

Internet users turn addicts 10666

[Technology](#), [Internet](#)



On June 14, ABC news reported that an "internet-crazed" Cincinnati woman was arrested for neglecting her three young children. The woman reportedly spent 12 hours straight online, while her hungry kids were locked away in one room so she could be online without interruption. The three kids were placed in county custody while the mother was tossed in jail. The Internet is rapidly becoming an addictive source to a lot of its users. Users of the Internet include students, housewives, and business professionals. Some of these Internet users spend a minimum of thirty-eight hours per week on the "net"; hence, losing touch with reality and reeking havoc on their studies, family lives or careers. Individuals such as these are classified as "Internet Addicts." Based on level of addiction, there are three groups of Internet addicts: i) the "I'm-not-addicted users," ii) the "I-only-use-it-when-I-have-to-users" and iii) the "Internet junkies." The "I'm-not-addicted users" are the users who try to convince themselves that they are not addicted to the Internet. This group includes college students who don't go online during the day to prove to fellow students that they can do without getting online; only, to stay up all night in a chat room online. Or business people who stay after office hours to supposedly get a late report done; only, to stay online until the security guard's ready to lock up the building. Or husbands who stay offline all day, only to get online for hours after their family members are asleep. These users are addicts but portray themselves otherwise in the presence of people. Next, are "the I-only-use-it-when-I-have-to-users." These users make convenient excuses to use the Internet. Mothers who claim they have

to visit their child's school's website, to read the highlights of the last PTA meeting, while they could have waited for the minutes of the meeting in the mail. They end up staying online for hours. Or college students who insist on checking out the ratings of a movie online, using this as an excuse to stay online for hours; while they could have looked in the local newspaper. Or businesspeople who use checking for e-mail, as an excuse to get online; even though, the computer announces when there's new mail. These addicts make excuses to justify their use of the Internet. The third group of Internet users is the "Internet junkies." Unlike addicts in the previous two groups, these users neither sneak online nor make excuses to get online. They put their lives on hold to get online. The mother in the story at the beginning of the essay is an example of an Internet junky. Another example of an Internet junky is a woman in her 40's resigns from her job suddenly with no reason given. Unfortunately she leaves some work undone and a family member tries to find her for the employer. Finally the woman is found hunched over her computer, completely oblivious to her surroundings. These addicts are completely oblivious to their surroundings. Although the Internet is a very useful and economical source of information, it's fast becoming yet another addictive substance to some of its users. Internet addiction seems very contemporary because it involves a high-tech device. But psychiatrists and psychologists typically treat Internet addictions in much the same way they deal with other addictions. Just like drug, gambling, or alcohol, Internet addiction affects the addicts' life and the lives of those around them.