

# iGeneration

## Healthy youth development in the digital age

Presented by

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# **iGeneration: healthy youth development in the digital age**

**COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA**

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# The Problem of Identifying Well-Being in the Digital Age



- Well-being is defined by certain variables all related to quality of life and healthy development:
  - Physical Health
  - Social Engagement
  - Mental Health
  - Community Engagement
- The problem in the digital age is we either:
  1. Ignore more than one of these areas
  2. Try to over-achieve in each of these areas
- **The result:** Our Digital interaction directly affects our health and well-being by motivating us to be constantly achieving or 'doing' in one or more areas of 'Well-being'.
- **The solution:** Rationalise our use of IT for meaningful and balanced interactions with work, leisure, academics, and community. To do this, we not only need to manage our time, but let technology work for us!
- **Question:** How many of you feel that technology makes you work more or harder rather than make your life easier?

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# Example of Healthy Decision Making Over Environment with Teenagers



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# What are the Physical and Wellbeing Impacts of Technology?

Technology Platform	Physical or Wellbeing Concerns
1. <b>Computer (PC/Laptop)</b>	Back Problems, Eye Strain, Headache/Migraine, Epilepsy, Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT), Repetitive Strain Injury/Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, Mental Stress (During and Post Use), Sleeping Disorders, Eating Disorders.
2. <b>Tablet Computer</b>	Same as Computer – however Eye Strain, Headache/Migraine and Sleep Disorders are marginally more common.
3. <b>Smart Phone</b>	Car Accidents, Sleeping Disorders, Anxiety (i.e. Checking Behaviour), Repetitive Strain Injury (possibly susceptible to Arthritis in older years), Headaches/Migraines.
4. <b>Gaming Console</b>	Aggressive Tendencies, Repetitive Strain Injury, Eye Strain, Bladder Problems, Eating Problems (i.e. Obesity), Sleeping Disorders, Anxiety and Stress.
5. <b>iPod/Mp3 Player</b>	Hearing Damage, Traffic Accidents, Sporting Injuries.
6. <b>Television (Non-Smart TV)</b>	Eyesight, Stress, Headache/Migraine, Sleeping Disorders, Ergonomic Problems.

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# Recommendations for Healthy Technology Use

- It is concerning to know that the scientific evidence of over-use of technology on health can impact the following:
  - musculoskeletal
  - circulatory
  - neurological
  - perception
  - behaviour
- It is equally important to remember the following:

**We must learn to adapt technology to our needs**  
**– not wants!**
- Why...? Because the world is now wired – we cannot switch it off completely just because we think its better for our children, or even ourselves!
- Therefore – its time to prioritise technology ‘needs vs wants’ to ensure good health for the future in this tech-driven world.



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# Practical Strategies for Balancing Technology Use

- One of the most popular questions asked by parents about young people and technology is:  
“How much time should my child spend on the computer?”
- There is no ‘evidence-based’ answer – only educated guess work.
- Australian Government Recommends 2hours a day (Aust. Gov. Health, 2014)
- Latest research recommends parental-decision strategies, not time length (Carlson, Fulton et al, 2010).



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# Monitoring video game use

– Most commonly asked question:

**“How do I get my child to stop playing games when I need/want them too?”**

1. Understand/learn about the game they are playing and WHY it is so appealing.
  2. Re-strategise game playing times during the week. (e.g. ‘Binge day/night’ vs, 2 hours play time every day).
  3. Traditional parenting style (**rationalise, negotiate, trial = reward/punish**)
- Banning games is not necessarily the answer. Knowing what they are playing and when is crucial to teaching self-reliant reward behaviour.



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# Teaching 'Task Focus'



IF YOU TEXT AND DRIVE, YOU ARE **23** TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE INVOLVED IN A WRECK

ABOUT **500,000** INJURIES ARE CAUSED BY DISTRACTED DRIVERS EACH YEAR.

