

KV COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS



A Newsletter by the
Kelloggsville Health & Wellness
Committee



Asthma Awareness



Asthma is a long-term condition that affects the airways in the lungs. The airways are tubes that carry air in and out of your lungs. If you have asthma, the airways can become inflamed and narrowed at times. This makes it harder for air to flow out of your airways when you breathe out. Signs and symptoms of asthma include frequent coughing, a wheezing sound when breathing out, shortness of breath, and or chest tightness.

According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, 5.1 million children under the age of 18 have asthma. Studies have shown that school absenteeism is more frequent among asthmatic children which can have a poor effect on school performance. Asthma triggers can include secondhand smoke, dust, mold, pets, and outdoor pollutants. There is no cure for asthma, but following treatment and action plans can help manage it.

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New Mental Health Clinician at KHS

Hello, my name is Bria Smith and I am the new mental health clinician at Kelloggsville High School. I am excited about this new role as I help young adults navigate many pressing challenges, including self-esteem and grief. Depression, anxiety, sexual assault, etc. I have a passion for helping others and I primarily specialize in Cognitive Behavior Therapy and Emotionally Focused Therapy. I am new to the Grand Rapids area and moved here with my fiancé and stepson during COVID-19. I recently had a baby boy who is such a joy to our family. In my spare time, I enjoy binge-watching reality tv shows and crime-based tv. I love to travel and try new foods. I look forward to meeting the staff and students and learning about all the things Kelloggsville has to offer!



Who Creates the Parts and Pieces for the Newsletter?



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Tips for Encouraging Healthy Eating Habits At Home

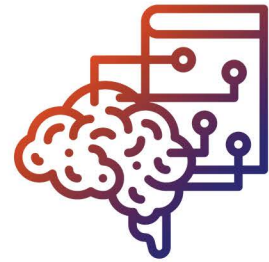
Developing healthy eating habits early on in life can bring lifelong benefits! We sat down with a nutritionist and got lots of tips for how you can encourage good habits at home.

Here are Ways To Promote Healthy Eating Habits at Home:

- Offer a variety of choices for kids to be able to choose from with a focus on whole, unprocessed foods as much as possible.
- Avoid using food as any type of reward for behaviors. This can promote disordered eating habits later on in life. Choose other rewards such as a new book or activity.
- Involve your children in the planning and cooking of meals to encourage participation.
 - Take them with you to the grocery store and explain why you are choosing certain foods
 - Ex. "Let's grab carrots, they are very high in Vitamin A which helps us see clearly!"
- Start an outdoor or indoor vegetable or herb garden and allow your kids to see how food is grown. Have them harvest it themselves and use them in a meal of their choice.
- Limit talking about weight or body shape with your children. Instead discuss how their body functions and needs food as fuel.
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- Start each day with a balanced breakfast to promote growth and all-day energy. Include a source of protein and carbohydrates.
 - The school cafeteria offers breakfast for students daily!
- Make a majority of your grains come from whole-grain options. Whole grains have more fiber and nutrients that support a healthy gut.
- You are a role model for your children! If they watch you prepare and eat nutritious meals, they are more likely to want to themselves.
- Movement should be a daily activity. Take your kids for a walk after dinner, encourage them to play outside, and enroll them in school sports.
- Keep balanced snack options on hand for kids when they get home from school. This helps them sustain energy until dinnertime and limits late-night snacking.
- Try something new each week! Include new fruits and vegetables. Add new recipes to your rotation. Having a variety of foods promotes gut and nutrient diversity.

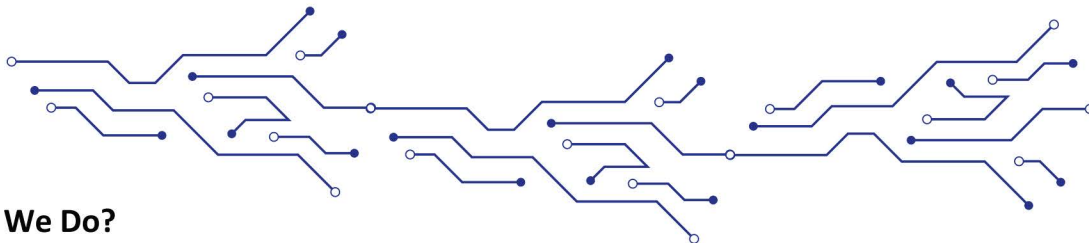


Technology: Impacting the Family System and Mental Health



It's no secret that technology is an integral part of our world. It's how we wake up, shop, learn, and connect with other people. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, technology became even more central to our daily functioning while we were limited in our in-person interactions. Studies have shown a dramatic increase in technology use when the pandemic started, but even as we've returned to functioning more in-person, technology use has not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

