

# Social Networking: Intervention and Treatment

Limiting internet access for youth may decrease online risk, but it may also limit the opportunity to develop digital citizenship skills and build resilience. The ubiquitousness and the rapidly changing nature of the internet make it impossible to protect children and young people from all online risks.

Therefore, the goal of treatment cannot be total abstinence from the internet. Treatment, as well as public policy, should focus on developing resilience in children and youth to maintain their emotional and mental wellbeing through digital citizenship [1].

Several prevention and intervention strategies can be implemented in schools, at home, and in health communities. These will be discussed in the coming sections. Schools and communities play an important role in teaching children and youth about respectful communication, strategies for safe internet use, benefits, risks and responsible use of social networking sites, and prevention of cyberbullying [2].

Psychological treatments of choice are stimulus control and then gradual re-exposure to the internet, psychoeducation, and cognitive behavioural therapy [3]. Other effective therapies include dialectical behavioural therapy, solution focused therapy, psychodynamic therapy, trauma-informed care, and the recovery model of treatment. The goal is to improve psychosocial functioning impaired by social networking overuse, through developing coping skills for craving and social isolation, as well as by self-limiting exposure. Service providers need to collaborate with the family and jointly create a treatment plan that promotes healthy habits [4].

## References

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