

Why are smartphones harmful to children and teenagers?



Ten years ago, we didn't know the impact that smartphones had on kids. Now, we do. Parents at your child's school are hoping that you will read this information and agree to delay buying your child a smartphone.

01.



Addiction

Smartphone dependence triggers addictive brain responses akin to those seen in alcohol, drug, and gambling addiction. Tech companies intentionally design apps and social media platforms to keep users hooked for extended periods, as that's how they profit. **Young children aren't equipped to have a healthy relationship with something addictive.**

02.



Academic Distraction

Early findings from a National Institute of Health brain development study indicate that children spending over two hours a day on screens score lower on cognitive tests. **Smartphones reduce memory and recall accuracy, even when not in use.**

03.



Altering Young Brains

Excessive smartphone use is associated with psychiatric, cognitive, emotional, medical and brain changes. Excessive screen time appears to cause premature thinning of the cortex, the brain's outermost layer responsible for processing sensory information.

04.



Sleep Impairment

Smartphones and other screen devices impact the quantity and quality of children's sleep. Childhood sleep disturbance leads to adverse health effects, including poor diet, obesity, weakened immunity, stunted growth, and mental health issues. **57% more teens were sleep deprived in 2015 than in 1991.**

05.



Behavioural Consequences

Recent research led by UC San Francisco reveals that tweens who spend more time on screens have a higher likelihood of developing disruptive behaviour disorders.

06.



Strained Relationships

Constant distraction leads to inattentiveness, and face-to-face interactions decline as children invest more time in online "friendships". **The quality of family relationships and friendships decreases for every year younger a child is given a smartphone.**

07.



Anxiety and Depression Risk

Children are ill-equipped to navigate the complex world of social media at an early age. Comparing their lives to others' highlight reels often breeds feelings of inadequacy. Depression, feelings of aggression, suicidal thoughts, low self-confidence, poor self-image, detachment and weak relationships increase for every year younger a child is given a smartphone – even in those with no traumatic or adverse childhood experience.

08.



Cyberbullying Risk

Bullying has expanded from the playground to the digital realm. Bullies target children through social media and texts, making escape nearly impossible. **84% of bullying to children with smartphones happens online.**

09.



Exposure to Sexual Content

Smartphones grant children easy access to explicit content. Moreover, children are increasingly engaging in sexting, and some apps expose them to sexual predators. **90% of girls and 50% of boys say they and their peers are sent explicit pictures or videos of things they do not want to see.**

10.



Link to Eating Disorders

Social media platforms provide access to content such as weight loss challenges and unhealthy diets, contributing to the rising number of younger individuals, including tweens, suffering from eating disorders.