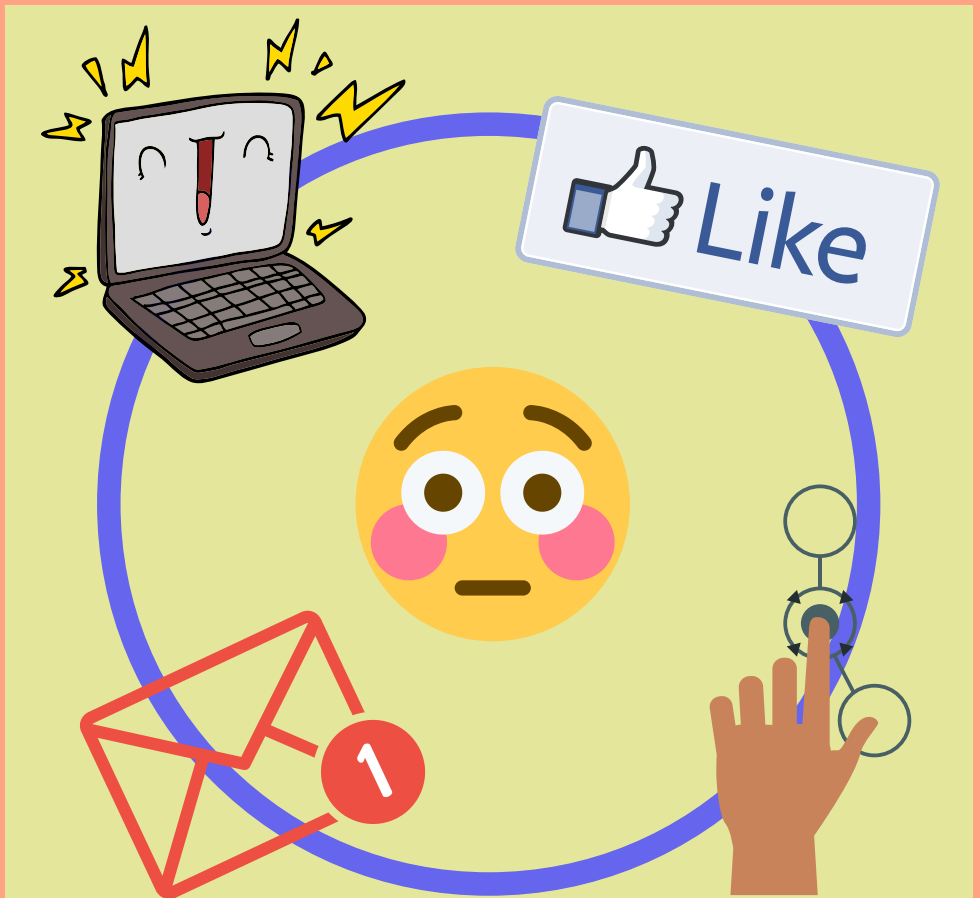


# DIGITAL HEALTH



# HOW DO MY DIGITAL HABITS AFFECT ME?

When used wisely, digital and online media are useful and essential tools that can be fun, provide social support, and even promote wellness!

However, excessive and impulsive gaming, social media use, and use of smartphones in general can contribute to anxiety and low mood.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Research shows that excessive time spent on social media is linked to depression. Social media can negatively affect our mental health by:

- Over-worrying about your **online image**
  - affecting self esteem
  - needing 'likes' to feel accepted
- Feeling inferior due to comparisons with other's life highlights
  - **Fear Of Missing Out (FOMO)**
  - **unattainable standards** affecting your self image
- **Online bullying**
- **Increased distractions affecting concentration**
- **Notifications** disrupting sleep



### Can social media replace face-to-face interactions?

Social media can be an extension, but **not a replacement** for real-life interactions. Although genuine interactions can occur online, the body language, facial expressions and tone we use make interacting in person a uniquely fulfilling experience.

## POSITIVE WAYS TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA

### Active vs. Passive Use

Actively interact with others through comments, likes, and posts instead of just scrolling!

### Be Intentional

Using social media to find specific information and connect with friends can be healthy.

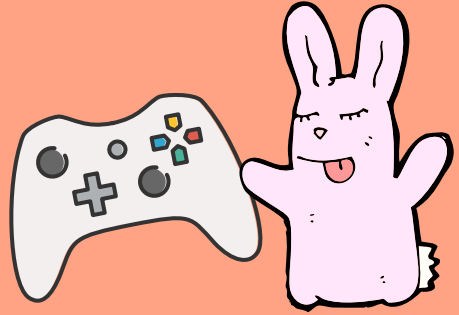
### Limit Social Media Use

Stop using social media and turn off notifications at least one hour before falling asleep.

# GAMING

While gaming can be a fun way to de-stress and connect with your friends, it can negatively affect your mental health if it results in:

- Avoiding problems in real-life
- Escaping from negative thoughts and emotions
- Losing track of time
  - lack of sleep
  - missing meals
- Lack of exercise
- Losing interest in real-world achievements



## AM I ADDICTED?

Some signs of gaming addiction include:

- Feeling **irritable, anxious or sad** when trying to stop gaming
- Constantly **thinking about or anticipating gaming**
- Spending **increasing amounts of time** gaming
- **Losing interest** in other hobbies
- Gaming to **relieve or escape** negative emotions

Do get help from a mental health professional if you think you might be struggling with gaming addiction!



## MORE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Social media use and gaming in moderate amounts can be healthy for your child. To encourage positive digital habits, you can:

- Negotiate **realistic durations** of social media use/gaming with your child
- **Turn off** notifications
- Set a **good example** by avoiding use of mobile devices during family meals
- **Encourage** your child to engage in hobbies and activities offline



# IPMDA

**Integrated Programme for Management of Depression in Adolescents**

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