



# FoMO

Too much internet?



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## Student Wellness Centre

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UNIVERSITY OF  
SASKATCHEWAN

## What is FoMO?

**Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)** is the concern that others are leading more interesting and rewarding lives. While some FoMO is completely normal, the stress and anxiety associated with it can become overwhelming.

FoMO has been linked to poor physical, emotional, and cognitive health outcomes, including:

- Poor sleep hygiene
- Lower mood
- Increased anxiety
- Decreased life satisfaction, and
- Poorer academic performance.

(Baker, Krieger, LeRoy, 2016)

One study showed that 55% of first year students at UBC believed that their peers had more friends than they themselves had.

48% of students from the same study also believed that their friends and acquaintances had more social connections than they actually did.

First year UBC students who believed that they didn't have as many friends as their peers reported lower levels of well-being and belonging. (Whilans, Christie, Cheung, Jordan, & Chen, 2017)

# Managing the Internet and Social Media

You're likely spending a lot of time online. Try these tips to reduce your time.

## Set Boundaries

- Take a "technology break" each day. At minimum, turn off your data while sleeping,
- Install a parental control software package and have someone else set the password. Set the settings to allow you to be online at certain times of the day or for a certain number of hours,
- Limit when you reply to emails to once every hour or several times a day.
- Develop hobbies that do not involve technology.

## Make It Inconvenient

- Turn off your computer after class or studying. The process of turning it back on may discourage you from going back on so freely,
- Do not eat meals or snacks at your computer, and

- Keep your smartphone out of your bedroom so you are not tempted to use it during the night.

### **Get Rid of It**

- Delete accounts and aps that you do not need,
- Remove people from your social media that are not real friends. Less “friends” means less people to creep and keep updated with.

## **Possible Health Issues Related to Long Hours on a Computer**

- Back aches,
- Dry eyes,
- Sore wrists
- Tired because you are staying up late, and
- Headaches.

## **Benefits of Decreasing Tech Time**

- More time for homework, studying, family, friends, sleep, fresh air, and

exercise, new university  
experiences

- Healthier back, wrists, and eyes

## **Using the Internet to Find Reliable Information**

When you are not sure how reliable the website information is, ask questions such as:

- Is the information current?
- What is the purpose of the information? Is it to sell something?
- What are the author's credentials?
- Is information consistent with other sources?

## **Is Technology Affecting You?**

Choose your answers from "very rarely," "rarely," "sometimes," "often" or "very often":

- You spend a lot of time thinking about social media, online gaming, or other internet activity.
- You feel an urge to use online access more and more.

- You use your internet activities in order to forget about personal problems.
- You have tried to cut down on your use of the internet (e.g., social media, gaming) without success.
- You become restless or troubled if you are prohibited or unable to connect to the internet.
- You take part in your internet activity so much that it has a negative impact on your academics, your work, or your relationships.

More than four “often” or “very often” responses indicate a problem. Seek help at Student Wellness Centre.

**16% of U of S students admit that the internet has negatively affected their academics in the last 12 months.**

2019 National College Health Assessment

## **Internet Safety: Keep Yourself Safe**

- Keep your profile information minimal. Your friends will know most of this anyway,

- Crop photos or fuzz out backgrounds to remove any information that strangers could use to locate you,
- Before you make any internet purchase, check the company's privacy policy to make sure they will not share or sell your personal data,
- Watch out for phishing, which are emails appearing to be from a legitimate company and asking you to confirm personal information such as credit card numbers, passwords, birth dates, or addresses. If in doubt, phone using the number from the website, not the email, to confirm,
- Everything you do on the internet is apparent to other users, and you should be aware of what they are seeing. Take a moment to “Google” yourself and see what others are seeing about you,
- Report identity theft. File a police report immediately if you notice that someone else is using your name, credit card, or other personal information,
- Choose a secure password that combines letters, numbers, and characters. Keep your passwords in a secure location such as on an

external flash drive that you keep with you,

- Think before opening email attachments or links and don't open attachments or links from people you don't know. If it doesn't sound like something your friend might send you, email him or her separately to find out if it's legit,
- Avoid downloading free software online unless you are certain it is from a reputable company. Many free programs are merely a device for delivering adware and spyware,
- Install virus protection software and a firewall. Keep it up to date, and
- If you use online dating sites, look out for potential sexual predators. Plan your first meet to be in a public place. Always tell a friend where you are going and to check up on you after the meet.

## **What is Internet Addiction?**

Any compulsive behavior that interferes with normal living and causes more than normal stress on family, friends, work, or studies is



usually an addiction. Excessive gaming, gambling, email, instant messaging, social media, shopping, cyber relationships could all be addictions.

Keep a log of the hours you use the computer. Experts say that more than 38 hours per week of recreational internet use may be a red flag for internet addiction.

## **Types of Internet Addiction**

### **Cyber Relationships**

Research has shown that a social media addiction may produce symptoms similar to those observed in substance and alcohol addiction.

### **Online Gaming and Shopping**

Online gaming, gambling, and shopping are quickly becoming new mental problems.

### **Compulsive Surfing**

With so much information at our fingertips, there is a risk for some to keep looking and looking resulting in less productivity.

### **Cyber Sexual Addiction**

Individuals who suffer from cybersex/internet pornography addiction are typically engaged in viewing, downloading, and trading online pornography. They may also be involved in adult fantasy role-play chat rooms.

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## **Additional Resources**

[www.olganon.org/home](http://www.olganon.org/home)

[www.techaddiction.ca](http://www.techaddiction.ca)

[netaddiction.com](http://netaddiction.com)

[wellness.usask.ca](http://wellness.usask.ca)

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