



Managing The Impacts of Gaming and Technology on Youth Toolkit



September 2025

Table of Contents



Introduction	3
Youth Diversion	3
What Is This Toolkit For?	5
Stages of Change Model	6
What is Problematic Gaming/Technology Use?	8
Who Is A Youth With Problematic Gaming/Technology Use?	9
Terminology	10
Note on Gambling	11
Ways Youth Use Technology	12
Signs, Symptoms, Risk, and Protective Factors	13
Interventions	17
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Practices	18
Physical Exercise	23
Family and Group Therapy	26
Educational Interventions	29
Combination Interventions	31
Provider Tips	32
Resources	34
Logistics	43
Citations	46

DISCLAIMER: The interventions in this toolkit are recommendations generated using scientific research and input from professionals in the field. At present, there is no standardised way to identify or manage these addictions, so these recommendations should be taken as suggestions and not medical advice.

Introduction



Youth Diversion

Youth Diversion is an not-for-profit located in Kingston, Ontario committed to helping youth overcome challenges by providing prevention, intervention, and educational services that divert youth from risk and support their ability to thrive. For more information on Youth Diversion please visit: <https://www.youthdiversion.org/>.



Land Acknowledgement



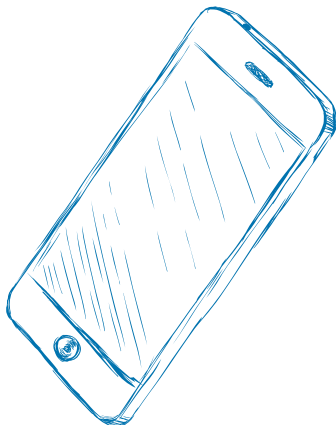
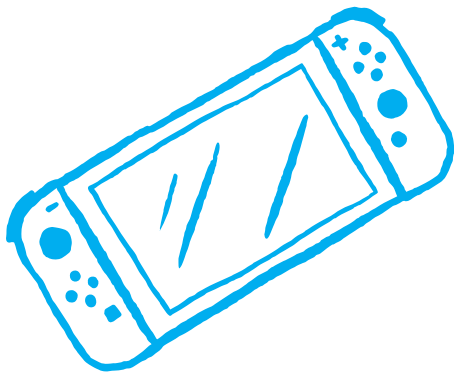
Youth Diversion is situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Territory. Our organization is grateful for the opportunity to meet and use this land. We thank all the generations of Indigenous people who have taken care of this land. We are committed to continuing to learn about our footprint on this traditional territory and to understand the long-standing history that has brought us to this land. We acknowledge the devastating impact on, and inhumane treatment of, Indigenous Peoples including the residential schools, the Sixties Scoop and the lack of clean drinking water on many reserves.

This land acknowledgment compels us to never forget that this territory is significant to Indigenous Peoples who lived and continue to live upon this land, including First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous Peoples from other nations across Turtle Island. We recognize that practices and spiritualities are tied to the land and continue to evolve and develop into the present day.

Youth Diversion recognizes that truth and reconciliation is a continuous process and while this land acknowledgment is a crucial step, our organization has much more work to do. We are committed to educating ourselves and others and building positive relationships with Indigenous Peoples and this land. We are truly thankful to be able to work and live in this territory.



