

Internet Addiction

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Dr. Daria Kuss

Complete List of Publications: [Dr Daria Kuss](#)

Dr. Kuss Bio as featured on [Academia](#)

Dr Daria Kuss is a Chartered Psychologist, Chartered Scientist and Associate Professor in Psychology at Nottingham Trent University, UK. She has published prolifically in peer-reviewed journals and books, and her publications include over 70 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters, three authored books, and over 60 international conference presentations. Her

significant experience and notable achievements in the area have allowed her to gain an international reputation as Internet addiction and cyberpsychology expert. She is currently a guest editor of Addictive Behaviors and the Journal of Addiction Research and Therapy, editorial board member of Psychopathology, Frontiers in Psychology and JMIR Serious Games. Moreover, Daria is a member of various international and national professional bodies, including Chartered Psychologist at the British Psychological Society, a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, member of the European Psychiatric Association, the Hellenic Association for the Study of Internet Addiction Disorder, the International Consortium of Mobile Phone Behavior, the International Communication Association, and the International Association of Applied Psychology. Daria is among the Top 10 publishing academics at Nottingham Trent University with her research cited nearly 3000 times, and she has won the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health Best Paper Award 2015 for her research on online social networking.

Selection of Previous Interviews

[Nottingham Trent University's Dr Daria Kuss: Cyberpsychology](#)

[An interview with Dr Daria Kuss](#)

[Is social media really addictive? | Interviews | Naked Scientists](#)

[Award-winning Author and Psychologist on Social Media Addiction and How To Push Back](#)

[Against It - EP7 with Dr. Daria Kuss by A Second Impression • A podcast on Anchor](#)

Internet Addiction

Here follow the internet addiction statistics (2020) and predictions (2021):

Key Internet Usage Statistics

Much like other addictions, to become an internet addict, you first have to be an internet user. And so, to comprehend the internet addiction statistics better, you must understand where this disorder starts. Amazingly, many people enjoy multiple activities over the internet that enables them to socialize, meet, and exchange ideas.

For a good reason, many spend endless hours online examining topics of interest and engaging online friends on social networks and chat rooms. As the stats below imply, internet usage is proliferating, impelled by the proliferation of social media networks and smartphones.

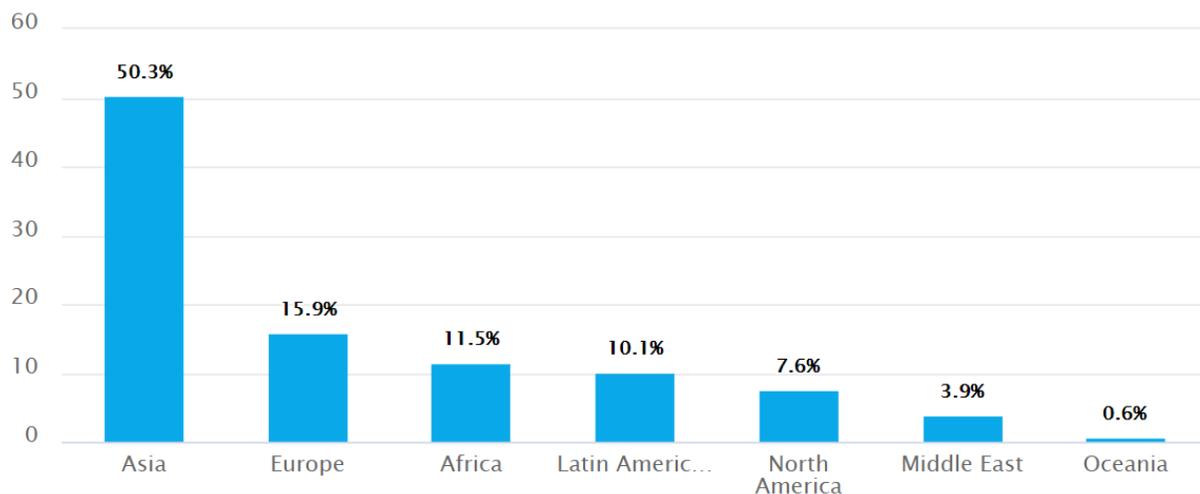
Distribution of internet users

The entire world has awakened to a high tide of internet usage. It's sweeping all corners of this world, enticing people of all generations and demographics to join the rollercoaster ride. Asians continue to dominate, with countries like China taking the lead in the hectic race. Interestingly, mobile internet has risen from the periphery, and going by statistics; it's the current driver of internet usage growth.

