

## **Abstract**

### **Information technology and family health**

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Information technology in particular Internet has been developed rapidly. The revolutionary and affordable technology and related products are becoming more and more popular and affecting the daily life of the whole world.

Internet brings a lot of convenience to us. However, improper use of the new technology may have potential risks, particularly to our health. It does not only affect individual's physical health but also the psychosocial health including relationship with family members and other people.

Children and adolescents using Internet is in particular a special concern, as this group of users may not be mature enough to self-regulate and they are prone to spend prolonged time in browsing Internet. Family conflicts often arise from the different perception between parents and children in using Internet.

Parents should understand the reasons why children spend so much time on the Internet through open and non-judgmental communication. However, children may sometimes avoid open communication with parents e.g. anticipations of banning, scolding and punishments from parents. Parents should stay calm, recognize the acceptable needs of their children and granting permission for appropriate use of Internet. In occasions when the banning of inappropriate use are warranted, parents should show genuine concerns for their children's own benefits by providing reasonable explanations. This can reduce hard feeling due to rejection. Letting the children know parents are caring and sensible also facilitate effective parenting.

In addition, being a good role model is very important. Parents should show their children the appropriate behaviour and attitude in using Internet and computer, including the smart devices. It would not be effective to ask the kids not to spend so much time on Internet but the parents themselves are chatting with friends or watching TV frequently with their smart phones, sometimes in inappropriate occasions.