



# Teen Talk

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## ADDICTED TO FACEBOOK

— By Tynaya Frasier



Most teens have a Facebook® account, but what lies beneath the surface is that some teens may actually be addicted to it. Don't get me wrong, Facebook® is great for virtual

communication such as keeping in touch with your friends and family, but when you start to find it hard to log off, it's beginning to become a problem.

Sometimes the problem can start off being as simple as posting pictures of you and your friends, but when the "likes" and the comments start rolling in, it becomes hard to ignore them, and hours later you are still having long conversations and looking at pictures of people whom you may not even know. It's not only teens, though. Some adults have this problem too, and even though there's not a medical diagnosis for it, an addiction to Facebook® can become a serious problem that can negatively interfere with your grades, work, and other parts of your life. According to the New York Times, Facebook® has "350 million members worldwide who, collectively, spend 10 billion minutes there everyday". With statistics like this, you can see how Facebook® has taken on a life of its own and become an obsession for some users.

If you're questioning whether or not you are addicted to Facebook®, here are some questions that can help you figure it out:

- Do you find yourself losing sleep over Facebook® because you can't log off?
- Are you falling behind with your homework because you're spending too much time updating your Facebook® status instead of doing your assignments?
- Has work become second to social networking?
- When you log off of your computer, do you immediately turn to your phone to use your Facebook® application?

*If you've answered yes to any of these questions, it's likely that Facebook® is consuming too much of your time. This could also be true for any other social networking site you visit.*

**continued on reverse...**



## Emily's Health Tips

In our society, we sometimes use the word depression in a casual sense, but there is nothing casual about depression. Everybody has a bad day once in a while, but having a feeling such as sadness that lasts a long time is very different. Depression is a psychological condition that affects your feelings, behaviors, and thoughts. It can happen to people at any age, including teens. Sometimes it happens as a result of a stressful event, and other times it may seem like it just snuck up on you. If you are depressed, you may or may not notice changes in yourself, but people who are close to you will often notice things. Likewise, if you are close to someone who is truly depressed, you will usually notice a big change in that person's behavior or mood. It is important to try to understand the difference between feeling sad or "blue" and being what is called, "clinically depressed".

### Signs of clinical depression include:

- Feeling sad or empty a lot of the time—for at least 2 weeks
- Not feeling like doing things you used to enjoy
- Feeling irritated a lot of the time or losing your temper easily
- Sleeping a lot, or feeling restless or edgy
- Changes in your eating habits
- Changes to your sleeping patterns
- Finding it harder to concentrate
- Feeling like things will never get better
- Thinking about hurting yourself

The first steps to getting help with depression are noticing the signs and getting help from a trusted adult. Remember, it is not your fault if you become depressed. ♥

For more information about depression, visit:  
[youngwomenshealth.org/depression.html](http://youngwomenshealth.org/depression.html)



## Erica's Corner: The Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts Annual Girl 2 Girl Conference



The Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts Girl 2 Girl Conference is held annually so that girl scouts can connect with each other and learn about different topics. On Sunday, January 31st, the other CYWH youth advisors (*Tynaya and Emily*) and I co-facilitated a workshop about internet safety with our supervisor Dénisse. We are all certified as Internet Mentors and are passionate about spreading awareness about staying safe in cyberspace.

The girls in the audience were between 11–15 years old and had a good understanding of internet safety. They seemed to have talked about the consequences of inappropriate internet behavior with their parents, because they knew that it was “not cool” to post personal information on social networking sites, chats, etc. They were also aware that people in chats and other online groups can pretend to be someone that they are not. The girls all agreed that the internet can be both educational and dangerous, and people should follow rules and use the internet with caution.

We like to make our presentations interactive and stimulating, so we showed videos from [netsmartz.org](http://netsmartz.org). For example, one video called “Profile Penalty” was about what not to put on a social networking profile, and the consequences of inappropriate posts. We also showed a video called “Broken Friendships”, which was about a girl that shared her password with her best friend. Her friend shared the password with a group of girls from their high school who then sent e-mails to boys in their class. These girls sent inappropriate things which appeared to be coming from the owner of the email account.

We discussed the problem that arose in this video, and the girls came up with a way to resolve the issue. The majority of the participants said that she should have never shared her password, and that now that her password is no longer private she should cancel her account and create a new one, or take a break for a while. The girls who attended the Girl 2 Girl Conference might have been young, but they were very mature and very aware of the dangers of the internet. ♥

For more information about how to become an Internet Mentor, visit: [isafe.org](http://isafe.org)

If you would like to watch the Netsmartz videos, visit: [netsmartz.org](http://netsmartz.org)

### Addicted to Facebook, continued...

Luckily, this is an addiction that you can shake, but you have to commit to the following things.

- ★ Keep track of what you actually do on Facebook®, and how much time you're spending on the site. This can help you pinpoint where the problem lies. For example: Are you playing games, chatting with friends, or searching for old friends? Before you can figure out how to kick the Facebook® habit, you need to admit that you have a problem.
- ★ Next, give yourself a set amount of time to update your status and check your news feed (*try for no more than once a day!*)
- ★ Instead of chatting with your best friend online, go for a walk and catch up.
- ★ Instead of turning on your computer, find a good book to read, or listen to music.
- ★ If cutting down on your Facebook® time doesn't work, de-activate your account for a while.

Virtual communication can be a great thing, but you have to balance it with other important activities in your life, such as school, work, and spending “real” time with family and friends. Social networking shouldn't come first in your life, and if it does, it's time to take a break and focus on what really matters. ♥

For more ways on how to beat your Facebook® addiction, visit [netaddiction.com](http://netaddiction.com)

## Introducing Johnny



Johnny Mejia Jr. is the newest peer leader in the Adolescent Medicine Department.

He is 15 years old and a freshman at John D. O'Bryant School of Math and Science. Since Johnny goes to a school that specializes in math, it's no surprise that he loves math, and his current favorite subject is geometry. Johnny is still a freshman, so it's understandable that he has no idea of what he wants to study in college or what school he wants to go to. However, I have no doubt that he will accomplish his goal of going to college.

Johnny decided to become a peer leader so that he can advocate for young men. He feels that a lot of male teens have issues with peer pressure. For example, a lot of young men are pressured into having sex and doing drugs. A lot of older teens talk about it, and younger teens feel like they need to follow the trend in order to be cool. So he feels that it's important for young men to know more about sex and its consequences.

Johnny helps teach new doctors how to work with teens, and as time goes on, he will staff health tables and give presentations, too. He says that as soon as he got here everyone made him feel comfortable; especially the peer leaders from the CYWH. Aside from school and work, Johnny enjoys playing baseball. He finds it to be a great sport to both watch and play. ♥



**Tweet Tweet!** The CYWH is on Twitter! We're tweeting about up-to-the-minute info on what's going on around the Center; including events, new blog entries, health chat reminders, and brand new health guides posted on our website. Follow us at: [twitter.com/cywh/](http://twitter.com/cywh/)