

# Internet Addiction in Children and Adolescents

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## Introduction

Internet use has become an indispensable part of people's daily life. In particular, the teenagers are more likely to use the concentrated and fast features of the Internet to find the information and have connections they need. Therefore, both learning and socializing use the Internet intensively, and they are particularly prone to overuse, be unable to control oneself, even become internet addiction (IA) [1].

## Epidemiology

The prevalence rate of IA among adolescents (including college students) is 5.9-26.8% [1-6]. Previous studies found that IA is closely related to depression, and the more depressed, the more likely to be IA. In addition, men, insecure attachment characteristics, and low academic achievement had a higher IA risk of IA [3-6]. A study by Huang from Taiwan [7] found that male college students are more prone to Internet addiction, which is positively correlated with the amount of time they use the Internet every day, and those who use the Internet more often to play online games and online audiovisual.

## Impacts

Many studies have found that IA may have a negative impact on different aspects of health [1,7]. Since IA often accompanies unhealthy lifestyles, such as poor eating habits, insufficient physical activity, drinking, and staying up late to surf the Internet [8,9], they are all detrimental to physical health. As for the part with mental health, IA is not only a mental problem, but may also aggravate co-occurring mental illnesses, such as attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder and depression [10-13]. Other studies have found that IA has an adverse effect on the social function of addicts, and reduces life satisfaction [14,15]. For children under the age of 18, Internet addicts also have special components of internet gaming addiction. In addition to health problems such as vision, sleep, skeletal muscle and brain development, children and adolescents are time-consuming. It also wastes a lot of money, cause children to become anxious, melancholy, self-injured, inattention, high hostility, low empathy, and problems with parent-child [1,16].

## Management

Empirical research emphasizes the importance of time management in preventing and treating IA problems, and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) has been proven to be an effective treatment method for obsessive-compulsive disorder accompanied by compulsive Internet access [17], led by professional counseling psychologists. In addition, the IA behavioral features may co-occur with ADHD, at this time, they must also be treated together, including the use of necessary drug treatments to be more effective. For young people, we have repeatedly emphasized the importance of improving self efficacy, which includes positive thinking, positive adaptation, and having good resilience and positive adaptation [18]. For the prevention and treatment of IA for children under the age of 18, parents and teachers should play more roles. The parents may join parent-child camps that can improve their interactions with children [1,19]. In addition, both the teachers and parents should find ways to create a pleasant learning and growing environment, and make some achievements in real life,

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which is beneficial to reduce internet addiction among children and adolescents [1,20].

## Competing Interests

The author declare that there is no competing interests regarding the publication of this article.

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