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Holli Kenley – Addressing technology issues in MFT practice.

This is the section on my Informed Consent / Agreement for Psychotherapy where I address technology.

Cell Phone, Electronic Communications, and Social Networking Policies

I, Holli Kenley, choose not to use any type/kind of electronic communications for conducting therapy or working through any kind of therapeutic crises or situation. Therapy is conducted face to face in an office setting.

***Note:** During the COVID-19 pandemic and given the state guidelines and licensure recommendations for safety of clients and of myself, I am conducting therapy via doxyme.com. It is a HIPPA approved site. A separate informed consent will be sent to clients.

Cell phone (call or text) and electronic communications (email) will be used only for initial contact, obtaining forms, and for appointment cancellation or rescheduling.

I, Holli Kenley, maintain a social networking presence due to my work as an author, speaker, and workshop presenter. Neither You nor I agree to friend, follow, join, etc. one another's online presence or platforms. Online relationships constitute a dual relationship (see Dual Relationships).

***Cell phones, iPads, and other electronic devices are to be silenced during session and put in a place of safe-keeping. One will be provided for you if needed.**

This is part of my Adult History Form addressing screen issues.

6. Other Behavioral Addictions

Is there any history of other behavioral addictions such as sex, pornography, exercise, eating, shopping, gambling, gaming, etc.?

What is the degree of usage regarding electronic media for communication, social interaction, and entertainment (approximate hours in a day spent on all devices)?

Are any of these behavioral addictions causing distress or significant problems in specific areas of your life or in your relationships?

***Note:** For children, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends asking two questions:

How much recreational time does your child or teenager spend on all screens per day?

Are there any screens in your children's bedrooms?

Internet Addiction Test (IAT) by Dr. Kimberly Young.

Internet Addiction Test (IAT) is a reliable and valid measure of addictive use of Internet, developed by Dr. Kimberly Young. It consists of 20 items that measures mild, moderate and severe level of Internet Addiction.

To begin, answer the following questions by using this scale:-

0	Does not apply
1	Rarely
2	Occasionally
3	Frequently
4	Often
5	Always

	Question	Scale					
		1	2	3	4	5	0
1	How often do you find that you stay on-line longer than you intended?	1	2	3	4	5	0
2	How often do you neglect household chores to spend more time on-line?	1	2	3	4	5	0
3	How often do you prefer the excitement of the Internet to intimacy with your partner?	1	2	3	4	5	0
4	How often do you form new relationships with fellow on-line users?	1	2	3	4	5	0
5	How often do others in your life complain to you about the amount of time you spend on-line?	1	2	3	4	5	0
6	How often do your grades or school work suffers because of the amount of time you spend on-line?	1	2	3	4	5	0
7	How often do you check your email before something else that you need to do?	1	2	3	4	5	0
8	How often does your job performance or productivity suffer because of the Internet?	1	2	3	4	5	0
9	How often do you become defensive or secretive when anyone asks you what you do on-line?	1	2	3	4	5	0
10	How often do you block out disturbing thoughts about your life with soothing thoughts of the Internet?	1	2	3	4	5	0
11	How often do you find yourself anticipating when you will go on-line again?	1	2	3	4	5	0
12	How often do you fear that life without the Internet would be boring, empty, and joyless?	1	2	3	4	5	0
13	How often do you snap, yell, or act annoyed if someone bothers you while you are on-line?	1	2	3	4	5	0
14	How often do you lose sleep due to late-night log-ins?	1	2	3	4	5	0
15	How often do you feel preoccupied with the Internet when off-line, or fantasize about being on-line?	1	2	3	4	5	0
16	How often do you find yourself saying "just a few more minutes" when on-line?	1	2	3	4	5	0
17	How often do you try to cut down the amount of time you spend on-line	1	2	3	4	5	0

	and fail?						
18	How often do you try to hide how long you've been on-line?	1	2	3	4	5	0
19	How often do you choose to spend more time on-line over going out with others?	1	2	3	4	5	0
20	How often do you feel depressed, moody or nervous when you are off-line, which goes away once you are back on-line?	1	2	3	4	5	0

Total up the scores for each item. The higher your score, the greater level of addiction is.

