MODULE 6

SOCIAL MEDIA DETOX AND DIGITAL WELL-BEING

ERASMEDIAH

Educational Reinforcement Against
the Social Media Hyperconnectivity

erasmediah.eu

**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Lesson 6.2

Building Healthy Online Habits

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Social Media Detox Strategies

Objectives:

- To help participants understand the benefits of maintaining healthy online habits.
- To introduce strategies for balancing digital and offline activities.
- To promote self-awareness about personal screen time and its impact.

Key Message(s):

- Healthy online habits contribute to mental well-being and productivity.
- Balancing digital use with offline activities enhances quality of life.
- Small, intentional changes can lead to sustainable improvements in digital habits.

TYPE OF LESSON:

Lesson Overview

This lesson focuses on helping participants develop healthy online habits to improve their mental and physical well-being. Through self-reflection, group discussions, and guided activities, participants will identify their current online behaviours and create personalized strategies for a balanced digital lifestyle.

The workshop is organized into 4 steps:

1. Introduction to Healthy Online Habits (10 min)
2. Identifying Triggers and Solutions (15 min)
3. Strategy Development (15 min)
4. Closing Discussion & Commitments (5 min)

Introduction to Healthy Online Habits

Engage in a group discussion to explore the importance of healthy digital habits and share personal experiences and strategies for improving screen time management.

Suggested Video:
Keeping healthy habits with social media

Five Steps to Build Healthy Digital Habits:
1. **Take Breaks** - Step away from screens regularly to refocus and recharge. Avoid swapping one screen activity (e.g., work) for another (e.g., Netflix). Instead, balance screen time with offline activities.
2. **Minimize Distractions** - Turn off notifications and log out of social media to concentrate better. Fewer distractions mean more satisfying and productive work.
3. **Screen-Free Before Bed** - Avoid screens an hour before sleep to improve rest. Let friends know about your no-late-replies policy to prevent disruptions.
4. **Be Mindful of Usage** - Track your screen time and be conscious of how you spend it. Use apps to monitor and manage your habits.
5. **Check Your Mood** - Notice how online activities affect your well-being. Limit time spent on activities that lower your mood, replacing them with uplifting ones.

Introduction to Healthy Online Habits

Discussion Points:

Why do you think managing screen time is important for our well-being?

What are the signs that you might need a social media detox?

Which of the five habits do you already practice? Share how it has impacted your daily life.

Are there any habits on the list you find challenging? Why?

Can you think of additional strategies to develop healthier digital habits?

Identifying Triggers and Solutions

In pairs, think about common situations or emotions that might lead you to spend too much time online, such as boredom, stress, or loneliness. Once you've identified some triggers, brainstorm practical ways to address them.

Consider the following questions to guide your discussion:
- What emotions or situations lead you to spend excessive time online?
- How can you replace these habits with healthier, offline alternatives?

Here are some examples to get you started:
- Trigger: Stress or anxiety.
  - Solution: Practice mindfulness techniques or engage in physical activities like walking or stretching.
- Trigger: Boredom.
  - Solution: Schedule hobbies, reading, or other offline activities during free time.

After discussing these triggers and solutions, share your insights with the larger group, and see how others might have similar patterns or different strategies to address them.

Identifying Triggers and Solutions

Common Triggers for Excessive Online Use:

- **Mental Health Conditions:** Anxiety, depression, or ADHD can lead individuals to seek comfort in online activities.
- **Environmental Factors:** Family conflict, lack of offline social interaction, or constant exposure to digital devices.
- **Psychological Factors:** Low self-esteem, impulsivity, or a need for social approval.
- **Accessibility and Availability:** The ease of accessing internet-enabled devices encourages prolonged use.

Strategies to Address Triggers:

- **Mindfulness**: Use meditation apps or breathing exercises to stay present.
- **Scheduled Breaks**: Set regular times to step away from screens.
- **Alternative Activities:** Engage in hobbies, exercise, or in-person socializing to reduce dependency on digital interactions.

Strategy Development

Template Example

Time Limits for Apps

Apps to limit	Streaming	Social media	Gaming
Daily Time Limits	2 hours	2 hours	1 hour

Offline Activity Scheduling

Daily Offline Activities	Reading	Exercising	Hobby
Time Blocks for Offline Activities	20:30 - 21:00	19:00 - 19:45	18:00 - 18:45

Notification Management

Apps with Notifications Turned Off	Facebook	Instagram	Gmail
Quiet Hours	8:00 - 17:00	8:00 - 17:00	16:00 - 8:00

Achievable Goals

| Small Goals for the Week	Limit social media to 2 hours per day	Spend 1 hour on a new hobby
Progress Tracker	Done	

Strategy Development

Using the provided template, outline a personalized plan to improve your online habits and incorporate more offline activities into your day.

