

iKeepSafe iHealth Curriculum

HEALTHY TECH CHOICES: AVOIDING ADDICTIONS, PART 1

Purpose

To help students realize the addictive nature of pornography and other online activities and to inspire them to be free of addiction.

Key concepts

- Aspects of online life can be addictive
 - Addiction changes a person
 - Your life is better without addiction
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Grades: Appropriate for Grades 8-10

Time required: 45 minutes

Preparation

Equipment needed: projected video screen, computer with presentation loaded (filename: IKS iHealth, Internet Addiction Curriculum, Part 1), dry erase board and markers, Student Handout #1 or #2 for each student.

Notes to Presenter:

- The PowerPoint® presentation in this curriculum includes slides to be used in this lesson (Part 1) and Part 2. *There is only one presentation.*
 - Presentation contains live links to videos. The videos are not embedded in the pptx file. Before your presentation starts, queue these videos to play in your browser (Safari, Firefox, Chrome, Internet Explorer).
 - Social ‘norming’ good behavior: This presentation is designed to help you create a ‘social norm’ for teens that reinforces good behavior and avoids messages that could communicate, “Everyone is doing it.”
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Lesson Development

Introduction or Attention Activity

Idea #1: Video intro—“Fight the New Drug—What Teens Think about Pornography”
<http://vimeo.com/37398237>

Idea #2: Do you know someone who is addicted to something? Drugs, alcohol, gambling, or inappropriate things on the computer. If you can’t think of someone in real life, then think of someone in the movies.

- How do they act in their addictive state?
(insensitive, violent, selfish)
- What changed in *your* relationship with them when they became addicted?
(withdrawn, disconnected)
- What changed in their futures because of their addiction?
- What are your hopes for this person?
(That they will quit, get a job, get back to their old selves)

The people in your life care about on in the same ways. They want you to have every opportunity, every hope. You and your friends can live up to that. Even if you are in an addictive situation, you still have many tools at your disposal and can change your future.

Lesson

Addictions can develop quickly, sometimes instantly. People do not set out to get addicted. When you turn on your computer or phone, you do not think, “I’m going to become a pornography addict today.” But it does happen, and unless you see the signs, you can get trapped on a slippery slope and bind yourself in addiction.

Like other addictions, technology addictions consume your time and resources and keep you from meaningful relationships and experiences. What are some of the kinds of addictions you can think of that can happen via technology? (*Pornography, video games, compulsive surfing, texting, shopping, gambling, Facebook etc.*)

Look at this real life cigarette commercial from 50 years ago.

Show video: “Fight the New Drug—What Kind of Cigarette Do You Smoke, Doctor?”

<http://vimeo.com/29493005>

You laugh, but 50 years ago this was a serious commercial!

We didn't know what we know now about the harmful effects of tobacco. Science hadn't yet caught up with what was always true. . . Tobacco is unhealthy. Today science is just catching up with truth regarding the harmful effects of pornography. We are discovering that when it comes to the brain, addiction is addiction is addiction.

How can you know you are addicted? Ask yourself these questions:

- “Do I hide the behavior? Do I have to be secretive about it?”
- “Am I building a tolerance to the activity? Do I need more and more to have the same satisfaction?”
- “Is this affecting other areas of my life? Has my school work or sleep suffered?”
- “Do I need the activity to relax or improve my mood?”
- “Have my relationships suffered?” (friends, parents, etc.)
- “What long term effects could this have on me: physically, mentally, emotionally, socially?”

When you look at your friends and family, do you see addictive behaviors? Let’s consider some of the addictions you mentioned.

(Optional activity: Have students take the online 20 question [Internet Addiction Self Test](#). See below)

Pornography/Sexual Images

- Addiction of all kinds, including pornography addiction, shrinks the frontal lobe of the brain—the judgment center, making decision making more difficult.ⁱ
- Donald Hilton, MD—neurosurgeon—explains that the brain makes dopamine and epinephrine/adrenaline—natural drugs (chemicals) that in normal amounts help us survive in the world. It is the overload of these chemicals on the brain that causes damage and addiction. Addictions also shrink the pleasure centers of your brain, so you need more to experience the sensation.

Show video: “Fight the New Drug—Matt’s Story” <http://www.fightthenewdrug.org/Blog/Blog-Detail/Matts-Story/>

Compulsive Surfing/Texting/Digital Media Use

This includes Facebook, eBay, YouTube, eBay, Amazon, etc.

