time can negatively impact their mental and emotional well-being. What's more, the research backs them up. Evidence from a variety of cross-sectional, longitudinal and empirical studies implicate smartphone and social media use - increase in mental distress, self-harm behavior and suicidality among youth.

How to take control: The first step is making small achievable goals when it comes to taking back control of our mental health and wellness by unplugging. It's a good idea to set boundaries, take breaks, and prioritize face-to-face communication. Another big one is ensuring adequate sleep, making sure your phone or devices are not keeping you up at night. Some report that by regaining control over technology use they notice daily stress reduced.

How can parents help: Adults can model healthy behaviors for youth by taking breaks from their devices and setting their own digital detox goals. Parents who are successful in empowering their kids to take a digital detox encourage activities that don't involve screens. Spend quality time together doing outdoor activities, playing board games, or pursuing hobbies that don't involve digital devices. The key is to provide alternative entertainment.

Take the Digital Detox Challenge

- #1 CONNECT WITH NATURE
- #2 NO PHONES AT MEALS
- #3 UNINSTALL SOCIAL MEDIA FROM YOUR PHONE FOR A DAY
- #4 TAKE A HALF DAY WITHOUT YOUR PHONE
- #5 MAKE BEDROOMS NO PHONE ZONES FOR BETTER SLEEP
- #6 USE AIRPLANE MODE or DO NOT DISTURB MODE WHEN NEEDED
- #7 SET INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVABLE UNPLUGGING GOALS



Featured Articles

Statistics advisory on social media and youth mental health:

- Teens who spent more than 3 hours per day on social media faced **double the risk of experiencing poor mental health** outcomes.
- Nearly half of teens ages 13 to 17 said **using social media makes them feel worse.**
- **Almost 60% of teenage girls** say they've been contacted by a stranger on social media platforms in ways that make them feel uncomfortable.
- According to a survey of 8th and 10th graders, the average time spent on social media is 3.5 hours per day and almost 15% (**1 in 7**) **spends 7+ hours per day on social media.**
- **Excessive social media use** has been linked to sleep problems, attention problems, and feelings of exclusion among teenagers.
- In a review of 36 studies, a **consistent relationship was found between cyberbullying on social media and depression** among children of all ages.



For helpful parenting resources visit:
[ParentGuidance.org](https://www.ParentGuidance.org)

In the US, the proportion of young people between the ages of 13 and 17 years who have a smartphone has reached 89%



Take a no cost course at ParentGuidance.org

Take this course that provides practical and implementable advice to parents around technology and how it's impacting our children's mental health

[Click to view](#)

Works Cited

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