

BPD Technology Committee's Technology Assessment List for Social Work Practice, Version 1 (March 2017)

Started in 2016, this technology assessment tool was compiled by members of the BPD Technology Committee, using a web-based mapping tool, MindMeister (<https://www.mindmeister.com>). After compiling all the ideas, the list was reviewed by members of the committee, and was presented at the 2017 Annual Conference in New Orleans.

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Basic Information to obtain about technology use:

- Hardware Devices available to client (smartphone, e-readers, computers, etc.)
- Software/apps used by client
- Internet connection or access available to clients
- Email Accounts – how many and how used
- Social Media Accounts – how many, which ones and how used
- Number of hours spent engaged with technology each day; Screen time

Individual

- Tangible tech assets that the client has: Phone, tablet, computer, etc.
- Access to Internet Connection? DSL in home, library, Wi-Fi
- If smartphone or other mobile devices how was it purchased? (Lifeline program?)
- What is the monthly expenditure for technology?
- Types of Social Media Accounts and how frequently used
- Online Community Memberships? (Closed Facebook Groups, etc.) - Strength-based, internet-based social support including social media involvement.
- Average amount of Screen Time per week
- How does tech affect mood? What prompts tech use; how do you feel after?
- Need direct technical assistance?
- What apps are used? Why?
- Comfort-level with use technology with practitioner.
- How would you describe your screen time and/or use of technology? Productive vs. non-productive; Problematic vs. non-problematic; passive (web surfing, watching ads, watching videos) vs. active use (reading, communicating with others, creating content)?
- Online help-seeking behaviors: medical, behavioral, etc- where do you go for info, how do you protect identity when you do, do you use trusted sites, how do you assess?
- Netiquette - Is the client familiar with netiquette guidelines? How do the practice civility and etiquette in online environments?
- Self-Assessment Tools: <http://www.socialworktech.com/2012/09/10/self-assessment/>

Developmentally-based Considerations

Infants, toddlers, and young children:

- How much screen time per day?
- What technology is shared (i.e. caregiver's phone or tablet?)
- What are parents teaching their kids about the internet?

Elementary school, Tweens, and Teens:

- Texting: With whom do they have regular group texts? Who do they text one-on-one with the most?
- Types of Social Media Accounts and how frequently used (Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook Messenger, Kik, YouTube, Vine); What types of posts, comments or stories are on their accounts? What do they post, like, re-post or share?
- Who do they follow on these social media accounts?
- How they listen to music? (i.e. Pandora, Spotify or YouTube, etc)
- Do they watch Netflix or other video platforms such as YouTube or Vine? If so, when and what do they watch? Do they binge watch?
- Where do they generate content, and what's it about? (i.e. YouTube videos).
- What movie or TV genres are most viewed?
- Gaming - which games? Length of gaming time? Online group video gaming? Any impact of daily functioning?
- Does the teen have access to phone during school and free Wi-Fi? Many kids use their phones at school due to a lack of Wi-Fi at home.
- What are the school's policies on phone use, access to computers, Wi-Fi, social media, etc? How does this promote or hinder technology use by kids?
- Anonymous posting sites (i.e. Yik-yak, whisper, etc.) - assess potential bullying, mean-girl behavior or older adult posing as a younger person.
- Viewing of high-risk content, including sexually-explicit, self-harm, and other that mismatches family values/practices.
- Where do the phones/tablets/computers reside during bedtime? Family time?

Intergenerational/Cultural issues:

- How much awareness the child has regarding the financial impact their technology has on the family budget?
- For parents, do the parents have the same kind of technology that their children have (e.g. Does dad have a flip phone while the teenager has an iPhone 6?)
- Cultural issues related to differing informational and communication technology skills (digital literacy) within one household. How that may impact family dynamics?
- With young adults, assess online dating practices and app use (i.e. Tinder and other dating apps).
- With older adults, assess possible isolation and technological disconnectedness. (i.e. Did their professions require technological adaptation over the years? If so, in what era of informational and communication technology did they leave off?
- What is the communication style/preference for communicating with technology across generations? Developmental differences and knowledge of use tech. For example, texting conversations at the dinner table instead of face-to-face. Older adults (maybe) prefer face-to-face while (maybe) teens prefer to text.
- Communication regarding sensitive issues in families - For example, teens texting parents about topics that they can't discuss face-to-face.

- Grief, death & loss - Does the client or family have a plan for social media and other digital accounts at the end-of-life? Who has access to account log-on information to access in case of an emergency? How familiar is the client with archiving or legacy account settings with different types of social media? How comfortable is the client or family with sharing private information via social media?

Special Populations

- Homeless: Battery life, Wi-Fi access. I program phone numbers and addresses of resources directly into the phones/ direct technical assistance?
- Mental Health: App use to supplement mental health care: Mental Health apps for self-awareness, mindfulness, self-regulation, etc.
- Foster Youth: /who are they allowed to contact, and how- what are the special population safety issues.
- Clients with limited capacity/developmental disabilities may require extra support around psychoeducation, protection of personal information, online shopping, gambling/addiction.
- Rural Communities: many rural areas may have many dead spots for making phone calls but can still send and receive text messages for help.

Family

- Tangible tech assets that the client has: Phone, tablet, computer, etc.
- Access to Internet Connection? DSL in home, library, Wi-Fi
- If smartphone or other mobile devices how was it purchased?
- What is the monthly expenditure for technology? What is their financial burden regarding technology? Do they understand their monthly phone/internet plan/bill?
- What are the family rules/norms about technology use?
- Who has passwords to media accounts? Do parents know each media account youth use?
- Is the computer in public/private place?
- What circumstances lead to restriction of use or monitoring?
- What privacy settings are used in media accounts, and who supports the understanding of privacy use? Does internet friendship ever move to "in real life" sphere (phone number exchange, in person meeting?)
- Do parents/caregivers teach netiquette to children?
- General perception of technology on family: Where does tech support, where does it create tension/harm/family conflict? A tech infused ecomap?
- Technology used by other resources that influence the family: School, Work, Health Care Providers, Non-Profit agencies, etc.
- Need direct technical assistance?

Social Worker Technology Self-Assessment:

- What technology do you use and how in your social work practice?
- How you protect client confidentiality related to the use of technology (i.e. use of encryption software, HIPAA compliant electronic records, etc)?
- How do you protect client privacy related to the use of technology?
- Do you use informed consent with clients about using technology to communicate, interact, etc? If so, how?

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- What are your social media professional practices? Do you have a social media policy?
- Do you have a professional learning network?
- How does your agency support technology use (i.e. training, provides adequate tech, etc)?
- How knowledgeable are you about the technology that you use in your professional practice? (i.e. could you explain privacy settings in Facebook to a client?)
- How do you stay current about tech trends (i.e. crisis texting services, telehealth, etc)?
- How would you rate your digital literacy skills? Spotting fake news; Awareness of and ability to use software, apps, and devices; Netiquette; social networking, etc. See Doug Belshaw, Howard Rheingold, and Howard Jenkins for more details.
- Familiar with online behaviors such as bullying, trolling, binge watching videos, etc.

Resources:

Albion. (n.d.). *Netiquette Home Page -- A Service of Albion.com*. Retrieved from <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/>

American Academy of Pediatrics. (n.d.). *Media and Children Communication Toolkit*. Retrieved from <https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/pages/media-and-children.aspx>

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Rheingold, H. (2014). *Net Smart: How to Thrive Online*. Cambridge MA: The MIT Press.

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