- As of April 2020, 59% of the global population of approximately 4.57 billion people were active internet users.
- In terms of penetration, 58.7% of the global population has internet access.
- Of the total number of internet users, 50.3% are in Asia, 15.9% in Europe, 11.5% in Africa, 10.1% Latin America, 7.6% North America, 3.9% Middle East, and 0.6% in Oceania.

- In addition, 4.2 billion people were active mobile internet users, 3.81 billion were active social media users, whereas 3.76 were active mobile social media users.
- Moreover, 854 million Chinese adults or 59.3% of the population are active internet users. On the other hand, 292 million US citizens or 89% of the population are active internet users.
- In 2014, there were 2.485 billion internet users. This number has grown steadily over time to reach 4.388 billion users in 2019.
- Looking at it from a regional perspective, North America has the highest internet penetration at 94.6%. Other regions on the top list include Europe (87.2%), Latin America (70.5%), Middle East (69.2%), Oceania (67.4%), Asia (53.6%), and Africa (39.3%).

Distribution of Internet Users Across the World 2020



Source: Internetworldstats.com

Created by CompareCamp.com

Time spent on the internet

This is where things start to go haywire. The following statistics show that, as the internet evolves, more people are losing control and getting entangled on the internet.

- On average, in 2019, an internet user spends 6 hours and 42 minutes online each day.
- Besides, internet users spend an average of 3 hours on social media platforms per day.
- In the US, 81% of adults spend some time online daily.
- 12.4% of internet users spend more time online than intended very often or often.
- 13.7% of internet addicts find it hard to stay away from the internet for several days at a time.

Internet Addiction Demographics Statistics

Internet addiction is best defined as an impulse control disorder. In other words, it's a case where an internet user develops an inherent emotional attachment to their online activities on websites and apps.

Usually, internet addicts are driven by the desire to achieve satisfaction, and thus they have to use the internet with increased time. The following internet addiction statistics reveal that internet addiction is prevalent in all age groups. However, as you'll notice, teenagers and young adults are the worst hit.

- 61% of internet users are addicted to it.
- Internet addiction is common among all age groups and its prevalence is as follows:
13-17 (73%), 18-24 (71%), 25-34 (59%), 35-44 (54%), 45-54 (40%), 55-64 (39%), and 64+ (44%).

- According to Pew Research, 48% of people aged 18 to 29 go online almost constantly. Also, 36% of adults aged 30 to 49, 19% of those 50 to 64, and 7% of those 65+, use the internet almost constantly.
- Generation X users are more addicted to the internet, particularly to social media than Millennials.
- Both genders, male and female, are caught in internet addiction. Actually, 64% of female and 55% of male internet users are internet addicts.
- Another study revealed that, in the US, 29% of men and 27% of women use the internet almost constantly.
- A 2019 study revealed that 3.4% of high school students had severe internet addiction. On the other hand, 39% had low-level addiction, and 32% had moderate-level internet addiction.
- In another study, it was revealed that 65.5% of junior high school students belong to the internet addiction-risk group. Also, the study found that 6.5% of the students were in the severe internet addiction group.

Percentage of Internet Addicts Across Different Age Groups in 2019



What fuels internet addiction

Much like other disorders, it's not easy to tell the exact cause of internet addiction disorder. The following internet addiction statistics suggest that this disorder has multiple contributing factors. Income, level of education, and race have a hand in internet addiction.

- The first thing that exposes internet users to addiction is income. According to Pew Research, 34% of people with an annual income of \$75,000 or more use the internet more constantly and thus are at risk of getting addicted, compared to 23% of people earning less than \$30,000.
- In addition, 36% of people with college or university education are online almost constantly. On the other hand, only 23% of people with high school education go online constantly.
- Moreover, race is another factor. In fact, 34% of Hispanic adults use the internet constantly, compared with 26% white and 25% black adults.