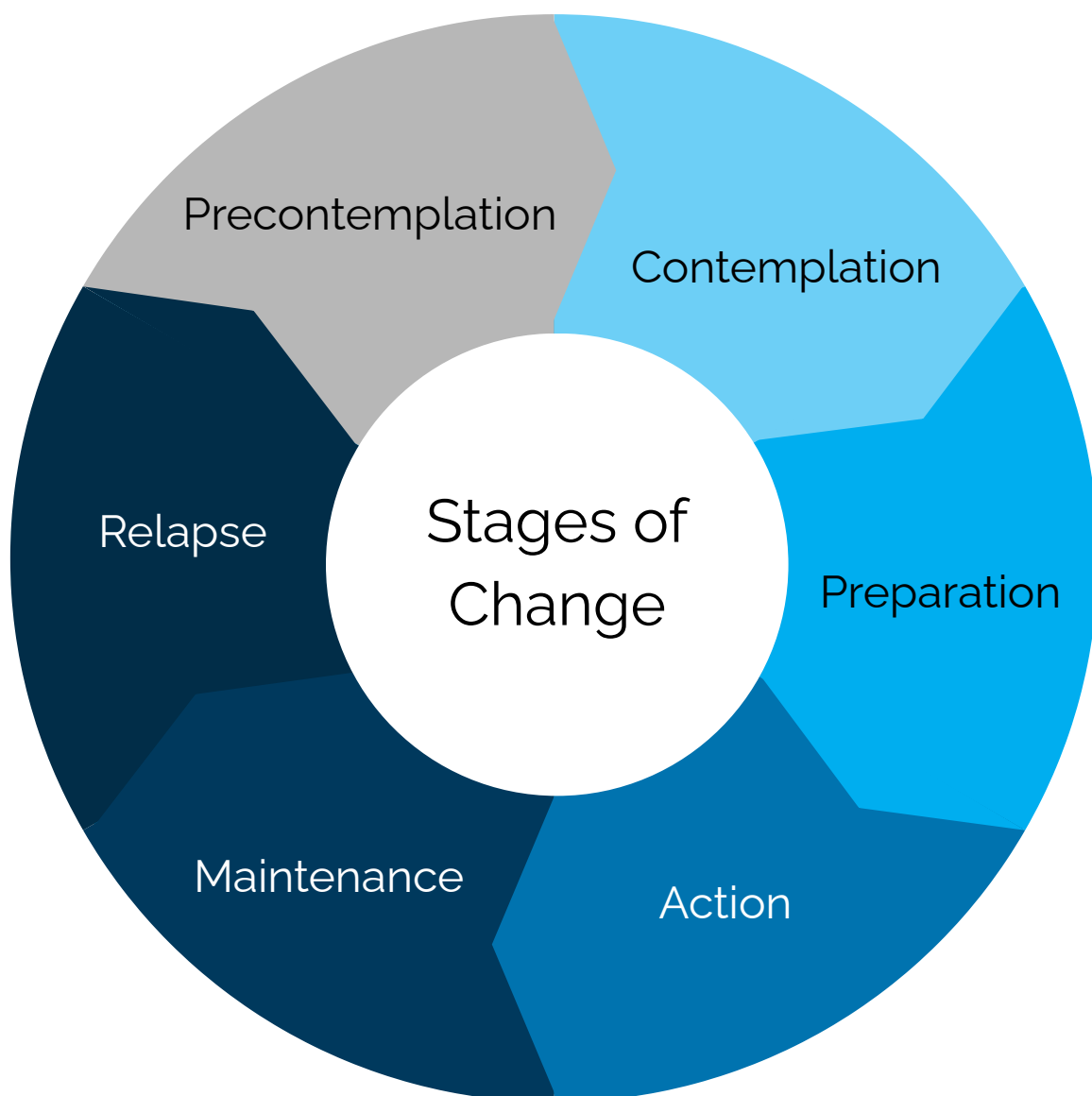
The *Managing The Impacts of Gaming and Technology on Youth Toolkit* was created to support a diverse range of frontline workers who encounter youth that are struggling with problematic gaming/technology use in their line of work. Anyone who works with this population may benefit from this resource whether they are social workers, support workers, teachers, clinicians, etc. The toolkit aims to be a comprehensive resource that contains information all the way from risk factors of problematic gaming/technology use to management techniques.



Stages of Change Model



Throughout this toolkit, the stages of change model, also known as the transtheoretical model, will be frequently referenced.¹ Given the lack of information on the topic, it is difficult to establish timelines when working with youth who struggle with problematic gaming/technology use. As a result, we instead recommend that care providers use this model to guide a youth through recovery.



Stages of Change Model



Precontemplation: The youth is not considering change, they are aware of few negative consequences, and are unlikely to take action soon.¹

Contemplation: The youth is aware of some pros and cons of their problematic gaming/technology use but has mixed feelings about change. This youth has not yet decided to commit to change.¹

Preparation: This stage begins once the youth has decided to change and begins to plan steps toward recovery.¹

Action: The user tries new behaviors, but these are not yet stable. This stage involves the first active steps toward change.¹

Maintenance: The youth establishes new behaviors on a long-term basis.¹

Relapse: Help the patient renew the processes of contemplation and action without becoming stuck or demoralised.²



What Is Problematic Gaming/Technology Use?

Problematic gaming/technology use falls under a subset of addictions called *behavioural addictions* or *process addictions*.³ These addictions manifest similarly to substance use addictions in the way that they can become uncontrollable, all-consuming, and have significant negative impacts on an individual's daily functioning.⁴ Research on this topic is relatively new, and as a result, gambling addictions are the only officially recognized condition by the DSM-5; Internet Gaming Disorder is classified as a condition warranting further study.⁵ Despite this, there remains significant controversy to whether problematic gaming/technology use should be classified as an addiction.⁶

Consequently, there are no officially recommended screening tools or management techniques for navigating problematic gaming/technology use in youth. While there are over 50 screening tools/criteria used in research, including one from the DSM-5 itself, there remains debate surrounding each tool's validity.⁷ This, however, does not make the other types of behavioural addictions less prevalent, they are still an issue faced by the youth population.⁵

Who Is A Youth With Problematic Gaming/Technology Use?