20 - 49 points:

You are an average on-line user. You may surf the Web a bit too long at times, but you have control over your usage.

50 - 79 points:

You are experiencing occasional or frequent problems because of the Internet. You should consider their full impact on your life.

80 - 100 points:

Your Internet usage is causing significant problems in your life. You should elevate the impact of the Internet on your life and address the problems directly caused by you Internet usage.

Prepared & posted by Dayu Internet Overuse Solution, the solution for internet overuse and online addiction. An online version is available at <http://www.internetoveruse.com/?p=171>

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Still have questions?




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Screen Time

How much screen time is OK for my kid(s)?

Kids are spending more time with screen media -- and at younger ages -- [than ever before](#). In an effort to help families curb kids' use, groups such as the [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#) and the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) have released numerical screen limit guidelines, but the reality is that there really is no magic number that's "just right." What's more important is the quality of kids' media, how it fits into your family's lifestyle, and how you engage your kids with it.

The idea of screen time as a one-dimensional activity is changing -- even the AAP, whose screen time rules had been strictly age-based, is recognizing that not all screen time is created equal. Computers, tablets, and smartphones are multipurpose devices that can be used for lots of purposes. Even so, the World Health Organization is sticking with specific screen time amounts on the theory that sedentary activities such as playing computer games is contributing to the global obesity epidemic. However, designating device use simply as "screen time" can miss some important variations. The [Common Sense Census: Media Use by Tweens and Teens](#) identifies four main categories of screen time.

- 1 • Passive consumption: watching TV, reading, and listening to music
- 2  Interactive consumption: playing games and browsing the Internet
- 3  Communication: video-chatting and using social media
- 4  Content creation: using devices to make digital art or music

Clearly, there's a lot of difference among these activities. But as valuable as many of them can be, it's still important for kids' overall healthy development to balance their lives with enriching experiences found off screens. These tips can help:

- **Pay attention to how your kids act during and after watching TV, playing video games, or hanging out online.** If they're using high-quality, age-appropriate media; their behavior is positive; and their screen-time activities are balanced with plenty of healthy screen-free ones, there's no need to worry.
- **If you're concerned about heavy media use, [consider creating a schedule that works for your family](#).** This can include weekly screen-time limits, limits on the kinds of screens kids can use, and guidelines on the types of activities they can do or programs they can watch. Make sure to get your kids' input so the plan teaches

media literacy and self-regulation, and use this as an opportunity to discover what they like watching, introduce new shows and apps for them to try, or schedule a family movie night.

The AAP 's guidelines, released in October 2016, allow for some screen time for children younger than 2 and emphasize parental involvement for all kids. In a nutshell:

- 1 Avoid use of screen media other than video-chatting for children younger than 18 months.
- 2 If you choose to introduce media to children 18-24 months, find high-quality programming and co-view and co-play.
- 3 Limit screen use to 1 hour per day of high-quality programs for children age 2 to 5 years.
- 4 Create a family media plan with consistent rules and enforce them for older kids.

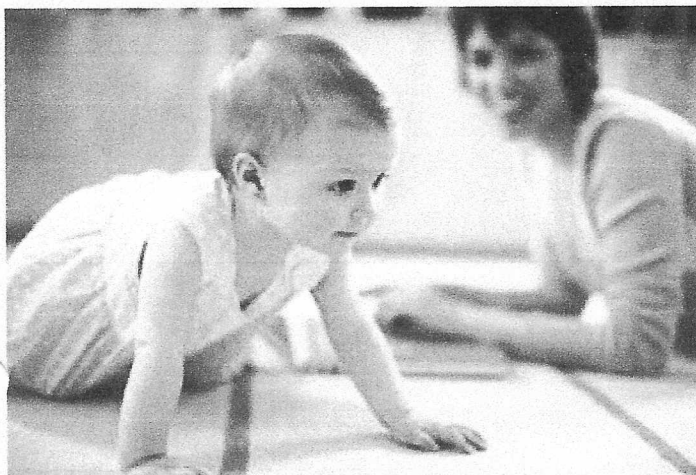
The reality is that most families will go through periods of heavy and light media use, but, so long as there's a balance, kids should be just fine.

