



The impact of screens on children and how to manage in these times of confinement

Specialists have been hammering home for some time that the overexposure of children to screens is a health catastrophe. Yes, but in these times of containment, the time spent on those famous screens has increased. They've become beneficial. They allow you to keep up with class, keep socializing with family and friends, keep busy.

So what to do? The key word is control: control over the time spent and the content whether it's the internet or games. Indeed, there is such a thing as screen addiction. For boys, it will be mostly an addiction to video games, for girls it will be an addiction to social networks and for all of them it will be surfing on spaces like Youtube.

In short, the key word is EDUCATION.

What should we be careful of?

1. Video games

The parent's role is to accompany their child in the discovery of these worlds and to control if the contents are adapted to the age of the child.

For example, Fortnite is a game that is all the rage among young people between the ages of 7 and 25. However, there is already a problem here, as this game is normally intended for those over 12 years of age.

It has been scientifically demonstrated that video games such as "shoot them all" will impact the prefrontal lobe of the brain, considerably reducing the capacity for empathy to the benefit of the part of the brain responsible for our ability to survive, thereby developing aggressiveness and violence. This explains why, when you force a child to stop playing, it is in an aggressive response.

If the child stops playing for a while you will see an improvement in his social behaviour.

On the boxes or pages, there is information indicating at what age the game is appropriate for the user. It is important to check and accompany the children in the choice of games they play and limit the time they spend on them. The task is more complicated with online games that virtually have no end.

Interesting internet links:

- <https://www.futura-sciences.com/sante/actualites/medecine-jeux-video-violents-alterent-certaines-fonctions-cerebrales-35035>



2. Social networks

The addiction to social networks could be explained by the fear of missing important information, on the verification of its popularity rate.

Beyond a limitation of time spent on their smartphone (most of the time), it is necessary to accompany young people on the reality of these networks, relativize their importance, rethink the meaning of the word friend, the importance or not of being popular, the quality of information that can be found there etc...

- Youtube

Youtube is a place where users can send, watch, comment, rate and share streaming videos.

Young people are fascinated by this new generation of Youtube users/influencers. More and more, they associate it with a job they would like to do without knowing the reality behind the facade of ease and popularity, especially the extremely ephemeral side of the thing.

Youtube offers videos related to what the person has just watched which brings 2 problems: the first is the infinite time that can be spent on it and the content that can become inappropriate for children. Indeed, you can find anything and everything from the creepy to the beast through the educational, the funny, the violent, the cute, the contemplative

It is necessary to accompany and educate your child in the use of this tool and to debrief well what it can see or hear. It is also important to limit the time spent on this site.

- Tik Tok

Do you know Tik Tok? It's a social network that allows you to exchange videos, track accounts... Its main feature is that it is about music videos: users sing in play back on well-known songs or sound extracts.

The app is a hit with young people who have deserted Facebook since their parents joined the application. After Snapchat and Instagram, it is Tik Tok that wins their support, with more than 1 billion users worldwide by the end of 2019.

There is a race for likes and a form of exacerbated narcissism. The goal is really to put oneself on stage and collect comments, likes, by imitating famous personalities, who are also very young. The younger people put themselves forward, the more likes they have, which leads to hyper-sexualisation of content.

Very young children, 9 or 10 years old, are posing, whereas theoretically, they are not even allowed to register on the platform...



This of course attracts ill-intentioned people. You can see them by their very indelicate comments, or by their comments that refer to looks, even if the child is less than 10 years old. They're clearly predators, encouraging young people to do more, to go further, and aggregating this kind of content over time. The problem of cyber-bullying can also be added to this network.

It seems harmless but it is not – like in all social networks you should be accompanying your child in the use of the application, take care about what they are posting and assist in decrypting the received comments.

Interesting internet links:

- <https://www.cnetfrance.fr/news/les-dangers-de-tik-tok-pour-vos-enfants-et-comment-s-en-premunir-39876613.htm>
- <https://www.3-6-9-12.org/>
- info@bee-secure.lu
- www.klicksafe.de
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- www.saferinternet.org.uk
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