Youth Diversion's KAIROS substance use and addiction service has been serving youth for over 50 years, and in the past several years we have been seeing a sharp and steady increase in youth who have problematic gaming/technology use.

The youth population, defined as those aged 25 and below, are at the highest risk of developing problematic gaming/technology use.⁸ As they are at a phase of development in their physical, intellectual, and emotional realms they are left particularly vulnerable.

Harm Reduction

Harm Reduction is a topic often discussed when working with individuals with substance use disorders. However, as can be seen with this toolkit, harm reduction approaches can also extend to other forms of addictions. The interventions recommended in this toolkit all focus on reducing the harms and leveraging benefits of technology.



When working with youth and families it is critical to keep in mind your positionality as a practitioner. Youth with problematic gaming/technology use face stigma, and as a result, must be approached with caution and care.⁹ Ensure that you self-reflect and acknowledge any unconscious biases you may hold before proceeding with this work.

Terminology

Terms used both in research and practice for youth struggling with gaming and technology use vary widely. Some commonly used terms are:

- Gaming/Technology Addiction¹⁰
- Internet Gaming Disorder¹¹
- Mobile Phone Addiction¹²
- Problematic Internet Use Disorder¹³

At present there is no standardised term for this issue, and as a result you will likely see these terms used interchangeably.

It is important to be mindful of language when approaching this topic with youth, as some terms such as “addiction” are stigmatized and may decrease desire to engage with services.⁹



“Game-bling” addictions are a form of addiction in which the mechanism of gambling is through a video game.¹⁴ The convergence of gambling and gaming is an actively developing field.¹⁵ Some research advocates that regulating the way gaming is used by a youth may decrease gambling.¹⁵

In the youth population, gambling addictions are deeply intertwined with problematic gaming/technology use.¹⁴ While this toolkit was unable to cover gambling due to resource limitations, organizations such as the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and Youth Gambling Awareness Program (YGAP) through the YMCA provide services and educational resources.^{14,16}



Ways Youth Use Technology



Youth use technology for a diverse range of reasons. Some of the uses include but are not limited to:

Communication, Socialization, and Connection¹⁷:

- Texting
- Direct messaging
- Facetime
- Snapchat
- In-game voice chats
- Discord

Media and Entertainment Consumption¹⁷:

- Tiktok
- Youtube
- X
- Instagram
- Reddit
- Gaming

Education and Employment¹⁸:

- Distance learning
- Khan Academy
- Career research

Identity Exploration and Formation

Youth are often at a phase of self-discovery that can be heavily influenced by their technology usage.¹⁸ For example, a youth may present themselves on social media in an attempt to achieve clarity regarding their identity. Another youth may consume content related to their interests to solidify their interests as part of their identity.¹⁸ Ultimately, the impacts of technology on youth and the reasons youth use technology are deeply intertwined with one another.

Signs, Symptoms, Risk, and Protective Factors



Signs of Problematic Gaming/Technology Use



Difficulty controlling gaming/technology usage¹⁹



Prioritizing gaming/technology use over other interests/activities¹⁹



Continuing or increasing use despite negative consequences¹⁹



Utilizing gaming/technology as a coping mechanism for feelings of stress or anxiety¹³



Green Zone²⁰

In the modern world it is virtually impossible to expect complete abstinence from a youth with a gaming/technology addiction. Not only is technology integrated in nearly every aspect of our daily lives, but depending on the way it's used, it can also become a positive tool in a youth's life. Instead of aiming for complete use cessation, providers should aim to establish a "green zone" with their youth, where they reach a point of being able to manage and regulate their technology use.

Symptoms of Problematic Gaming/Technology Use



Loneliness, social isolation, and impaired relationships with family and friends^{13,21}



Aggressive speech and behaviour to their surroundings and to others²¹



Emotional distress in the form of feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression²¹



Physical manifestations such as headaches, eye strain, fatigue, and insomnia as a result of overuse²¹



Impaired cognitive abilities such as memory loss and decreased concentration²¹



Negative impacts on mental health in the form of self-harm, suicidal ideations, and attempted suicide¹³



Protective factors are aspects of a youth's life that can help prevent or decrease the progression of problematic technology use. Ensure you identify what protective factors exist or could be added to your youth's life to support them.