- Stanford University School of Medicine Studyⁱⁱ:
 - 1 out of 8 Americans suffer from an Internet Addiction;
 - 5.9% said excessive Internet use affected their relationships;
 - 8.2% said the Internet was a means of escape from the real world.
- A direct relationship exists between the amount of time spent surfing the Internet and the signs of depression.ⁱⁱⁱ
- The average teen sends 3000 texts a month with heavy users spiking to 7000 or higher. How does this impact your life and relationships? Is texting so important that you have to do it while driving?^{iv}

Video Games

- 1 in 10 youth become pathological gamers.
- Video game addiction can increase a child's risk of problems with depression, anxiety, and school phobia.^v
- How addiction alters a person—increased aggression, decreased sensitivity.
(Show slide of MRI scans in youth as they witness violent media. See slide note for detail.)

Wrap-Up

Dialogue with students:

Put your hand over your frontal lobe, like this. (*Put hand over your forehead and forward section of your skull.*) This is the decision-making and judgment center of your brain. Pornography and other addictions shrink the frontal lobe. How can you help each other stay addiction free? What do you do if you already feel addicted? (*Talk. Share. Tell an adult. Professional help is for everyone addicted.*)

You are too good for these things. We're going to fight addiction. We need some tools, and I want you to come up with them. Your homework (or in-class activity) is to come up with ways to fight addiction. Choose from the supplemental activities.

Supplemental Activities

THINK. PAIR. SHARE. Put students in pairs to do one of the following activities that will be presented to the class:

- Make a PowerPoint® presentation to teach important concepts on avoiding Internet addictions. (*See assignment sheet for "iKeepSafe Student Project 1."*)
- Make a poster. (*See assignment sheet for "iKeepSafe Student Project 2."*)
- Create video to submit to monthly video contest: "Fight the New Drug" Every month someone wins an iPod Touch, hoodie, and a belt buckle. (Show contest promo video: <http://vimeo.com/19488910>.)

Additional Resources

- **VIDEO** (pornography addiction): "[Fight the New Drug High School Presentation](#)" (23 minutes). This video combines three of the videos listed in this lesson with other resources and could be used instead of the PowerPoint® presentation provided. (<http://vimeo.com/20580861>)
- **VIDEO:** [Dr. Donald Hilton, neurosurgeon, explains the frontal lobe](#)—"the breaks of the brain"—and how pornography (and all addiction) shrinks the frontal lobe. Four recent medical studies confirm this. Can a brain make drugs? The brain makes dopamine and adrenaline—natural drugs/chemicals. The overload causes damage and addiction.
- [Internet Addiction Self Test](#): a free, online 20-question survey (no login required) to help students identify if they exhibit addictive behaviors with the Internet and media.
- Kimberly Young, PhD, Kindle book: *When Gaming becomes an Obsession: Help for Parents and their Children to Treat Online Gaming Addiction*, 2010.

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ⁱ Lin F, Zhou Y, Du Y, Qin L, Zhao Z, et al. (2012) Abnormal White Matter Integrity in Adolescents with Internet Addiction Disorder: A Tract-Based Spatial Statistics Study. *PLoS ONE* 7(1): e30253. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0030253

[THIS ARTICLE ONLINE HERE.](#)

ⁱⁱ Elias Aboujaoude, MD. (2006) Stanford University School of Medicine. http://med.stanford.edu/news_releases/2006/october/internet.html
Aboujaoude said he found most concerning the numbers of people who hid their nonessential Internet use or used the Internet to escape a negative mood, much in the same way that alcoholics might. "In a sense, they're using the Internet to 'self-medicate,'" he said. "And obviously something is wrong when people go out of their way to hide their Internet activity."

ⁱⁱⁱ "Link Between Excessive Internet Use And Depression" (2010, February 3). *Medical News Today*.
<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/178042.php>

^{iv} Nielsen Wire. "U.S. Teen Mobile Report: Calling Yesterday, Texting Today, Using Apps Tomorrow." *Nielsen.com*. The Nielsen Company, 14 Oct. 2010. Web. 29 Feb. 2012. <http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online_mobile/u-s-teen-mobile-report-calling-yesterday-texting-today-using-apps-tomorrow/>.

^v Pathological Video Game Use Among Youths: A Two-Year Longitudinal Study
Douglas A. Gentile, Hyekyung Choo, Albert Liau, Timothy Sim, Dongdong Li, Daniel Fung, and Angeline Khoo
Pediatrics peds.2010-1353; published ahead of print January 17, 2011, doi:10.1542/peds.2010-1353