Problematic Technology Use

Information for Parents and Caregivers

Defining "problematic" use

- Technology use that gets in the way of different areas of life including: relationships, school, other recreational activities, and basic daily living.
- Unable to stop using technology despite negative consequences.
- Problematic use can occur with any type of technology, including video games, social media, and the internet.
- The number of hours spent using does not equate to problematic use.

Role of Parents and Caregivers

- Technology is a part of our lives and we cannot eliminate it altogether.
- Taking away technology has not been found to be effective at reducing problematic use.
- Instead, parents and caregivers can discuss with youth what their use goals are in using technology:
  - Focus on why they are using, rather than how much
  - Rely on parents and caregivers to help when overwhelmed, rather than using technology
- Parents must model appropriate technology use to their children.

Treatment Approaches

- Treatment approaches include motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioural therapy.
  - Focus on the youth's goals for treatment
  - Reduce use without eliminating altogether
  - Teach coping skills
  - Facilitate engagement with other important areas of life
- Treatment is a process
  - May take longer than expected
  - Youth's goals may be different from guardians
  - Continue to check in with youth about how you can help