Psychological Wellbeing



Youth feels a sense of purpose and are satisfied with their life.²²

Behavioral and Personality Factors

Youth is extraverted with an agreeable personality. They exhibit signs of self-control, resilience, and positive self-esteem.²²

Social Supports

Youth is part of a recreation-orientated family. They experience a positive school environment and feel well-connected.²²

Older Age



Older youth are further along in their neurological development and are at a decreased risk compared to younger youth.²²

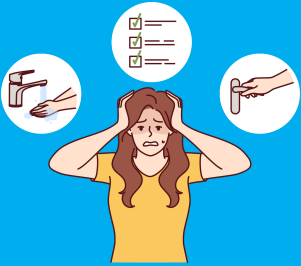


Sex

Males are at an increased risk for problematic gaming/technology use compared to females.²³



Mental Health



Individuals with Attention Hyperactive Deficit Disorder (ADHD) or Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) are at an increased risk.²³

Behavior, Personality, and Family²³

- Hostile, aggressive, or disagreeable demeanour
- Narcissism
- Difficulty regulating emotions and impulses
- Low self-esteem, social anxiety, and difficulty socializing
- Family dysfunction and poor parental care

Technology

Amount of time spent on technology, being a younger age when they started using technology, and the money spent on technology all increase a youth's risk of developing problematic use.²³

Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions



Cognitive
Behavioral
Therapy and
Practices

Physical
Exercise

Family-Based
and
Group-Based
Therapies

Educational
Interventions

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Literature and Working Group Recommendation



Note: Formal CBT can only be delivered by a licensed mental health professional licensed to provide the legal act of psychotherapy.

What Is CBT

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a form of talk therapy designed to help clients identify problematic thought patterns and teach them healthy coping and management techniques to resolve them.²⁰ While the research on the CBT for gaming/technology addictions ranges, the overall goal is always to improve the symptoms associated with the addiction.²⁴

Why It Works

CBT works to directly change the way a client perceives and manages their technology use, which can improve their day-to-day emotions by reducing depressive and anxious symptoms.²⁵⁻²⁶ Additionally, learning coping mechanisms to address negative thought patterns and behaviours can gradually decrease problematic reactions such as minimal impulse control. On a biological level, CBT is found to improve functioning in areas of the brain responsible for reward processing, emotional regulation, and self-control.²⁵

Topics

Topics typically reviewed in these sessions include¹¹:

- Psychoeducation on gaming/technology use
- Technology use reduction techniques
- Healthy communication skills
- Self-control/emotional regulation skills.

Benefits and Limitations of CBT



Benefits	Limitations
CBT is a frequently used intervention for many fields, making variations of it accessible and implementable. ²⁷	Depending on the youth's location and financial status, this may be too large of a time/ economic commitment for the family.
CBT is frequently praised in technology addiction literature for having long-term impacts (over 12 months). ²⁷	Requires "buy-in" from the youth, if they are averse to therapy, they will likely not benefit from CBT. ²⁸ Depending on the youth's environment, there may be more stigma associated with traditional therapy than perhaps physical exercise. ²⁹
CBT is the intervention with the most research supporting its use for technology addictions. ¹¹	Since CBT is such a popular choice in other fields, having more empirical data may simply be a reflection that it is a gold-standard and not that it is more effective than other interventions.

Provider Tips

For providers, by providers



CBT

Buy-in Concerns

A major limitation with CBT for youth with problematic gaming/technology use is a lack of “buy-in”. When presenting CBT to youth ensure that you use youth-friendly tactics, for example:



Provide a non-therapy option such as psychoeducation prior to CBT to help overcome a lack of buy-in caused by distrust or stigma associated with traditional therapy.



Integrate cognitive behavioural practices, such as motivational interviewing, into sessions before launching into formal CBT. When doing so, focus on improving the youth’s buy-in by increasing their self-awareness surrounding their difficulties.



Ensure you utilize alternatives to talk-therapy such as roleplay or drawing pictures.



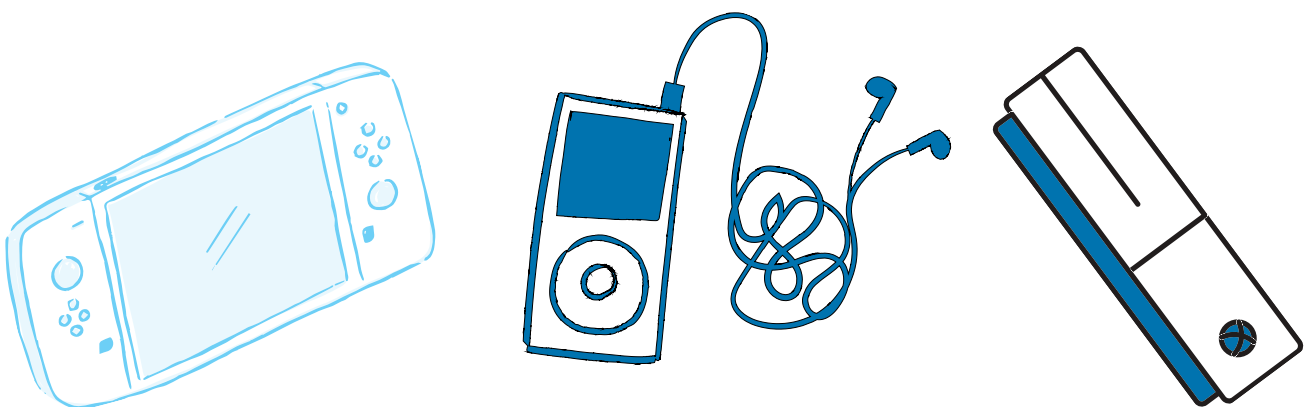
These practices are rooted in the same principles as CBT but have more flexibility in terms of who can deliver them. The ones listed below comprise only a few of the options available:

Motivational Interviewing

Working group recommendation

Motivational interviewing is a form of therapy designed to help the youth overcome the internal turmoil of simultaneously wanting to and not wanting to change (ambivalence).³⁰ It draws upon the phrase “ready, willing, and able” to communicate the basic principles of the therapy. As a result, MI aims to instill the importance of change, their ability to change, and whether change is an immediate priority for the youth.³⁰

In MI, the provider is viewed as a facilitator who guides the youth through their own intrinsic values rather than an expert who educates them.³⁰





Positive Psychology *Literature Recommendation*

Research on the impact of positive psychology to support youth with problematic gaming/technology use focuses on youth who struggle with social interaction.²⁴ Positive psychological methods are based on the idea that gaming/technology use addictions are a maladaptive coping mechanism that can be replaced with positive thinking patterns.³¹ This intervention focuses on increasing the youth's self-awareness surrounding their gaming/technology use and restructuring their reactions to perceived social stressors. As an intervention based from CBT, positive psychology utilizes modified versions of formal CBT tools such as the Thought-Feeling-Action Chain, Social Interaction Habit Diary, and Exposure Ladder.³¹

Arts Therapy *Working Group and Literature Recommendation*

Arts therapy allows a youth to navigate their cognitions and emotions through a safe artistic outlet.³² An important aspect of working with youth who have problematic gaming/technology usage is diverting them to more prosocial activities; time spent online can be reduced if the youth are engaged in other activities such as art. While formal art therapy must be facilitated by a licensed professional, working group recommendations suggest that providers use casual art as a tool during therapy and support sessions. Literature finds the use of art therapy for gaming/technology use addictions to be most effective when paired with formal CBT.²¹



Summary

Since there is no standardization between research studies focused on physical exercise (PE) for problematic gaming/technology use, this is a broad category for interventions focused on engaging the youth in any type of movement. As a result, this category includes team sports, individual cardio, martial arts, yoga, and more. While there are no specific exercises that are recommended, sports traditionally played in pairs (tennis, badminton, beach volleyball, etc.) are found to be more effective at decreasing symptoms associated with problematic gaming/technology usage compared to single or team sports.⁴

Why It Works

PE is an intervention that is found to benefit youth psychologically, socially, and physiologically.^{4,12,24} Diverting youth with tech addictions away from their devices using prosocial activities is a widely recommended technique that is incorporated in this intervention. Furthermore, team sports allow the youth to develop social networks to ease loneliness and practice skills such as communication, teamwork, and self-regulation.¹² From the psychological and physiological perspective, exercise improves brain functionality via improved blood flow and the release of positive hormones such as serotonin and dopamine. This in turn reduces the depressive and anxious symptoms associated with gaming/technology addiction while simultaneously improving decision making, memory, and impulse control.¹²

Benefits and Limitations of Physical Exercise



Benefits	Limitations
Due to the diversity of PE, it can be made easily accessible and adapted to a youth's interests.	There is no standardized research, making it difficult to establish expectations with the family on efficacy.
Addresses multiple aspects of tech addictions simultaneously. ¹²	It does not address any of the underlying causes of addiction in the way that traditional therapy might.
Improves overall wellbeing, which will benefit the youth in all aspects of their life. ¹²	For impacts to be long-term, engagement in exercise must be maintained. ¹²

Provider Tips

For providers, by providers



Not all youth will be interested in physical exercise, and without buy-in the intervention will likely not be effective. When working with your youth ensure you have an understanding of their interests and the barriers they face.

Provide Alternatives

- If the youth is uninterested in physical exercise, provide alternative prosocial activities such as art. While art may not have the same physiological impacts that physical exercise has, it does divert the youth from their technology.
- Alternatives are also critical for supporting youth with accessibility needs. Ensure that you factor in accessibility needs when recommending physical exercise.