Fill Out the Template:

1. Identify Apps: List the apps you use most frequently and set time limits for each. Be mindful of which apps tend to consume your time the most.

2. Schedule Offline Activities: Plan at least one offline activity each day to break up your screen time. This can include things like walking, reading, or practicing a hobby.

3. Adjust Notifications: Decide which app notifications you want to turn off and set quiet hours for your devices to avoid distractions during critical times.

4. Set Achievable Goals: Set 2–3 small, achievable goals for the week. These could involve reducing time on certain apps, increasing offline activities, or practicing mindfulness.

Reflection: Write a short paragraph on how you expect this plan to improve your focus, productivity, or overall well-being. Think about how reducing screen time and increasing offline activities might help you feel more energized or balanced.
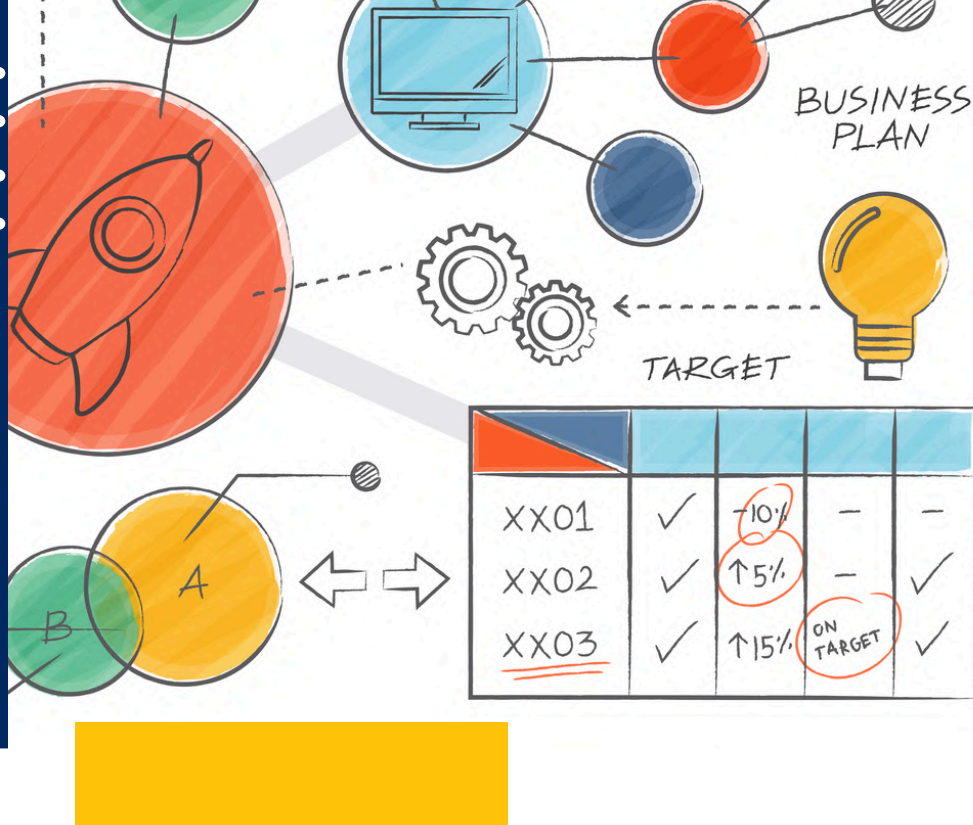
Strategy Development

Key Components of a Healthy Digital Plan:

1. **Time Limits for Specific Apps:** Identify apps that consume most of your time and set manageable daily limits.

2. **Offline Activity Scheduling:** Plan offline activities such as exercise, hobbies, or family time to create a balance.

3. **Notification Management:** Turn off unnecessary notifications and establish quiet hours to reduce distractions.

4. **Small, Achievable Goals:**
   - Reduce social media use by 30 minutes per day.
   - Spend 1 hour daily on a non-digital hobby.

Closing Discussion & Commitments

Small, consistent adjustments to your digital habits are more sustainable than drastic changes. Start by focusing on one manageable action that you can implement today. This will be your first step toward improving your digital well-being.