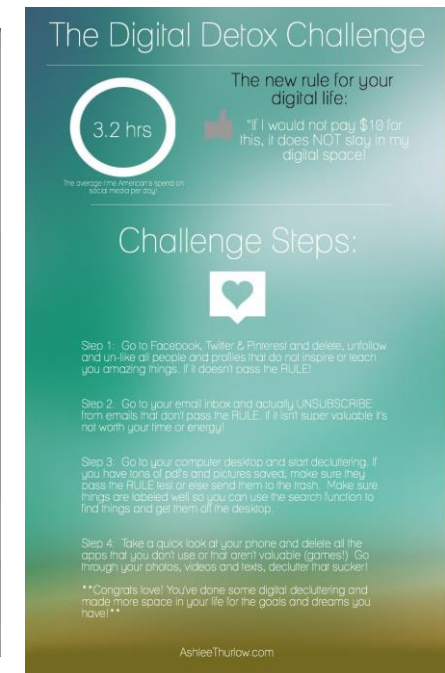
NEARLY **60%** OF 16-18 YEAR OLDS WITH A CELL PHONE ADMIT TO TEXTING AND DRIVING AT SOME POINT.



- Abolishing Phone Use in the Car – Advertising is poor on this subject in Australia, but will increase:
  - Learn to put the phone in the glove box or put on floor in back seat.
  - Argument over need for hands-free use (Heenan & Herdman, et al, 2014)
- iPod Use – great for exercise, bad for safety on roads.
  - halve the volume in busy areas (new GPS service working on this)
- Utilising reminders and schedulers and sticking to them! “Gamify” with family for motivation.  
(e.g. IFTTT, Outlook, Smartphone schedulers, etc)
- Simple Motto to instil in children – **I can wait for anything – can you!**  
Develop critical thinking in children early and repeatedly.

# Digital Detox Test

- Attempt Digital Detox, especially in Holiday Periods and when sick.
  1. Set a time goal you will stick too.
  2. Before starting detox, plan activities you will engage in.
  3. Note what you do when you are on Digital Detox that you enjoy – build it into a week with technology.
  4. When returning to Technology, note what function you least missed and try not to use (unless it is related to work).
- Can't do this – then Digital De-clutter!



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# ITC Resources (eHealth programs) Specifically for Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Nationally, children and teens are informed via their parents, school community or wider community about the following issues during their development:
  - General Health (mostly diet, exercise, sexual health and dental health)
  - Academic management and goal setting
  - Community Engagement
  - Social Engagement
- **The Problem:** The above points are openly talked about both in and out of class. Mental health, specifically the topics of stress management, anxiety and depression, then only to turn up at key points of trigger – e.g. HSC.
- **The reality:** Australia's Health (2014), estimated that 1 in 5 young people aged 12-25 will suffer from depression or anxiety. 1 in 20 might seek help. 1 in 8 will self-harm or have suicide ideation or attempt suicide.
- When comparing these mental health statistics to other health issues, they are fast becoming more the source of health problems that are chronic across the lifespan. Mental Health is now the second largest developmental problem, next to obesity.
- **What we need to do:** It's not just a matter of education about Mental Health
  - De-stigmatise
  - Regulate Discussion
  - Utilise Technology to influence change
- **Evidence:** eHealth programs for Fitness are now a 170billion dollar industry. More young people are changing their health patterns due to gamification and quantification of their health.

# ITC Resources (eHealth programs) Specifically for Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Website awareness for Mental Health & Well-being



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# ITC Resources (eHealth programs) Specifically for Mental Health and Wellbeing



**Get SH\*T  
Sorted!**



**My  
Compass**



**Top 10 Mental  
Health Apps**

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# ITC Resources (eHealth programs) Specifically for Mental Health and Wellbeing

- **Games –**
  - SPARX for depression
  - Journey to the Wild Divine for ADHD



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# ITC Resources (eHealth programs) Specifically for Mental Health and Wellbeing

