

The Lexington Group Employee Assistance Program

NEWS YOU CAN USE

September 2011

Information and tips to help you live healthier and happier

When Does Internet Use Become a Problem?

According to a study by researchers at Stanford University School of Medicine, one out of eight Americans exhibited at least one possible sign of problematic internet use. The researchers found that:

- 13.7 percent (more than one out of eight respondents) found it hard to stay away from the internet for several days at a time
- 12.4 percent stayed online longer than intended very often or often
- 12.3 percent had seen a need to cut back on internet use at some point
- 8.7 percent attempted to conceal non-essential internet use from family, friends and employers
- 8.2 percent used the internet as a way to escape problems or relieve a negative mood
- 5.9 percent felt their relationships suffered as a result of excessive internet use

According to Elias Aboujaoude, MD, lead author of the study, a small but growing number of internet users are starting to visit their doctors for help with unhealthy attachments to cyberspace. He said these patients' strong drive to compulsively use the internet to check emails, make blog entries or visit websites or chat rooms, is not unlike what sufferers of substance abuse or impulse-control disorders experience: a repetitive, intrusive and irresistible urge to perform an act that may be pleasurable in the moment but that can lead to significant problems on the personal and professional levels.

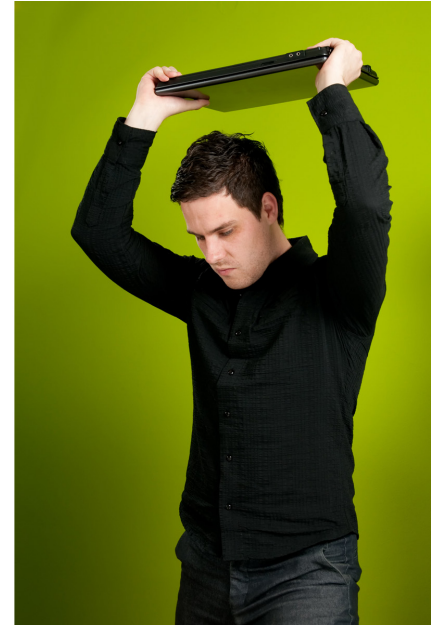
While online pornography and online gambling have received the most media attention, the Stanford study concluded that users are as likely to use other websites, including chat rooms, shopping venues and special-interest websites.

Do you have a problem?

Whether your internet use can be termed an "addiction" or not, it's most important to determine if your internet use is causing any disruption in your life. Do you find yourself spending more and more time online at a greater and greater cost to your real life? Is your internet use causing problems in your relationships, family, at work or school? If your excessive use of the internet is causing problems in other important areas of your life, then your internet use is a problem.

What to do

Recognizing and admitting that your excessive use of the internet is negatively impacting your life is the first step toward overcoming it. If you or a family member would like help, you can contact your Employee Assistance Program for CONFIDENTIAL counseling, referrals or information. We're here to help you.



The Lexington Group

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Caring and individualized help for personal and family concerns is only a phone call away.
For confidential services 24 hours every day, call us toll free at:

United States	1-800-676-HELP (4357)
Canada	1-800-567-4343
England	0-800-169-6706
Mexico	001-888-819-7162
Marshall Islands	1-800-676-4357
Puerto Rico	1-800-676-4357
TTY	1-800-955-8339