Community Resources

- If the youth is interested in sports but face financial barriers, ensure you explore options to help them overcome that barrier. Some examples include schools that offer seasonal intramural sports, community organizations with programming such as the YMCA or Boys and Girls Club, local sports grants, etc. Ensure that you factor the youth's mode of transportation to and from the activity into the options you provide.
- For some specific to Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox, and Addington (KFL&A), as well as some provincial options please refer to the resources section of this manual.



Summary

Family and group therapies are both forms of talk therapy that involve working through issues in a group setting as opposed to the more traditional individual setting. Family-based therapy (FBT) functions on the principle that family conflicts (whether caused or exacerbated by a youth's gaming/technology use) can worsen addiction.³³ As such, FBT focuses on improving relationships between the parent and guardian by decreasing family conflicts, improving communication, and increasing familial engagement.³³ Group therapy can rather be done with the youth or with the families. It adds a sense of social kinship and belonging that is not found in individual therapy models.²² There is no standard for the duration of sessions, number of sessions, or topics covered in a session, however, many family/group interventions are rooted in similar principles to CBT.

Why It Works

Both family and group therapy function similarly to CBT and other traditional therapy models. However, the added benefit that is found with FBT, if family conflict is an underlying cause of the addiction, it can improve home life for both the child and parent. With group therapy, individuals involved can develop social relationships and reduce feelings of loneliness³³, which is a significant risk factor and symptom of problematic gaming/technology use.²⁰

Benefits and Limitations of Family and Group Therapy



Benefits	Limitations
Can teach the parents and youth coping mechanisms, which can be employed in the long-term. ³³	Requires buy-in from both parent and youth to be successful.
Addresses home-life as an underlying risk factor for a technology addiction. ³³	Requiring all individuals to be there simultaneously can be extremely inaccessible.
Group therapy can foster social belonging for both parents and youth. ²⁰	Research on the efficacy of this intervention for youth technology addictions is lacking. ³³

Provider Tips

For providers, by providers



Organizing this intervention has significantly larger barriers compared to other options just based on the scheduling aspect alone.



If you are interested in engaging with the family, try providing workbooks or informational resources on gaming/technology addictions to the guardians. For examples please refer to the resources section of this toolkit.



If you are interested in organizing a youth group, consider hosting it online or in school to overcome accessibility barriers. Do note, the impacts of providing services for technology use addictions via technology are yet-to-be determined.

Educational Interventions

Working Group and Literature Recommendation



Summary

This form of intervention involves increasing knowledge surrounding problematic gaming/technology use in rather the youth themselves or the parents.^{11,21,34} These interventions typically involve increasing individual awareness surrounding technology use, learning how to manage technology use, developing healthy habits, and improving self-control and emotional regulation.³⁴ A diverse range of individuals can deliver these sessions such as teachers, nurses, psychologists, trained presenters, and more. There is no standardisation for topics to cover, duration/number of sessions, or presentation methods. The research surrounding this intervention is quite limited, making it difficult to draw conclusive limitations and benefits.



Provider Tips

For providers, by providers



Utilize educational interventions as a way to help kids who are in the *precontemplation* and *contemplation stage* of change move to the *preparation stage* before engaging in structured therapy.



Ensure that when working with youth, the informational session is engaging. Tools such as Kahoot, roleplay, and icebreaker games may be used to maintain youth interest.



Education

Organizations such as Mediasmarts provide all the resources necessary to facilitate an educational intervention. For examples please refer to the resources section of this toolkit.



Combination Interventions

Literature and Working Group Recommendation



Summary

Interventions used in combination such as physical exercise paired with CBT were consistently found to have superior results when compared to youth engaging in just one intervention.²⁵ If possible, consider providing the youth access to multiple interventions to improve their overall outcomes.

Provider Tips

For providers, by providers



Accessibility Concerns

When providing interventions to youth it is critical to factor in all the barriers they may face when attempting to access services, regardless of whether it is due to personal, familial, or financial circumstances. Some ways to support the youth in overcoming specific barriers are:

Awareness Accessibility: Increase community awareness of your service and how to access it by advertising it in places where youth congregate (i.e. malls, skateparks, schools, community centers, etc.)



Financial Accessibility:

- Be cognisant of the financial needs of your youth and ensure you are providing service options that range in cost.
- Be familiar with grants and government funding for interventions in your area. For some specific to Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox, and Addington (KFL&A), as well as some provincial options please refer to the resources section of this manual.
- Ensure to utilize or form partnerships with other organizations to increase service accessibility. For examples of organizations already servicing youth with gaming/technology addictions please refer to the resources section of this manual.

