



RILEY'S RAINFOREST

“Send down ... from the clouds of Thy mercy the rains of Thy healing...” —Bahá'u'lláh

Media Overload

Do you like 2 txt? Cell phones, the Internet, and other technology are important for communication, education, and entertainment. They're fun to use, but it's easy to get too attached to them.

In one survey, over 60% of kids ages 11–18 felt they were addicted to the Internet. More than half said they were addicted to their mobile phones. Another study of college students found that most couldn't go a full day without cell phones or computers. Some reported feeling sad, lonely, and anxious without access to media.

Texting, in particular, can be easy to overdo. According to one study, American teens send more than 3,000 texts per month on average! Some experts say that intense text use can lead to hand and wrist injuries. The pressure to be in constant contact with friends and respond instantly can also cause anxiety and lack of sleep.



While you can't avoid technology completely, using it in moderation is key. Chat with your parents about how much media is a reasonable amount. That could mean setting a timer when you're using the computer or TV. You could establish “off screen” times each day when you don't use any electronics. Make it a goal to spend time in nature every day. And look for hobbies and games that don't need batteries.

Turning off technology can be hard, but it may help you tune in to new ways to have fun and connect with friends and family in person.

Explore & Soar: Tech-Free Fun

Technology can be a cool way to stay in touch with others, but you don't always need gadgets. Try these tech-free ways to nurture your friendships.

- Write notes to tell friends three things you appreciate about them.

- Play or invent a fun board game or ball game.
- Start a book club to chat about favorite reads.
- Plan a group hiking trip or another nature adventure.



Canopy of Questions

What do you want to know about staying healthy and happy? Health can involve your body, mind, emotions, and spirit. Send your questions to brilliant@usbnc.org. Responses are given by a health professional.

“What ways can I control my anger when I am in a difficult situation?”

—Mona, age 13

Dear Mona,

What a great question. So many people find anger a most difficult and challenging experience. Anger can feel like a powerful ocean wave, and if you aren't prepared, it can carry you away. It helps to know the early signs of anger, when you feel frustration or annoyance creeping in. At this stage, the force of the wave is manageable. When you see it coming, take a deep breath, smile, count to nine, and jump as high as you can—as if you were physically jumping over a big wave. Or imagine jumping high in the sky, as if to reach the center of a rainbow. You can also say a prayer, take a walk, listen to happy music, or dance to shake off anger.

Anger isn't always bad, if used the right way. You can use anger waves to do good, such as fighting injustice and poverty. Then it can be a positive force.

Wishing you joy,

*Keyvan Geula
Licensed Family Therapist*