The above statistics show clearly that people from all walks of life can be an internet addict. Online activities often generate euphoria, which blinds users, enticing them to remain fixated to their computer or mobile screens. This is a situation we've found ourselves in time and time again.

Does this always translate into internet addiction? Certainly not, but this is always the hallmark of a soon-to-be pathological case of internet addiction disorder. When left unaddressed, it soon becomes a full-blown problem that starts to considerably hamper daily life, relationships, and real-life human connections.

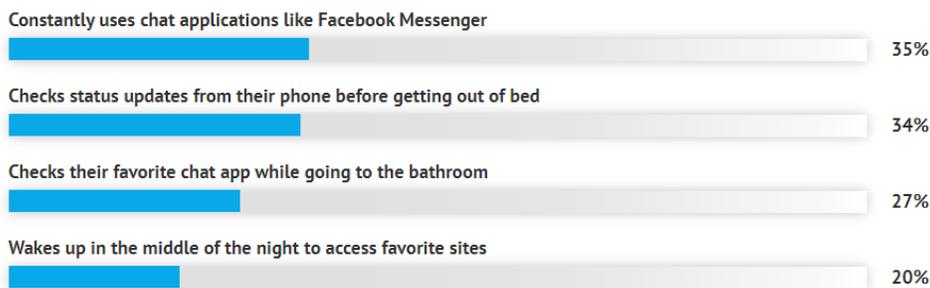
What Do Internet Addicts Do Online?

What you ought to know is that the internet doesn't require deep technical sophistication to comprehend. Its simplicity means there are endless opportunities for developers to come up with all sorts of online activities to keep users glued to the computer or mobile screens.

However, it's still puzzling how something invisible can be so addictive. To help you decipher internet addiction, we've compiled a list of the activities that addicts engage in online. As shown by the stats below, addicts engage in different activities, including shopping, gaming, social networking, and blogging.

- The top five online activities for internet addicts in China include social networking (94.73%), school work (86.53%), entertainment (82.44%), online gaming (73.42%), and online shopping (33.67%).
- According to Mental Health America, the most rampant types of internet addiction include cybersexual, cyber-relationships, net compulsions, online gaming, and information seeking.
- A whopping 45% or 3.5 billion people in the world are on social media.
- 20% of internet addicts wake up in the middle of the night to check their social accounts.
- Also, 34% of internet addicts access their favorite websites and check for status updates before getting out of bed.

Top Behaviors of Internet Addicts



Source: Brandongaille

Created by CompareCamp.com

Where do people access the internet

The above-mentioned activities are happening on electronic devices that have internet access. Interestingly, the very device you're using to read this article can easily drive you into uncontrolled internet usage and, ultimately, plunge you into addiction.

- 52% of the global population are mobile internet users. In other words, 3.986 billion people in the world access the internet using their mobile devices.
- Besides, 81% of Americans own a smartphone. Of this number, 84% are men, whereas 79% are women.
- In addition, 74% of Americans own desktop/laptop computers, whereas 52% own tablets.

There is a thin line between proper and improper use of the internet. For example, many of the good use of the internet, such as gaming, social networking, and online shopping, can easily become addictive. The problem is, many internet users don't know where to draw the line and declare certain levels of engagement in these activities to be too much.

However, some bad uses of the internet are conspicuous. For example, if you engage in activities such as cyber-dating or even cybersex, there is a high probability that you're struggling with internet addiction. Besides, if the first thing you think about when you wake up is checking your status update or visiting your favorite website, internet addiction is regrettably rooted in your daily life.

Negative Effects of Internet Addiction Statistics

If you're ensnared by internet addiction, your life is either on the brink of, or it's already, feeling the negative effects. Studies have shown that internet addiction disorder causes structural changes to the brain's prefrontal region. As a result, it impairs your capability to resoundingly organize and prioritize crucial tasks in life.

But that's not all; internet addiction statistics show that the disorder can have far-reaching adverse effects on the addict's relationships and career.