Provider Tips

For providers, by providers



Service Accessibility:

- Depending on geographic location, accessing certain interventions may in some cases be impossible. Ensure you provide options that can be accessed in the immediate future. Refer to remaining interventions for more accessible options.
- Provide a diverse range of access options when providing service. If possible, offer an intervention virtually to overcome transportation and physical accessibility barriers. Do note, the impacts of providing services for technology use addictions via technology are yet-to-be determined.





Cognitive Behavioral Therapy/Practices Resources

Providers who can provide CBT

- Providers who are trained to provide psychotherapy are able to deliver CBT. Some examples of licensed CBT providers are psychologists, registered psychotherapists, social workers, and physicians including psychiatrists.³⁵
- To find a licensed practitioner in your area you can use the [Academy of Cognitive and Behavioural Therapies](#) search engine.³⁶

Free CBT and Counselling Programs

CAMH YouthVAST Dependence Program

- [Youth-VAST](#) offers targeted support to help youth (age 12-21) develop healthy coping strategies, access specialized treatment, and foster resilience in managing their nicotine/vaping, substance use, and technology use.¹⁶ Youth who access the program are provided with one-on-one, ongoing support from a Care Coach and psychoeducational group sessions.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy/Practices

Resources



BounceBack

- BounceBack is a program for youth 15+ facilitated by the Canadian Mental Health Association.³⁷ Designed to help youth navigate low mood, depression, anxiety, stress or worry. BounceBack is delivered over the phone with a coach and through online videos.

OneStopTalk

- One Stop Talk is a free, confidential service that lets kids and youth under 18 years of age get immediate mental health support with a registered therapist.³⁸ Youth get paired with a therapist for a one hour session and are also referred to a chosen organisation for longer term services.

Maltby Centre Mental Health Services (KFL&A Specific)

- Maltby Centre offers counselling to children and youth (0-24 years), parents/caregivers, and families from communities in KFL&A.³⁹ In the first meeting, the client will meet with a registered psychotherapist to explore any behavioural or mental health concerns. They discuss client's knowledge, strengths, and skills to manage, as they work to determine new ideas and next steps.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy/Practices Resources



Kids Help Phone Resource Directory

- To find youth-specific resources you can search for physical or virtual well-being supports (e.g. programs, services, tools, etc.) across Canada using Kids Help Phone's directory of vetted resources.⁴⁰

The Psychology Clinic Queen's University (KFL&A Specific)

- The Psychology Clinic at Queen's offers psychological assessment, consultation, and therapy for children, adolescents, and adults.⁴¹ As part of their training to eventually become registered Psychologists, graduate students (students studying for their Master's degree or Doctorate) apply what they are learning through coursework in the Department of Psychology to real-world situations. The clinic offers therapy sessions for 8 to 10 week blocks from September to April. Booster sessions may be offered in the spring/summer if indicated and there is availability.



Cognitive Behavioral Therapy/Practices Resources



Addictions and Mental Health Services Gambling Counsellors (KFL&A Specific)

- AMHS offers counselling to youth as young as twelve who struggle with gambling or gaming/technology addictions.⁴² The counsellors can offer short-term, confidential, one-on-one support where you can learn more about problem gambling/gaming, how to financially protect yourself, and create healthy boundaries. AMHS counsellors will also support in reviewing options for moving forward, including additional referrals if needed.

Cognitive Behavioural Practices Informational Resources

- Pages 41-45 of this CBT information guide created by CAMH has a list of cognitive behavioural approaches that you can draw inspiration from when working with your youth.⁴³ Please keep in mind these approaches are not specific to youth or problematic gaming/technology use.
- The Essentials of Motivational Interviewing Series is a resource created by the Canadian Center on Substance Use and Addiction.³⁰ It contains a step-by-step guide for conducting motivational interviewing, along with links to additional resources. Please keep in mind these approaches are not specific to youth or problematic gaming/technology use.

Physical Exerise Intervention Resources



Examples of Low Cost/Easily Accessible Sports



Basketball and Soccer - Requires a ball and access to a net, there are typically nets located at schools and public parks.



Running - Requires running shoes, can be done anywhere.



Yoga - Can be done using Youtube video instructions.



Biking - Youth can access an affordable bike and helmet through local organizations (example GearUp in Kingston).



Rollerblading - Many thrift stores sell rollerblades at reduced prices; ensure the youth also have access to a helmet.

Physical Exercise Intervention Resources



Swimming- Youth can acquire a swimsuit at a thrift store at reduced cost. Many local organizations will have free or low cost youth-specific pool access during different times of the year. Check with your local YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, Aquatics Center, or post-secondary institution.

