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Pediatric Occupational Therapist Cris Rowan presented  
**“Mixed Signals”** on November 1, 2013  
to **health and education staff in Bella Coola, BC.**

### *What did the participants have to say?*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Workshop objectives were met	55%	43%	2%		
Workshop was well organized	50%	47%	3%		
Workshop was just the right length	37%	49%	9%	5%	
Instructor was well informed	75%	25%			
Workshop materials were useful	59%	37%	4%		

#### Most valuable information learned in workshop:

- That you can use technology but limit the use of it in classrooms and still have a positive outcome in learning.
- Effect of technology on children.
- Keeping a child energized, yet also helping children vent energy.
- How much time children are actually spending using technology.
- Pharmaceutical effects! Students need “Green Space” – no tech in the bedroom, eat dinner as a family (with no tech), build attachments.
- The link between adhd and too much technology.
- Detrimental aspects of media – importance of movement and nature.
- Understanding behaviours I see in my students.
- How tech does affect kids learning
- Technology does effect us in strange ways, add onto drugs and alcohol.
- Freedom of technology to some kids affects all our kids. If other communities can deal with this effectively, so can we.
- That videos are available.
- I finally have the proof about video games to lead a strong objector to.
- Statistics and strategies to share with parents and classes.
- This reinforced my beliefs in the positive benefits of the outdoors!
- Techniques I can use at work and at home to help kids focus.
- My main interest was with the teenagers are how it (tech) affects them, I had not heard about the erectile dysfunction info before.
- Strategies to use as parents and students
- It really brought home the harm technology is doing to the developing child. It reinforced the trend I’m seeing in my classroom over the past 25 years.
- That even gentle “baby” TV can be harmful.

- Zone-O-Meter
- Addictive behaviors
- My kids need more time to play without TV. I need to talk and play more with them.
- I found that learning more about the use of technology is too awful for everyone to hear.
- Medication use on children and the length of tech with children.
- That it is not the technology itself that is causing these issues but overuse and it should be monitored and limited.
- Behavior can be worked with. Connection- attachment – hugs – are okay!
- Ideas for giving kids a chance to learn more through exercise etc.
- That everyone has to be more informed.
- Is just to be more observant on how kids are more active during class, just take them on a nature walk etc.
- Media violence alters brain function.
- Having another outlook on the effects of video gaming.
- More aware of the effects of technology and too much of it.
- I thought the video gaming was very intriguing.
- Try to stay away from too much technology. Keep the balance.
- Studies backing my understanding.
- Lots of work to do.
- Medication regarding adhd.
- Didn't know anything about this. It's shocking to know this. Amazing.
- Children can be separated from their technology devices in a good way and understanding. Also "synergy energy".
- The stats and videos.
- How medication is not the answer for everything.
- The impact of psychological drugs on young minds.
- Stats, tech info, really liked the graphic cards Building Foundations and Virtual Futures. Brain function, and so much more!
- Drugs like Ritalin don't always work in the child's favor.
- All the science behind what technology does to our brains; that was fascinating and alarming!
- How tech is affecting the development of children.
- That addiction to technology can replace healthy attachment.
- Erectile dysfunction in young males exposed to pornography; Health Canada issued warning re: radiation/cell phones. Media violence alters brain function – frontal cortex gone.
- Advantages and disadvantages of technology. The triangle graphics Building Foundations and Virtual Futures.
- That the research support what I have been feeling/thinking.
- The overuse of technology and why it should be limited.
- How teachers are trying to control 10 different characters at once and holding the bar too high for the hyper active students.
- Research stats...would like the updated.
- Limit the use of technology – more outdoor, environmental experience.
- Information about technology, parents need to know this, only so much teachers can do.

#### Information not covered that would like in future workshops:

- No, was good.
- Positives of video games → team building, reading, thinking outside the box.
- No
- No
- No
- Wondering is there any research on tech on First Nations? [Presenter comment: no].

- No
- N/A
- Distinguish between adhd and parent/Dr over diagnosed and drugged phenomena – they are not the same thing. Adhd is not interchangeable with hyperactive behavior!
- Needs something about how to help students that have to deal or be around kids with technology.
- No
- I feel that more of this should be shown and taught to parents and their kids.
- Dangers of social media besides bullying such as stalking, preying and luring – ways predators can use social media, pics and info to find and harm children.
- No
- No. Well the lunch could have gone more smoothly. Teachers visited at the lunch bar, making the lineup long and slow. When the end of the line was up to eat, the workshop started again.
- No
- N/A
- Not to my knowledge
- Feelings of parents – sense of having made HUGE mistakes. How to help them cope and not deny the issue.
- N/A
- Children can help in making rules if they are included.
- N/A
- No
- No
- There are 2 sides to a story.
- How do you bring this out to parents?
- Love the “brain” stuff.
- No
- No I feel everything was very informative.
- The influence of aggressive sports and how they affect behaviors.
- Sports and aggressive behavior.

#### How workshop could have been better or more helpful:

- Nothing. It is clear.
- Do a poll (hands up or stand up) to gauge how much tech (TV, cellphone, gaming etc) we use a day to help us realize our own connection.
- More movement breaks over the 2 days.
- Need to finish afternoon session before I can respond.
- It was good!
- Was presented very well.
- Including other community groups e.g. children who witness abuse, day cares etc.
- Maybe a time schedule
- N/A
- Present at least cursory look at other sides perspective; define terms more clearly (even a handout would work) ie adhd, tech (digital)?
- Have enough photocopies already
- Needed more time.
- N/A It was awesome/perfect.
- To go through all the slides.
- More open to questions and comments.
- I'd like a smaller setting with fewer people and more interaction.