- Studies have found that internet addiction impairs various functions of life.
- Besides, internet addiction can lead to internet gaming disorder, which in turn has adverse effects on psychological functions.
- Internet addiction causes some psychiatric disorders, directly or indirectly. For example, internet addiction is associated with mood disorders, poor sleep quality, impulsivity, self-esteem, and suicide.
- Even worse, internet addiction has a negative effect on the part of the brain that's involved in decision making, executive attention, cognitive control, and emotional processing.
- Internet addiction causes 50% of workers today to suffer severe occupational impairment.

- Unfortunately, 5.9% of internet addicts say that their relationships went south as a result of excessive internet use.

While few studies examine the impact of internet addiction on mental health, there is no doubt that the disorder can cause tremendous psychological problems. The disorder was added to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder as an ailment that needs more research, which points to its growing impact on mental health.

Beyond this, internet addiction thrust victims into a self-created and self-satisfying virtual space, making them massively detached from the real world. As a result, the addicts become isolates who suffer in silence and watch helplessly as their relationships and mental health deteriorate.

Treatment of Internet Addiction Statistics

The first and most important step in the treatment of any disorder is the recognition or diagnosis of the problem that exists. Diagnosing this disorder, however, has always proven to be a hard nut to crack because of some overarching issues such as lack of accountability and limits.

The following internet addiction statistics reveal the dismal nature of the treatment landscape of this disorder. But first, let's look at the symptoms of internet addiction.

Symptoms of Internet Addiction

The symptoms of internet addictions come in both emotional and physical manifestations. However, the stats below suggest that knowing these symptoms doesn't help in the diagnosis of internet addiction. The number of addicts who are aware of their status is dismally low, which probably points to the complexity of diagnosing the disorder.

- 12.3% of internet addicts have seen the need to stop or regulate internet use at some point.
- 8.2% of technology or internet addicts are aware of their status, and so they try to hide non-essential use of the internet from friends, family, and employers.
- Only 35.4% of high school students show signs of internet addiction.
- Some of the most common emotional symptoms include anxiety, depression, a feeling of guilt, isolation, dishonesty, agitation, mood swings, and defensiveness.
- Also, internet addiction has physical symptoms, such as headaches, insomnia, carpal tunnel syndrome, backache, neck pain, poor nutrition, and dry eyes.

Treatment of internet addiction

Are there viable treatment options for internet addiction? The answer to this question depends on how you perceive this disorder. Some people see it as a “fad illness” and firmly believe the disorder should resolve itself. However, for people who take internet addiction with seriousness and believe in proper treatment, there are effective therapies that can help.

- Interestingly, 39% of the addicts can easily quit if they wanted to.
- It is also good to note that internet addicts can suffer similar withdrawal problems to substance misusers.
- According to one study, the world is far from a comprehensive model for testing, diagnosing, and treating internet addiction disorder.
- Some of the most common treatment options include behavioral modification, equine therapy, dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT), and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT).

Internet addiction is challenging to diagnose, and this explains the reason why it's difficult to treat. Some people have embraced self-corrective behavior, with the help of software that controls internet use, to deal with the disorder. Besides, the striking prevalence of internet addiction has compelled treatment centers to join hands in the creation of psychological treatments.

Initially, people used electroshock therapy as psychological treatment, but that option has since been banned. Luckily, other therapies, such as the DBT, CBT, Art, and Reality therapy, have been devised to take its place. Hopefully, the rate at which this disorder is gaining traction will inspire scientists and medical professionals to come up with a standard diagnosis and treatment.

The Way Out of Internet Addiction is Getting Trickier

There you have it, a compilation of the key internet addictions statistics and facts. Unfortunately, owing to the sparsity of internet addiction studies, we had to cull data from a few small studies. Fortunately, however, the statistics have sufficiently painted a picture of the deteriorating cases of internet addiction.

One thing we've noted with serious concern is that modern cultures are encouraging and legitimizing the use of new technologies. The race to a fully digital landscape has pushed people from different walks of life into the internet age, hence increasing the probability of addiction. Even more worrying, nowadays, everything—from shopping, interaction, ordering food, playing games, and watching TV and movies—has moved online.

Digital technology has swept across every aspect of our lives, further blurring the lines between healthy and unhealthy use of the internet. Besides, the proliferation of smartphones and tablets

means that you don't have to sit in front of a computer to plunge yourself into the online world. All these factors have stacked the odds in favor of increasing internet addiction cases.

