

Create a plan for the prevention of pathological disorders of the game



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GUIDELINES AND TIPS FOR THE HEALTHY USE OF THE INTERNET AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

It is important that we teach minors to surf the Internet in such a way that their experience is safe. Although it is true that, on these issues, children know much more than their parents, this should not lead us to doubt our authority to exercise any type of educational mediation. The role of the family is of great importance to moderate and model the use and access to screens by young people.

As with other technologies, in the case of the Internet and social networks, it is not intended that they do not use them, but rather that the aim should be to encourage a pattern of controlled use. And for this it is necessary to promote conditions that favor the development of appropriate habits. The objective will be that the Internet is a tool with different uses but that it does not interfere with other activities or generate interpersonal relationship problems. And, above all, that it does not become the owner of our actions, but rather an instrument of them.

The main tips are:

1. No Internet connection in the room. Internet connection in isolation should be avoided. Internet use should preferably be at a computer (or other device) located in a common place in the household. Internet connection in the bedroom or via mobile should be avoided. This is not only to prevent problems with online bullying and other risks on the internet, but also because surfing in the bedroom encourages family isolation and lack of necessary control. At the same time, the absorption capacity of the Internet induces uncontrolled use. It is one of the main distractions from academic activities (especially if you "study" with the computer on) and disrupts other healthy behaviors, such as food (you should not eat while using the computer) or sleep (excessively lengthening the moment getting ready to sleep).
2. Sharing the internet is the best way to actively mediate between children and screens. This does not mean that you should always be by their side. But, only if they have ever seen an adult act before the various risk situations that arise when using these technologies, can they have a valid reference.
3. Establish a usage schedule. A use schedule allows you to control the amount of time you will spend, avoiding overuse, but also ensures that alternative

activities are carried out that can help to avoid problematic use, while ensuring it does not interfere with other healthy activities. It is necessary to have a weekly schedule that indicates the times and situations in which you will connect to the Internet, respecting the time to carry out other equally important activities. In this sense, it is especially significant to indicate the time at which the connection will be terminated. With this we train in acquiring the ability to stop the activity and prevent the difficulty in controlling the urge to stay connected to the Internet, or to use it more and more.

4. Use the Internet's own tools to facilitate control of use. The Internet has numerous applications that can be used to control or prevent problematic use. Thus, in the case of young children, a keyword that only the parents or guardians know and that they enter so that the child can use the internet in the periods that have been determined. Likewise, it is possible to program the disconnection time automatically through simple software or applications of the operating systems. Protection systems can also be installed to prevent access to pages that are not suitable for minors.
5. Specify in advance (before connecting) what will be done on the Internet or on social networks, that is, what pages will be consulted, which applications will be used, what the Internet will be used for, how many photographs will be posted, how many comments are going to be made, etc. This does not mean that it will not be used as a way of having fun or spending time, but as with any game or recreational activity, we must know what we are going to do and how much time we are going to spend. In other words, the Internet is a tool, also for leisure, but it is not the end in itself.
6. Do not use the Internet or social networks to hang out, because there is nothing better to do or as a way to overcome negative moments. Social networks have the ability to entertain; the innumerable connections and contacts that can occur makes it easy to immerse oneself in this virtual world and abstract yourself, overcoming negative moments. Regardless of whether this may be useful at some point, it should not become the usual way to overcome adverse moments, since the escape or avoidance of those situations or moments negatively reinforces excessive use. This means that feeling relieved from the boredom or discomfort I feel, makes it more likely that the next time I feel bad I will use the

strategy of connecting again, forgetting other alternative ways of dealing with negative moments.

7. Avoid “sailing aimlessly”. Not only because you get into the habit of using the Internet or social networks at any time and for any function, but also because, given the number of applications and functions that already exist (social networks have numerous leisure and entertainment functions) , it is more than likely that you will end up using the internet for longer time than you had anticipated and needs will arise that you did not have before.
8. Seek (and schedule) alternative activities, if possible incompatible with being connected to the Internet or using social networks. There are many alternative activities to using the Internet and social networks, which can be equally useful or enjoyable. But the excessive use of the Internet or social networks means that you do not have the opportunity to do them. That is why they sometimes need to be programmed to ensure that you have a moment for them. That is to say, the activities that must be carried out must be programmed, such as study, hygiene and health habits (hours of sleep or meals), as well as those of leisure and entertainment. It is always easier to reduce or eliminate a behavior when alternatives are enhanced. And in order to ensure that these alternatives are carried out, the most effective way is for them to be pleasant activities or positively reinforced.
9. Establish and agree with the children on the rules of use of the Internet and social networks that include the main recommendations mentioned above. One possibility is to draw up a contract where these rules are written down and in which the advantages and disadvantages, as well as the rights and obligations, are stated. Likewise, the objectives and the actions that will be carried out to achieve them must be defined.

The ideal is to reach consensual agreements regarding the use of the Internet and social networks (time spent, alternative activities, etc.). This favors commitment, which is one of the main aspects of motivation. Do not worry so much about the number of hours you can spend on the Internet or social networks, as about the fact that it allows you to do other things and that you make a commitment to comply with the established conditions.

10. Talk to children about the importance of good habits in social networks and encourage such patterns. It is very important to know and discuss with them

how and why they connect, but especially what content is what is posted on social networks and who can access it now or in the future. Since children tend to have a greater knowledge of the Internet than their parents, this can be an opportunity to learn, discover new applications and have a meeting space. Parents should transmit recommendations and warn of possible risks, since the adolescent tends to minimize them. It is essential to provide adolescents with a critical sense of these and other activities in our society, since on the Internet, as in so many other facets of life, there are powerful economic interests. Social networks have their challenges and risks. Parents have the opportunity to alert them to be aspirational citizens, to take on their own challenges and not be alienated by power. No personal information should be exchanged; there is no need to give information that can be used against you now or in the future; solutions to problems should be sought to from those who know about the subject (professionals) or can really help you (parents, friends), who are generally people who are close.

11. To strengthen their values and critical sense, so that they are also applied in the use of social networks. It is about prioritizing respect for others, responsibility and common sense, in the same way as in other social gatherings.
12. For the youngest children, it is recommended that they surf only when there is an adult at home, avoiding them to connect at night and expressing the importance of not exchanging addresses, phone numbers or other personal information.

SOME KEY MESSAGES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

1_ Don't believe everything you see on the Internet, there is a lot of false and misleading information.

2_ Heed only the information you are looking for, without being distracted by others. Remember that time on the Internet passes quickly. You may want to set up a schedule.

3_ Combine the use of the Internet and social networks with other leisure activities, and do not stop doing other things that you like in your free time.

4_ Be wary of being offered something or a prize, as you may be asked to do something in return.

5_ Do not respond to messages or emails that threaten you or tell you things that make you feel bad. If it ever happens to you, talk to your parents.

6_ When forwarding e-mails, write down the addresses with a hidden copy (BCC) so you don't reveal them. Remember to delete the previous addresses if they appear in the message. We must protect our email address and those of our friends.

7_ Think carefully about the things you post on social networks, since anyone could see that information. Use the privacy filters available to you to protect your information (private level, that only my friends see, that they can see the photos but they cannot be downloaded, etc.).

8_ Do not give information about yourself to people you do not know or publish it on social networks or blogs. It would be advisable to put in your profile photo an image that does not directly identify you.