Sports funding opportunities/grants

KidSport Ontario Provincial Fund

- Grants to kids from families facing financial barriers so they can participate in registered sport programs.⁴⁴ KidSport Ontario provides grants of up to \$250 per eligible kid, per year (January 1st - December 31st) towards sport registration fees. If the child needs equipment, they will make a referral to a partner agency.

Jumpstart Individual Child Grants

- Jumpstart provides families with financial assistance to get their kids (4-18) into a sport or physical activity.⁴⁵ To be eligible for funding for one or more children, families must first meet specific financial criteria as per Revenue Canada's Low-Income Cut-Offs (LICO) chart. The maximum amount of funding per application is \$300.

Physical Exercise Intervention Resources



Ontario Growing Up Through Sports (GUTS) Fund

- GUTS offers financial assistance to low-income families across communities in Ontario.⁴⁶ To be eligible for funding for one or more children, families must first meet specific financial criteria as per Revenue Canada's Low-Income Cut-Offs (LICO) chart. The maximum funding amount is \$200 per activity.

Their Opportunity Sports Subsidy Program

- Their Opportunity has a sports subsidy program that provides funding to youth to enroll in a sport.⁴⁷ To qualify for a sports subsidy families must fall within the financial criteria as per Revenue Canada's Low income measure (LIM) thresholds by income source and household size.

Organizations That Provide Sports in Kingston

Boys and Girls Club South East Sports League

- BGC offers free sports leagues for youth aged 13-18 during the fall, winter, and spring seasons.⁴⁸
- They also offer free drop in access to their fitness center from Monday-Friday after 3pm.



Physical Exercise Intervention Resources

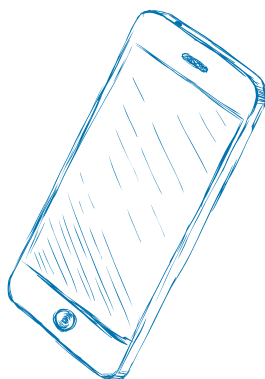


SPARK Fitpass Kingston

- Subsidy Program for Affordable Recreation in Kingston (SPARK) is here to help eligible people in Kingston save money on recreational and leisure programs.⁴⁹ Can be used to pay for programs, memberships or single-use passes. It is given out on a first-come, first-served basis until the yearly budget is used up. Each eligible family member can receive an annual SPARK Fit Pass membership and up to \$300 in support from SPARK every calendar year.

Kingston Get Active ActivPass

- From September 26, 2024 through August 31, 2025, grade 5 and 9 students in public and private schools in the greater Kingston area can use their ActivPass.⁵⁰ Students can enjoy activities such as swimming, ice skating, curling and use of gymnasiums or fitness centres at participating organizations.





Informational and Financial Resources

Mediasmarts

- MediaSmarts develops digital media literacy programs and resources for Canadian homes, schools and communities. Their work falls into three main areas: education, public awareness, and research and policy. Their website houses tools, information, and resources for both parents and teachers.

Recovery Alberta Gaming Recommended Educational Resources

- This document contains resources, including websites, videos, books, and academic articles that service providers may find helpful while supporting children, youth, and families facing challenges around problematic gaming (51).

Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth Mental Health Addictions Resource Hub

- This resource hub includes a plethora of resources for providers to educate themselves and others on technology use in the child and youth population (52).



Methods

The toolkit and its associated recommendations were created by compiling scientific literature and reviewing them with a multidisciplinary board made up of youth support workers, physicians, researchers, families, and youth. The scientific articles reviewed in this toolkit were generated using the following databases: Medline, Web of Science, and Proquest. All studies were some form of review (systematic review, meta analysis, etc.) and were screened based on predetermined inclusion criteria. Information was extracted by three independent reviewers who recorded population, terminology, interventions, screening tools, and results in a spreadsheet. The interventions evaluated in the literature were then presented at a structured multidisciplinary focus groups to collect the feedback of frontline workers and individuals with lived experiences. The interventions presented in this toolkit are a result of merging the focus group feedback with scientific literature.



Limitations

The creation of this toolkit was accompanied by a plethora of limitations. Firstly, due to a significant lack of standardization in scientific literature on this topic, it was impossible to conduct a formal comparison between studies. As a result, this toolkit can not recommend one intervention as superior to others. Furthermore, there seems to be no validated screening tool for gaming/technology use addictions, as reviewers recorded over 50 different screening tools between studies. Additionally, while this toolkit is designed for Ontario Canada, a majority of the research is conducted in East Asia, potentially limiting the generalizability of the results. Finally, there was significant difficulty in identifying and connecting with field experts due to both the novelty of the topic and the limited resources of community organizations.



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