Reflection:

- Look at the plan you've developed and reflect on the changes you can make today.
- Choose one small, manageable change you can start with something that feels achievable.
- This could be reducing your screen time on a particular app, scheduling a daily offline activity, or turning off notifications during certain hours.

Share Your Commitment:

- Share the action you've committed to with the group.
- Reflect on how this change will impact your overall well-being, such as improving your mental health, focus, or relationships.
- By sharing your commitment, you reinforce your decision and take the first step toward healthier digital habits.

Remember, small, steady changes can lead to long-term improvements in your digital well-being.
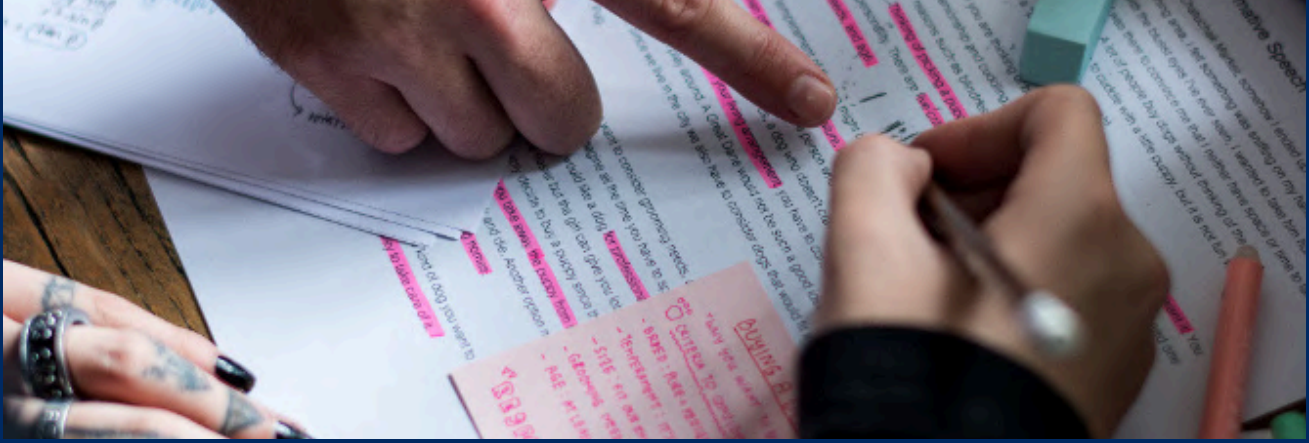
Key Takeaway Summary

- **Being mindful of online habits can improve mental and emotional health.**
- **Simple steps, like setting time limits and prioritizing offline activities, make a big difference.**
- **Building healthy online habits is a continuous process.**
- **Small, manageable changes are more effective than drastic ones.**
- **Creating accountability through support systems (family, friends) can help sustain positive habits.**
- **Tracking screen time and reflecting on its impact can lead to better awareness and informed decisions.**

Instructions for youth workers, educators, and teachers

Objective:
This lesson aims to help participants recognize unhealthy online habits and equip them with practical tools to build a balanced digital lifestyle.

Materials Needed:
- Materials Needed:
- Projector and screen
- Laptop or device for video playback
- Strategy templates
- Pens or pencils

Step 1: Introduction to Healthy Online Habits (10 Min)

Warmly welcome the participants, introducing the session's objective of the importance of healthy digital habits and how to achieve them with 5 simple steps. Present a brief overview of the workshop structure, you may also present a video depending on the time you can allocate for this task:

Suggested Video:
Keeping healthy habits with social media

Present and discuss the 5 steps to build healthy digital habits with the participants.

Step 2: Identifying Triggers and Solutions (15 min)

Give each participant a worksheet to list situations where they use screens excessively. Encourage them to reflect on moments they turn to digital devices due to boredom, stress, loneliness, or other triggers.

In pairs, participants should discuss their answers and share personal experiences about what drives them to spend excessive time online. Ask:

- What situations or emotions lead you to spend excessive time online?
- Can you identify patterns or specific triggers that cause this?

After discussing triggers, each pair should brainstorm practical solutions to replace unhealthy patterns with healthier alternatives.

Example:
Trigger: Stress or anxiety → Solution: Practice mindfulness techniques or engage in physical activity.

Bring the class together and ask each pair to share one trigger and one solution they discussed. Write down key insights on a whiteboard for everyone to see.

