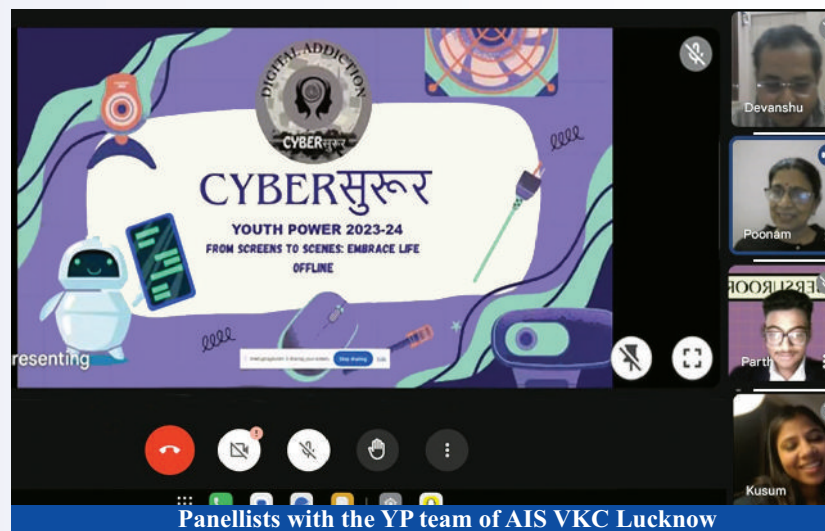


# Perils of screen time

## Elucidating The Detrimental Repercussions Of Acute Digital Addiction

**Y**outh Power-an annual social leadership initiative organised by The Global Times, brings together teams from Amity schools across India to drive meaningful change through a structured, multi-stage programme. A key stage of the programme is the 'Panel Discussion' where experts from various sectors come together to engage in insightful debates on pressing social issues. This exclusive series spotlights the panel discussions organised as a part of YP 2023-24. In **Part IX** of this series, we spotlight the critical issue of 'Digital Addiction', a cause championed by the Youth Power team of AIS VKC Lucknow.



### Digital addiction affects both physical and mental health

**Panellist: Dr Devanshu Shukla**, paediatrician, Vatsalya Nursing Home, Lucknow

“Earlier, children in my hospital ward would spend their time drawing or playing together. Now I find that kids are totally absorbed in their mobile phones and have zero interaction with each other. This lack of physical activity has led to an increase in obesity, diabetes and hypertension at an early age. In toddlers, problems like delayed speech, social isolation, and an increase in the autistic spectrum are being noticed. The cognitive skills have drastically reduced with depression and anger issues becoming common. We must adhere to some guidelines like no screen time for kids under two years, and for those aged two - five, digital tools should be used for educational purposes only. Parents should restrict the usage of mobile phones to calm a distressed child. Most importantly, age appropriate content should be monitored, and children must get 8-9 hours of sleep.”

### Take a break from your screen every hour

**Panellist: Dr Poonam Kishore**, ophthalmologist

“Even though technology is useful for children as they can find hundreds of articles at the click of a button, but spending unregulated time on screen can prove to be very harmful for their eyes. You can equate this situation to one where you are running for hours together. Your legs will become fatigued, and you will run out of breath. Unfortunately, your eyes cannot convey to you how tired they are, but you will experience itching and watering of eyes. You can also get bad headaches. The good rule to follow is 20:20:20 where after every 20 minutes of screen time, look at an object twenty feet away for 20 seconds. While this may not be possible when you are focusing on studies, at least take a break after every hour for a few seconds. Some other tips to follow for good eye health is to keep your laptop at eye level, never read in the dark and maintain a good posture while working or studying on a laptop.”

### Understand the difference between real and reel life

**Panellist: Kusum**, psychologist, GD Goenka School, Delhi

“Digital addiction is not a moral failure; it is really a behavioural problem. It begins with parents giving a mobile phone to three-year-old kids. The fear of missing out is so high in children that they suffer from low self-esteem and lack of confidence if they feel unaccepted on social media platforms. Excess of everything is bad. However, children do not know how to seek a balance and there is no one guiding them. Children have to be made aware that everything they consume on social media affects them not just today but also in the long run. Since children form bonds based on their social media presence, it can lead to several relationship problems later in life. They must be taught to differentiate between real life and reel life.”



Part IX

Expert Speak