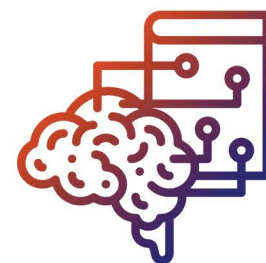
This over-reliance on technology can have adverse effects. Depression, anxiety, and attention issues can develop in youth who overuse technology. Additionally, technology can make it difficult for children to develop healthy emotion regulation and social skills. In extreme cases, people can even exhibit withdrawal symptoms when denied access to their devices, such as getting a phone taken away.



What Do We Do?

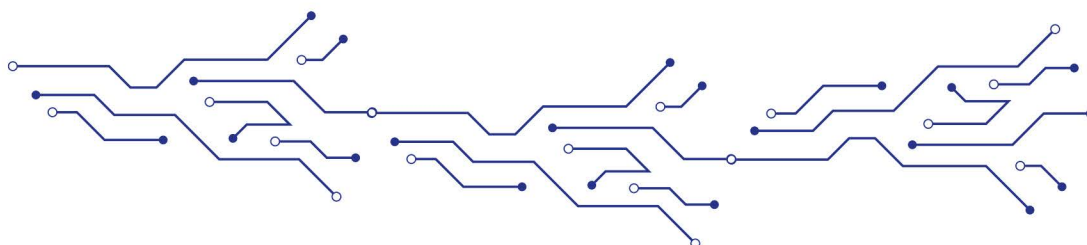
Technology addiction is a tricky problem to approach because, as stated above, it's an essential part of our world today. Simply taking away devices doesn't solve the problem. It is important to note that technology in and of itself is not a bad thing. Technology is a tool that doesn't need to be condemned but instead has boundaries created around it so that it can continue to be a healthy addition to our daily lives.

Taking away a phone or other devices is not how technology addiction is solved. Instead, sit down with your family and talk about your concerns about too much technology use. Acknowledge the difficulty in creating new habits around technology. Let your kids know that creating new technology boundaries is not about punishment or control but about creating healthy habits. Then, include your kids in creating those boundaries. Kids are much more likely to get on board with rules that they get to help create!



Technology Use Practical Tips for Parents

1. Model healthy technology use. Technology addiction is not just a problem for kids. If you're concerned about how much your children use screens, consider how you can model healthy technology use. Children often learn through observation of others, so make rules that the whole family can follow.
2. Establish a set time for screens to be off. Screens off during meals or keeping phones on the kitchen counter to charge overnight are common ways families will often limit screen use. (Alarm clocks can be bought relatively affordable as a replacement for phones as alarms in the morning). Make plans for family games or movie nights where phones are put away to encourage being present with each other.
3. Encourage exploring hobbies outside of screens. Reading, arts and crafts, knitting, puzzles, sports, baking and cooking, jewelry-making, and playing a musical instrument; there are so many interests and skills for kids to enjoy. Show interest and support in your child's hobbies to encourage time away from screens. Additionally, exploring hobbies for yourself as a parent can be a good modeling opportunity, and you may even discover a common interest with your child that you can do together.
4. Get outside! This one can be a little trickier in Michigan winters, but spending time outside and away from screens is important for physical and mental health. Every January and February, Grand Rapids puts on the "World of Winter" downtown with lots of art, family-friendly activities, and food! Many of the events are free and open to the public. You can visit www.WorldofWinterGR.com for more information and the full list of events.



We hope these few quick tips provide a starting framework for your family if you think creating new technology habits could benefit you. Technology use looks different for everyone; what works for some families might not work for others. As a family, decide what's beneficial and achievable in your household. Encourage each other to work toward the goals you set. Again, technology in itself is not a bad thing! Use this start of the new year to create healthy habits to promote a better relationship with technology and with each other.