Step 3: Strategy Development (15 min)

Clean Template

Time Limits for Apps

Apps to limit			
Daily Time Limits			

Offline Activity Scheduling

Daily Offline Activities			
Time Blocks for Offline Activities			

Notification Management

Apps with Notifications Turned Off			
Quiet Hours			

Achievable Goals

Small Goals for the Week		
Progress Tracker		

Step 3: Strategy Development (15 min)

Print out the Clean Template from page before for each participant (or provide them digitally if appropriate).

Familiarize yourself with the template, which includes sections on time limits for apps, offline activity scheduling, notification management, and achievable goals.

The goal of this task is for participants to create a personalized plan for healthier online habits by outlining their digital behaviors and setting practical limits.

Quickly explain each section of the template and have participants complete the template by filling in the sections with their specific plans. Encourage them to be realistic and practical when deciding on time limits, offline activities, and notifications to turn off.

Offer suggestions or examples for each section if participants are struggling to get started.
Encourage participants to prioritize offline activities that promote relaxation and social interaction.

After completing the template, ask participants to write a brief paragraph (2-3 sentences) on how they expect this plan to improve their focus, productivity, or well-being.

If time allows, invite participants to share one or two goals they set for themselves with the group.

Step 4 Closing Discussion & Commitments (5 min)

Encourage participants to reflect on their personalized digital wellbeing plans and make a commitment to implement one small change immediately.

Begin by emphasizing the importance of gradual changes in digital habits. Highlight that small, consistent adjustments are more sustainable than drastic changes and that even small actions can have a big impact on overall wellbeing.

Remind participants that by taking control of their screen time, they can improve their mental health, productivity, and relationships. Over time, these positive habits lead to a more balanced and fulfilling digital life.

Prompt participants to choose one small, manageable action they can start implementing immediately. This could be setting a time limit for an app, scheduling an offline activity, or turning off notifications for certain apps.

Invite each participant to share the action they've chosen to implement. Ask them to briefly explain how this change will improve their overall wellbeing.

Conclude by reminding participants that developing healthier digital habits is an ongoing process. Encouraging them to check in with their plan regularly and adjust as needed will support their long-term success.

Follow-Up and At-Home Activities

- Weekly Review: Encourage participants to assess their digital habits weekly and adjust goals as needed.
- Accountability Check: Pair participants to support each other in their efforts.

Tips for Teachers:

Encourage participants to reflect on emotional or situational triggers, such as stress or boredom, and the impact of these on their screen time.

Create a supportive environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their commitments.

If there's time, facilitate brief discussions about potential challenges and how to overcome them, so participants feel prepared for success.

Tools

Habitica

Habitica is a free habit and productivity app that treats your real life like a game. Habitica can help you achieve your goals to become healthy and happy.

LINK

Freedom

Freedom lets you easily block distracting websites and apps on any device to stay more focused and productive.

LINK

References

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- Hughes G. (2022). Five steps to healthy digital habits. Student Space. https://studentspace.org.uk/wellbeing/five-steps-to-healthy-digital-habits
- The Wellbeing Thesis (n.d.). Digital Wellbeing – How to Have a Healthy Digital Diet. The Wellbeing Thesis. https://thewellbeingthesis.org.uk/foundations-for-success/digital-wellbeing-how-to-have-a-healthy-digital-diet/
- Valley Spring Recovery. (2024). Internet Addiction: Definition, Symptoms, Causes, Effects, and Treatment. Valley Spring Recovery. https://valleyspringrecovery.com/addiction/behavioral/internet/