To sidestep the subtle yet powerful psychological manipulation of internet addiction, you have to know the boundaries. You've to demarcate and bolden the line between good and bad internet use. Most importantly, you should desist from overstepping this boundary, regardless of the overarching situation ([Sources and References](#)).

Social Media Addiction Statistics Of 2021

Social media addiction is global problem that continues eat into humanity in a drastic way and these 10 statistics about social media addiction highlight a cause for concern:

How Many People Are Addicted To Social Media?

The latest facts suggest that more than 210 million people suffer from internet and social media addiction.

3.96 Billion People Use Social Media

There are approximately now 3.96 billion social media users in 2021, up from 3.48 billion in 2019, which is more than half of the world's entire population (51%).

People Spend An Average of 2 Hours And 23 Minutes On Social Media Per Day

It is not surprising that the internet users of today spend an average of 2 hours and 23 minutes on social media per day, and most of it happens on the six most popular platforms. These platforms include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook messenger. Facebook as the biggest social media platform has the largest social media usage. In fact, about 2.23 billion people of all social media users are active on Facebook.

Some Teenagers Spend Up To 9 Hours Every Day On Social Media

The fact that teenagers still enjoy the most care free age of a human being's lifetime make them spend more time on these exciting social media platforms. However, this also means social media addiction has a bigger effect on them, and from research and observations, they are very

ignorant of these facts. It is most common with American teenagers who spend a “mind-blowing” nine hours a day with digital technology, entertaining themselves by streaming videos, listening to music and playing games.

Teens Who Spend 5 Hours A Day On Their Phones Are 2x More Likely To Show Depressive Symptoms

A recent study has proven that spending about 5 hours on the phone, irrespective of the specific content you are viewing — goes hand in hand with the higher prospect of depression. Parents can help this situation by making sure their kids are allocated 2 hours maximum to their phones, in between quality rest and other relaxation activities.

Young, Single Females Are Addicted To Social Media More Than Any Other Group

It is very common to see young and single females checking and updating their social media accounts. This is mostly caused by factors which involve a pattern of self-centered, arrogant thinking and behavior, lack of empathy and consideration for other people, and an excessive need for admiration which are all narcissistic traits. It may also be due to low self esteem.

50% Of People Caught While Driving Using Their Phone Are Checking Social Media

A considerable number of research studies have been carried out in different parts of the globe, which all conclude that using a device while driving is pervasive and perilous. Texting and driving also appears to be a significant problem, especially among younger drivers. Thousands of people have been caught on their mobile phones while driving so far this year, and they haven't just been making and taking calls; they have been posing for selfies, updating social

media posts, and live-streaming. To curtail this, about 25 million Americans have signed the pledge to drive distraction-free.

71% Of People Sleep With Or Next To Their Phone Every Night

People, especially young ones prefer sleeping with their phones beside them or perhaps under the pillow. It seems to be the best spot to keep the phone, as it makes it easy to reach when it a notification appears. Sadly, these people are ignorant of the fact that the act causes health issues. Despite this research, most Americans still encourage sleep disorder with this behavior.

Out of 1000 people involved in a survey carried out, 71% said they usually sleep with or next to their mobile phone, 3% said they sleep with their device in their hand, 13% said they keep it on the bed, and 55% leave it on the nightstand. Furthermore, about 37% said that the phone is the first thing they grab when they wake up.

10% Of Teens Check Their Phones More Than 10x Per Night

A poll by Digital Awareness UK and the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference shows that 10% of teens check for notification more than 10 times a night, and about 45% of total social media users check their phones once at least when they should be sleeping.

More Than 240 Million Americans Check Facebook Every Day; That's 75% Of All Americans

Statistics show that about 68% of the American population has an active Facebook account. 75% of these users check Facebook every day, and more than half of them visit the platform several times in one day. ([Source](#))

Additional Resources

[Internet Addiction Disorder - Signs, Symptoms, and Treatments](#)

[Current Research and Viewpoints on Internet Addiction in Adolescents](#)

[Being lonely ups time spent online, risk of internet addiction, says new study](#)

[The pandemic in waiting: Internet addiction - Mon, January 18 2021](#)