## — Social Networks —

### Buddy Help at Kids Helpline

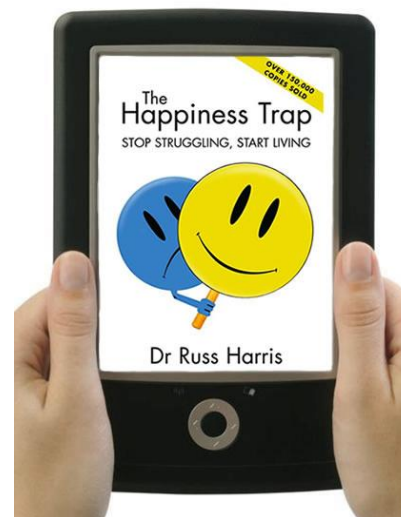
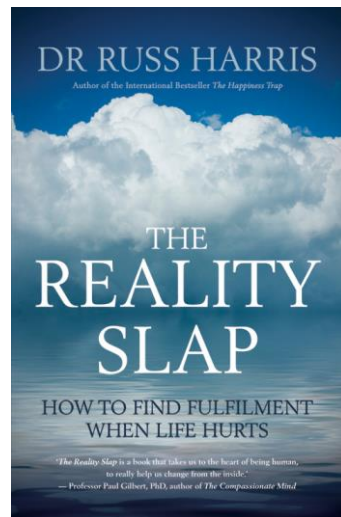
[www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the 'BuddyHelp Social Support' page. The page has a blue and white color scheme with various navigation buttons like 'Home', 'About', 'Your Space', 'Get Info', and 'Kids'. A search bar is visible at the top right with the phone number '1800 55 1800'. The main content area features a 'Sign In' button and a paragraph explaining the project: 'We are operating the Kids Helpline BuddyHelp project to determine if young people can benefit from group support with qualified counsellors via social media. This project uses the Google+ platform to hold group chats between qualified counsellors and small groups of similarly aged young people. Topics include depression and anxiety.' Below this are two buttons: 'Participants This way...' and 'Parent Info This way...'. There are also two columns of text: 'I am involved...' and 'I am a parent...'. On the right side, there is a pink speech bubble with 'BuddyHelp' and a paragraph about the research project's association with the University of Sydney and Black Dog Institute. Logos for 'THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY' and 'BLACK DOG INSTITUTE' are present. At the bottom right, there is a pink button with '1800 55 1800 Call us 24/7' and the text 'Need help now? 24 hours a day, 7'. The browser's address bar shows 'http://www.kidshelp.com.au/teens/buddyhelp/' and the taskbar at the bottom shows various application icons and the system clock.

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# Strategies for Engaging in Daily IT use in a Mentally Healthy way

- Mindfulness and Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT)



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# Social Networking across the Lifespan for Well-being

- **The real value of connection in social groups**
- Evaluating Social Networking for long term wellbeing:
  - Reduce 'friends' to those they truly relate and trust
  - Evaluate what you communicate to them and why?
  - Reflect on previous years communicate – what would you have said/done differently
- Explore more than Facebook
- Understand that it is an extension of normal social reward not a replacement.

# Social Networking across the Lifespan for Well-being

- Narrative Therapy in the Digital Age
- - You would learn more about yourself and your relationships with in-depth communication – narrative therapy
- Improves your everyday communication skills
- Is a true measure of value of engagement in social relationships
- Is a true measure of your evolution in development and changes in positive or negative well being.
- Evidence base to the priorities you place on the online world.

## 5 Tips for Promoting Positive Behaviour and Wellbeing with IT

1. Teach or encourage your children to understand that understanding their moods and feelings is as important as understanding the need for good diet and exercise.
2. Technology influences mood and wellbeing. Learn Moderation strategies.
3. Implement Self-Evaluation of tech use – what is **NEEDED** and what is **WANTED**.
4. Trial programs together and discuss their impact on you, them and the family.
5. Regardless of high level or low level tech use – Mindfulness (ACT) is a valuable skill for life-long wellbeing!

# References

- **Website Reading**

<http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/>

<http://au.reachout.com/>

<http://www.kidshelp.com.au/>

<http://psychcentral.com/>

<http://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

<http://www.youngandwellcrc.org.au/>

<https://sparx.org.nz/index.html>

<http://www.actmindfully.com.au/>

<https://ecouch.anu.edu.au/welcome>

<http://www.beacon.anu.edu.au/>

# Q&A Time



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