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What Parents Can Do About TECHNOLOGY ADDICTION AT HOME

PARENTING GUIDELINES: RULES EVERY AGE

What can parents do? Children need different rules at different ages of development. Here are some 3-6-9-12 Rules for the home which parents may want to use to determine how much technology their child is exposed to.



Birth-3 years Rules: Never/Nowhere

No technology, this includes smartphones, computers, and televisions. Any screen time impairs social communication, development, and a child's attachment to the parent or other family members. If they are completely disconnected from technology, they have time to develop relationships with others and can develop other needed sensory-motor skills playing with physical toys, reading skills, and relationships with other children.

3-6 years Rules: One Hour a Day

At this age, children can be introduced to technology under careful parental supervision. Parents too often may give a child a tablet or smartphone as a sitter or a reward for good behavior. This is a crucial time in childhood development for them to learn pro-social behavior and social behavior. Keep them involved in activities outside of the computer and avoid multiplatform portable devices (e.g., phones, iPads, laptops). Watch their use in public areas of the home and block video games and questionable sites.

Appropriate activities now are:

1. Uses an eReader for storytime
2. Sorting shapes and finding hidden objects on mobile apps
3. Access to electronic toys that educate and teach numbers, letters, and vowel sounds
4. Make sure they still physically play, read books, and engage other children



6-9 years Rules: Supervised Use

Children need to balance technology with social and physical behavior. Now that children have passed the physical milestones of mastery of running and kicking, and bending over without falling, screen use may include games that the entire family can play on the Wii or Xbox 360. It is important this screen time is a family bonding experience. Some of the best all-ages games on the Wii are Just Dance Kids and Epic Mickey. If you are not sure about a game's content, use the Entertainment Soft-

Continued...



ware Rating Board app (it is free) to judge its appropriateness. Still control and avoid multiplatform portable devices as these are hard to monitor. If used, they can be allotted 2 hours of screen time per day under close parental supervision.

Appropriate activities now are:

1. Uses the Internet under supervision (create tech-free time to talk each day!)
2. Plays active video games with the family
3. Take time to create a new definition of "screen time"
4. Keep children active in school clubs, sports, peers, and outside activities



9-12 Years Rules: Responsible Use

Still have the rule of no more than 2 hours of screen time a day, including family videogame time. Do not allow access to tech devices in private areas of the home, and no access to online gaming (especially any role-playing games).

At this age, children need to be mentally and physically stimulated through reading, taking nature walks, riding bikes, getting involved in school and sport activities, making friends at school, and spending time with family. Try to establish family time with no technology (e.g., no screens at dinner or in the car). If rules are broken, confiscate all screen devices for 24 hours (or longer) and lock all technology up at night.

Appropriate activities now are:

1. Uses the Internet under supervision (create tech-free time to talk each day.)
2. Independence with technology, social media with strict time limitations and rules for use
3. Monitor computer homework and confiscate all tech when screen time rules are broken
4. Make sure children complete chores and stay involved with school activities and friends

12-18 years Rules: Independence

This is time when most of the arguments and disobedience happen. Children can emotionally implode when parents put computer/Internet rules on them. By now, your child probably has his or her own smartphone. They see many of their friends with unlimited computer access.

They are sick of the rules. They are also young and cannot absorb the meaning of parental rules.

As children enter the teenage years, they want independence. Rules of the house usually change as they can stay out later or meet friends or by age 16, they start to drive. These are all signs of independence, and screen use is no different. At this age, teenagers desire their own social media accounts and demand privacy and unsupervised online time.

"Digital diet" and "digital nutrition" are important at this age. If you grant unrestricted use, have your child maintain a digital log. They can provide you with updates on their time online. A digital log helps a teenager also keep track of their own media use. Too much time online, like food, can result in harmful habits. A digital log helps you track a child's balanced and healthy digital diet without hovering over their daily online use.