QUIZ

1. What is the main benefit of setting time limits for digital device usage?

A. It increases screen time.

B. It helps balance online and offline activities.

C. It makes you more dependent on technology.

D. It decreases the quality of online activities.

2. Which of the following is a common trigger for excessive internet use?

A. Being productive.

B. Emotional stress or anxiety.

C. Spending time outdoors.

D. Participating in offline hobbies.

3. What is an example of a strategy to address excessive screen time?

A. Leave all notifications on to stay connected.

B. Schedule daily offline activities, such as exercise.

C. Keep digital devices near your bed while you sleep.

D. Spend more time on social media to relax.

4. According to the lesson, how can mindfulness help manage digital wellbeing?

A. By increasing time spent on social media.

B. By helping you become more aware of your screen time.

C. By encouraging you to ignore offline activities.

D. By promoting the use of multiple devices at once.

5. What should be included in a personalized digital wellbeing plan?

A. A list of all social media platforms you will use more.

B. A daily schedule with only online activities.

C. A time limit for apps, offline activities, and notification management.

D. An unlimited amount of screen time for work and leisure.

Solutions

Question 1: B
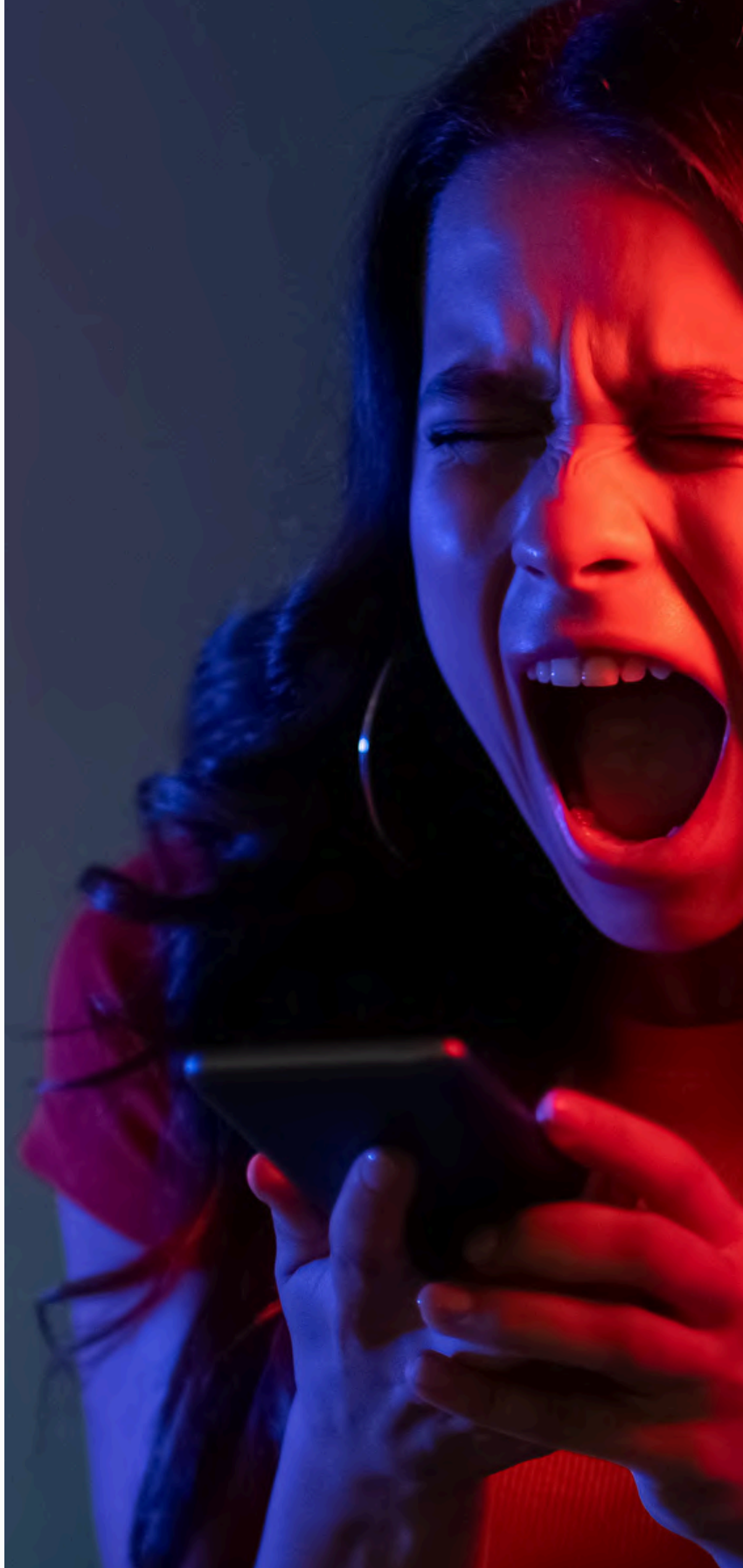Question 2: B
Question 3: B
Question 4: B
Question 5: C

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the Social Media Hyperconnectivity

Lélekben Otthon
Közhasznú Alapítvány

AdM
ArchiviodellaMemoria

LABC

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ASSERTED KNOWLEDGE
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