

Responding to emotions with practical solutions

Young people are constantly online and at times it can be difficult to get them back into the offline world in a calm manner. · We have explored the many reasons why young people choose to engage in online activities, but we need to remember that young people face an increased amount of pressure to use online activities as a way to switch off and socialise.

Young people have an increased need for independence yet still, due to hormonal changes, need guidance and support. They are aware of the consequences of spending too much time online, yet they appear incapable of identifying other forms of activity.

This can make it difficult to get your child to participate in other activities. The good news is this will pass and as they start gaining independence, working, being able to drive, having their own money they will find other social activities away from gaming.

It is important to still try and help them to have a healthy online/offline balance. Below are some activities they could participate in and enjoy.

Outside activities

Join a local sports group – Sports are good as they are a form of exercise, they keep your child healthy and can be enjoyed with others.



Running/Bike ride/Go for a walk – If they are not interested there are still opportunities to get outside for some fresh air and exercise. Not only does it get the body moving but it can improve their mood and being outside ensures they receive some Vitamin D, also essential for health and mood. Suggest they listen to a podcast or music whilst they are out as people enjoy combining both.

Other outside activities – Depending on where you live there may be other outside activities on your doorstep. These can include Hiking, Surfing, Skiing, Rowing.

Relaxing activities

This may be difficult to get your child(ren) engaged, however it is important they use offline activities to provide an outlet.

Yoga – A great way to improve flexibility and muscle strength amongst others. Yoga has become popular for its ability to improve people's mental health and wellbeing. There are many free tutorials online so they can follow a programme and participate in a safe manner.

Meditation – Another popular pastime due to its many benefits, meditation can reduce stress, control anxiety, improve mental health and wellbeing and provide a sense of calm. Again, there are many different techniques so people can explore which options are best for them. There are apps which can help people to get started or enjoy whilst listening to soothing music

Deep breathing – Not too dissimilar to meditation, focusing on your breathing can help to calm the body and mind. This can be a quick practice and again, there are different techniques to use to find a suitable method for you. One good and easy practice is to breathe in for a count of 7 and breathe out for a count of 11 for a few minutes.

Me time – Sometimes just taking time for yourself can help. Doing something you enjoy such as having a bubble bath, pampering yourself, calling a friend, reading a book, or listening to some music.

Other activities

Listen to some music – Music has many benefits whether it cheers people up, calms them down, relaxes them. The good thing with music is it has many different uses and choices.

Reading

Knitting

Creativity – Drawing, colouring, writing, painting, diamond painting

Sensory – There are other sensory gadgets which can help your child to relax focusing on their different sense;

Sound – Listening to relaxing music can soothe. Popular examples are the sound of water, waves, chimes, nature

Smell – Using candles or aromatherapy oils. These can be used in lots of different ways and for different purposes such as to relax, soothe or uplift. Popular choices include lavender, Chamomile and Bergamot but why not explore and let your child find the best one for them.

Sight – Soothing examples can be lava lamps or sensory bottles which help calm the mind by providing a soothing visual aspect. Why not create your own.

Touch – Weighted blankets, fidget spinners or putty, stretch bands. Anything which a person can use their hands and fingers can help to soothe. Using a small ball to roll under the balls/arches of your feet can also help to unwind and soothe.

Taste – Get baking and create a favourite dish. Having comfort foods can help bring a sense of calm.