- Maybe smaller class. Allow for more questions and comments. More input from different viewpoints.
- Yes, to other parents, adolescents.
- More strategic planning in groups would be fun.
- N/A
- For those people who have heard the morning session could understand there are solutions to difficulties we face today.
- Longer
- Not everyone had the handouts which was a little distracting.
- More interaction, lots of “talk” regarding outside but not going outside. Bring some exercise stuff for the back of the room?
- Not sure thought it was great. Except – maybe having materials available ahead of time. How technology is taking over the world...How to use it balanced.
- Maybe one day for each session.
- I would not change anything!
- It was great!

Would you recommend this workshop to others? If not, why not?

- Yes I would, because our future is our next generation!
- Yes
- Yes, because it is a good way to connect with kids.
- Yes, I found the section on medicating children very important and interesting.
- Yes. Good information and all is supported with research.
- Yes – it is very relevant and practical.
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes, very insightful
- Yes
- Yes to parents especially
- Absolutely
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes, definitely!
- Yes everyone needs to see this
- Yes
- Yes, definitely. Due to our location and lack of active activities for kids to do, TV and gaming is huge!
- Yes
- Yes, parent clubs
- Yes
- Yes I really enjoyed this workshop and I would recommend this to others.
- Yes very useful
- Yes, a lot of info that is helpful not just for educators but parents to work together.
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes!
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes, to other parents, adolescents
- Yes most definitely
- Yes, I would recommend this workshop to others because I see too many children using too many video games.

- Yes
- Yes (parents/students)
- Yes
- Yes to the parents of the community even if it is an individual workshop.
- Yes
- Yes, a lot of valuable info for parents, teachers, TA's
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Parents! Pre-natal classes!
- Yes. It would be a definite eye-opener to any caregiver or any professional working with children.
- Yes
- Yes!
- Yes
- Parents.
- Yes
- Yes for our community.
- Yes to the parents of the community.
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- yes

#### Additional Comments:

- Awesome!
- A major problem at our school is TA's using cell phones during instruction time (bad example for students). Talk about role modelling!
- Thanks!
- Very good information.
- Satisfied with everything.
- Good stuff.
- Very educational and brings out awareness of TV etc. Should be presented to politicians.
- Stutwmiitscw! Thank You! TRY, modify, TRY again
- Love to have Cris come more often (to our school).
- Perhaps the word "gamers" should be enhanced to "video gamers" because it conflicts with the name. Also used by role-play gamers (D & D etc)
- Very interesting, Thank You!
- The statistics to support what we have intuitively known for a while. Do you visit classes at elementary level?
- Would be interested in having you work with some of our students at BCE as therapist/consultant. Are you available for that idea?
- This information has to reach parents for any significant change to happen.
- The antidrug movie was giving this much of the whole pic and was frustrating. More processing /pair share/talk time/brain-movement breaks.
- I really enjoyed this workshop and am realizing now that all the technology is not good for anyone.
- Bothered me how the studies categorized the children into normal and not normal. Who defines who is normal? "Non-normal" kids exhibit aggressive tendencies and behaviors. Do these "experts" define who we are?
- Thank you. I needed more inspiration to grow.
- Very interesting. It made me very aware of the effects of technology.

- I feel if we had more interaction we will retain information in a larger scale.
- Very interesting about the bouncy balls they sit on, and how it stimulates them.
- I was raised without much technology. I've always wanted my children to have less of it. Unplug.
- Was a very good informative morning.
- I agree that children need lots of play and interactions with parent, grandparents, peers and community members. I think Cris did a wonderful job!!
- The breaks were important and helps us to remember for attention span difficulties can be applied to kids.
- Thanks for all the info. I will be looking online for more.
- Great to have a parent/child interactive workshop that encouraged discussion in the family. Thank you, I enjoyed this workshop very much.
- I wonder if studies have been done on how all this translates in families/community where other addictions/domestic violence compounds children's challenges in learning?
- A lot of videos, perhaps summarize the first 45 min. of vids you showed.
- Think it's great that doing Crash-N-Bump initiatives; would love an excellent playground for SAMS. Kids don't go outside here. We are grade 6-12 and NEED EXERCISE OPPORTUNITIES.
- Thank you! Really informative.
- I think when you talk about mental health it might be good to mention that there are children with clinical mental health challenges. Yes, increased attachment to parents, increased exercise, etc will all help these children, it isn't only caused by tech and tech effects. PTSD which is high in First Nation communities is an example and something that would make people more likely to have unhealthy coping mechanisms and greater propensity to addiction (including tech) and therefore harder to use.

*Presenter comment:* I stated in workshop that I am encouraging health and education professionals to look toward evidence based alternatives to address mental health issues e.g. movement, touch, connection and nature prior to referring for diagnosis and medication (see *Schools Operating Safely – Child Behavior Management Policy* handout provided at workshop).

- Would recommend more balanced drugs section – good but might lead to misunderstanding.

**Analysis:** comments about wanting handouts ahead of time, wanting presenter to consult at BCE, parents to have this information, more movement breaks.

**Action:** will request staff are emailed handouts ahead of time. Presenter Cris Rowan will be in Bella Coola from Jan. 12-24 and Mar.10-21, 2014 working for Healthy Beginnings. Please contact Cris at [crowan@zonein.ca](mailto:crowan@zonein.ca) if you would like to book consulting time, as she could extend stay for March visit. If you would like to meet with Cris to discuss initiatives, she is available evenings and weekends during both Jan. and Mar. visit dates.