

# Solutions

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## Dangers of Excessive Screen Use

Studies consistently link compulsive internet use to brain changes that foster addictive behaviors and impair intellectual and physical growth. Teens now average 4.8 hours online daily. Signs of addiction include disinterest in other activities, withdrawal symptoms when offline, and using screens to escape negative feelings. If you're a concerned parent, know that over 50 studies confirm family counseling is the most effective approach. This therapy helps establish healthier screen habits, promotes offline activities, improves family communication, and supports children's mental and emotional well-being. Don't endure the frustration of watching your teen struggle with depression, anxiety, aggression, defiance, or even bullying. These issues are treatable but require family involvement rather than sole focus on the teen. Your employee assistance program can help. Learn more at <https://greenschoolsgreenfuture.org/excessive-internet-use-disrupts-key-parts-of-the-teenage-brain/>.

## Stress Tips from the Field: Conquer Monday Morning Blues

Feeling the Monday morning blues is common. Very simply, weekends give you control over your time and choices. It's almost like retirement for 48 hours. But the script flips on Monday, and demands you don't control take over. Overcome this overwhelming feeling by spending 10 to 15 minutes on Sunday night writing down your goals and organizing your personal to-do list for the week. This way, you can start the week feeling more in charge rather than suddenly "dictated to" by work.



## Suicide Prevention Month: Connections are a Key in Intervention

Everyone can help prevent suicide by knowing the warning signs, understanding how to initiate an intervention conversation, using empathy and compassion, and knowing how and when to act. A key component of Suicide Awareness Month is challenging the stigma and misconceptions around mental health and suicide. One of the issues the MHCC has highlighted for many years is the harmful impact of such stigma on individuals struggling with their mental health. Stigma can be a significant deterrent to individuals seeking help. It can also exacerbate their struggles and potentially lead to tragic outcomes. By promoting understanding and empathy, we can create an environment where people feel safe and comfortable discussing their mental health challenges. This includes recognizing that seeking help is a sign of strength — not weakness — and that mental health is just as important as physical health. Learn more at <https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/event/suicide-prevention-awareness-month/2024-09-05/>. You can always reach out to FSEAP for 24/7 support.

## Using Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage your emotions while also recognizing, understanding, and influencing the emotions of others. Maximize EI's use to enhance relationships, experience fewer conflicts, and enjoy your job more. 1) When a coworker shares a concern, listen without interrupting, and show you're engaged by nodding, maintaining eye contact, and paraphrasing what they've said. Similarly with your boss, listen carefully to feedback or instructions, and ask effective questions to ensure you understand and show it. 2) When tensions rise in the office, decide you will remain calm. Encourage others to take a break, thereby helping defuse tense situations. Likewise, if your boss is under pressure, decide to offer solutions rather than adding to their stress, thereby allowing your calm demeanor to influence their mood. 3) The most important EI skill is being aware of your own emotional triggers and managing your response to them. If a coworker's comment annoys you, pause for a moment and take a breath. You'll respond thoughtfully rather than reacting impulsively. And if you feel frustrated or upset by something your boss has said or done, take time to cool down before addressing the issue. Then enter the conversation as though you are teaming with them to explore a concern.

## Choosing a Positive Attitude at Work

Many employees think a positive attitude at work is mostly shaped by the environment, job satisfaction, and how they are treated. While a positive work environment can foster a good attitude, your attitude is also a controllable soft skill that can be developed and applied in any situation. Experiment with your attitude. Choose to approach challenges with optimism while maintaining a professional demeanor. When the work unit feels stressed or dysfunctional, clearly define your own boundaries to prevent burnout, and your attitude will remain more positive. Even in less-than-ideal conditions, you can choose to maintain a positive attitude. Why? While you may not control the conditions around you, you can control how you respond to them. The payoff is maintaining your well-being, but it will have a ripple effect that improves the overall environment.

## Career Counselling

Feeling undecided about your career?

Career counselling can help you identify your interests, values and personal styles in order to make better career choices or meet your professional goals. Service includes career counselling and consultations with career specialists on issues including educational planning, career advancement and changes, job search, as well as resume and interview preparation.

Career support services can include:

- A comprehensive career assessment to identify career goals;
- The identification of opportunities for personal & professional growth;
- Assistance with resume writing, as well as developing strategies for employment research and professional networking;
- Coaching to assist individuals in preparing for an interview, including pre-interview research, planning and follow-up; and
- Role-playing to practice communication skills.

For personalized, confidential support, contact FSEAP today.