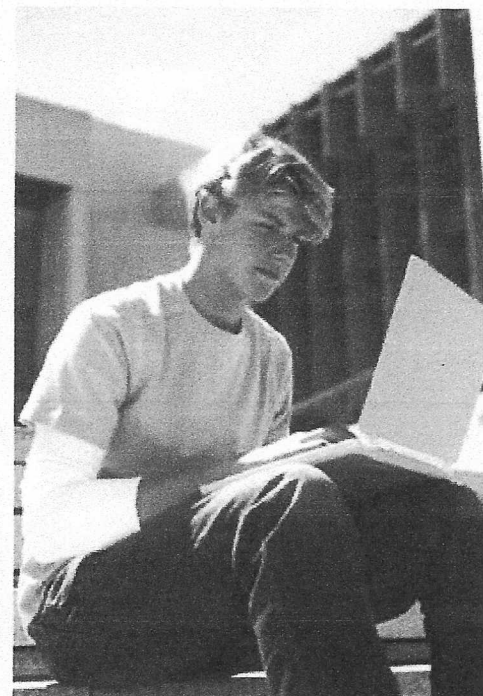
Regarding digital nutrition, this is a time to help children make better choices about their activities online. Do they play videogames all day or are they doing homework? Are they using social media or are they researching a paper for school? Like food addiction, online use is about making healthy choices. Nutrition means that as an independent teenager the technology is used responsibly.

Once you have rules for responsible technology use, decide on discipline for violations in advance, whether you ban your child from driving for a week or a month, whether you ground them, cut back on their allowance or Internet use – whatever – plan it in advance.

Make sure your child has daily chores around the house (e.g., doing the dishes, cutting the lawn, shoveling snow, or taking out garbage). Keep them structured. At 16, urge them to get a job. If they are working, then they don't have time to play or use all their digital devices. This also helps them develop a work ethic. Working also helps teenagers maintain structure in their day to avoid boredom and idleness that contributes to screen overuse and addiction and they can now afford their own digital devices.

Appropriate activities now are:

1. Your child has independence with technology but make sure your child turns in a weekly digital log to improve engagement with technology and the family
2. Review what is meant by digital diet and digital nutrition and decide on consequences for violations of rules and time limits
3. Know your child's online friends, invite them to dinner and talk about how they are
4. Make sure they complete chores and stay involved with school activities and friends
5. When old enough, have children work to improve their time structure, personal financial management, and develop a good work ethic.





Family Media Agreement

I, _____, will:

... take care.

- I will take care of the device I'm using and tell my family if it's broken, stolen, or lost. As a family, we have agreed on the consequences if I lose or break a device, and I understand those consequences.
- Unless I have paid for a device with my own money or it was a gift, I understand that the device belongs to the family member(s) who bought it.
- _____

... stay safe.

- I will not create accounts or give out any private information — such as my full name, date of birth, address, phone number, or photos of myself — without my family's permission.
- I will not share my passwords with anyone other than my family. I will ask my family to help me with privacy settings if I want to set up devices, accounts, or profiles.
- If anyone makes me feel pressured or uncomfortable or acts inappropriately toward me online, I'll stop talking to that person and will tell a family member or other trusted adult about it.
- _____

... think first.

- I will not bully, humiliate, or upset anyone online — whether through sharing photos, videos, or screenshots, spreading rumors or gossip, or setting up fake profiles — and I will stand up to those who do.
- I know that whatever I share online can spread fast and far. I will not post anything online that could harm my reputation.
- Whenever I use, reference, or share someone else's creative work online, I will give proper credit to the author or artist.
- I know that not everything I read, hear, or see online is true. I will consider whether a source or author is credible.
- _____

Family Media Agreement

... stay balanced.

- I will help my family set media time limits that make sense, and then I will follow them.
- I will be mindful of how much time I spend in front of screens, and I will continue to enjoy the other activities — and people — in my life.
- If using media or being online is making me unhappy or it's hard to stop, I will take a break and talk to a family member.
- _____

... communicate openly.

- I will talk to my family about what media I use and what I do online and answer any questions they have openly and honestly.
- I will tell my family if I'm struggling with media use, have made a mistake online, or need help.
- _____

In exchange, my family agrees to:

- recognize that media is a big part of my life, even if they don't always understand why.
- talk with me about what worries them and why before saying "no."
- talk to me about my interests and embrace my world, including helping me find media that's appropriate and fun.
- _____

X

SIGNED BY ME

X

SIGNED BY MY PARENT OR CAREGIVER

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