



6840 Seaview Road, Sechelt, BC V0N 3A4

www.zonein.ca

Unplug'in – How can you help?

The Zone'in *Unplug - Don't Drug Movement* was established in 2008 to address the alarming rise in incidence of misdiagnosis and medication of young children who have TV and videogame addictions. Zone'in is actively advocating to physicians, pediatricians and health and education governments to recommend a three month unplug trial for families, prior to diagnostic procedures and medication.

Zone'in recognizes childhood TV and videogame addictions are at epidemic proportion, and understands that unplugging children from technology will not be easy. As fear of human connection often underlies addiction, Zone'in is creating the Unplug'in Game to address issues of children's fear of self, others and nature.

When children play the Unplug'in Game, they will begin a labyrinthine journey to different dimensions of self, where they can safely explore challenges and achievements. Children emerge with a new sense of who they really are, allowing them to confidently reach out to others and nature. Experiencing the Unplug'in Game allows children to gain the skills and confidence necessary to unplug from virtual technology, and begin to enjoy the reality of life.

What can you do to help?

We need a team of people to assist us with the Zone'in *Unplug - Don't Drug* policy initiative in the following areas. If you can help us, or know of anyone we should contact, please give us a call 1-888-8zonein or send us an email info@zonein.ca.

1. Send us your stories, concerns, and experiences regarding TV and videogame addictions, unplugging children from technology, or diagnosing and drugging children. Advocate for an unplug trial for all children, prior to diagnosis and medication.
2. Inform your family physician, local health and education Government, and media regarding your concerns and experiences.
3. To complete the Unplug'in Game, Zone'in requests help from experienced board game designers, manufacturers, and financial investors. We will also require classrooms to participate in initial prototype testing.

Suggested Unplug'in Initiatives

Parents – would benefit from family meetings, to teach family members about the detrimental effects of TV/VG (TV and videogames), and then design a reduction plan (can use the *TV/VG Help Module* free download www.zonein.ca). Families can discuss reasons why each family member uses TV/VG, and how they each intend to reduce usage times. Discussion regarding problems they anticipate when reducing are great places to start. Put a blanket over the TV, get a dog that needs walking, join the community centre, rotate chefs for dinner, family wrestling

night, dance competitions, dust off the card and board games, talk – best/worst thing that happened today are all great places to start the ball rolling.

Schools – education professionals would benefit from being informed regarding behaviors associated with TV and videogame addictions, and address reduction as a school initiative. Schools could look at redesign programs and school environments to accommodate, not diagnosis and drug, child behaviors. Teachers would benefit from being informed regarding movement, touch and connection alternatives to medicating child behavior.

Physicians, pediatricians, child psychiatrists – prior to diagnosis and prescription of any psychotropic medication to children, physicians might consider recommending whole families undergo a three month technology unplug trial. Children already on psychotropic medication could also undergo a technology unplug trial with subsequent attempts toward medication reduction.

Health Government - health professionals would benefit from education regarding TV and videogame addiction identification and treatment, and pass this information onto parents. All parents should be educated regarding prevention of TV/VG addictions in children, and treatment for adult addictions, as well as the negative outcomes of drugging children. All advertising of medications in lay public magazines by pharmaceutical companies should be prohibited by government.

Education Government – teachers and schools would benefit from understanding that only medical professionals are authorized to diagnose ADHD and recommend medication, and teachers and school administrations have no authority to tell parents that their child should be on medication. Exploring alternatives to designated funding for diagnosing and categorizing children, might serve to discourage monetary incentives.

University researchers – government could explore sponsoring research grants to investigate environmental parameters regarding TV and videogame addictions and subsequent diagnosis and medication. Funding of studies that focus on parenting styles, level of attachment between parent and child, amount of time parent spends with child, TV and videogame usage (frequency, duration, intensity of violence), and TV and videogame correlation with diagnosis and medication would be a few suggestions. Following are some specific research parameters put forward to researchers that attended the 2008 *Brain Development and Learning Conference* to possibly include in future research.

1. Record TV and videogame usage (frequency, duration, intensity) of children with diagnosed ADHD, Autism, Aspergers, PTSD, depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorders. Compare to control group who is undiagnosed.
2. Use current ADHD, Autism, Aspergers, PTSD, depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder scales on children with low and high TV and videogame usage. Compare differences between low vs. high usage for different diagnostic categories.
3. Analyze the TV and videogame usage of parents of children with diagnosed ADHD, Autism, Aspergers, PTSD, depression, anxiety, bipolar disorders. Compare to parent control group of undiagnosed children.
4. Analyze physical stress indicators in TV and videogame addicted children and adults. Compare to physical stress indicators in children with ADHD, Autism, Aspergers, PTSD, depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorders.
5. ADHD medications have not been tested on children younger than 13 years of age, and depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder medications have only been tested on adults.



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- Prescription of these medications by physicians and pediatricians therefore need identifiable parameters that have been determined by academic researchers not affiliated with pharmaceutical companies.
6. Trial of psychotropic medications with one group, and trial of TV and videogame unplugging with the other.
 7. Do all of above, but consider parental abuse and neglect (instead of TV and videogame addictions) as determinants in behavioral diagnosis.
 8. Determine role of right orbital frontal cortex in TV and videogame addictions.

Thank you all for your support and interest in creating a healthy environment for sustainable child development!

Cris Rowan, BSCBi, BScOT, SIPT
CEO Zone'in Programs Inc.