

Cell Phone Use and Behavioral Problems in Adolescents



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Abstract

Cell phone addiction is a psychological or behavioral dependence on cell phone that leads to severe impairment or distress in one's life. Adolescents, as digital natives, express their thought in an online space, try to keep up with fashion, use many kinds of applications (apps), and search for emotional relationships and support. They are good in multitasking, and they pursue instant reactions and feedback. If excessive money and time spent on cell phone, use it in inappropriate situation (eg. driving) insomnia, emotional instability, anxiety, stress, depression etc combined with adolescent's immature control competence, they are placed at a high risk of cell phone addiction. An adolescent experiences different psychological and physical problems. Excessive use of cell phone harms parent child relationship, social development, behavior and personality development. It causes lack of control, lack of attention, mood swings, anxiety, stress, depression, frustration, suicidal tendency etc. Hearing loss, back pain, headache, body pain, stiffness in fingers, loss on vision, are some physiological impact of cell phone. No doubt, cell phone is an essential part of today's generation but control on its overuse can help an adolescent to be mentally and physically fit. Adolescents and their parents' efforts can help to overcome this disorder.

Keywords: Cell Phone, Addiction, Adolescents, Behavior.

Introduction

We cannot deny the fact that technological developments and innovation played a major role in our life. It improved lives. Present things are now being better, faster, easier and more convenient. Technologies have given many useful inventions to the world. Invention of telephone is yet another important milestone in technological development. Before invention of telephone, it took days or months to pass information from one place to another. But today we can connect or exchange information faster than before.

Cell phone, a invention given by new technologies, has become an essential part of human life. Without any age limit everybody uses cell phones. As a communication device it has changed our earth to global village but excessive use of cell phone has become a serious issue for today's society. Excessive money or time spent on cell phones, use of cell phones in socially or physically inappropriate situations such as driving can be harmful for a person and society as well. Over use of cell phone and its adverse effects on relationships, anxiety if separated from a cell phone, irritability if sufficient signal are not good are some developing symptoms of cell phone addiction.

Cell phone addiction is a psychological or behavioral dependence on cell phone that leads to severe impairment or distress in one's life.

Cell telephone is an essential part of the day yet different shades of malice and maladies get youths at their initial age. An observational investigation about uses and abuses of mobile phone has featured that adolescents are the most influenced among wireless clients. Adolescents experience physical and mental changes. On one hand, they are depend on their parents for their life and identity, On the other hand, they are attempting to be independent and trying to set their own identity with a different lifestyle. During these changes, a cell phone becomes indispensable for adolescents. They regard a cell phone as their second self. Many cell phone users have reported that they would not be able to live without a cell phone (Wajcman et al., 2007).

Common Sense Media Report, 2016 found that 50 percent of adolescents feel addicted to cell devices, while 59 percent of parents believe that their children are addicted to devices. This survey also showed

that 72 percent of adolescents and 48 percent of parents feel the need to immediately respond to texts, social-networking messages, and other notifications. 69 percent of parents and 78 percent of adolescents check their devices after a short time gap continually.

Pew Research Report 2018 found that 45 percent of adolescents utilize the Internet continuously and another 44 percent go online only for few times in a day. 95 percent of adolescents have access to a cell phone.

This is disturbing and alarming stage. Over use of cell phone may cause mental sickness, dry eyes, computer vision disorder, weakness of thumb and wrist, neck pain, headache, irritability, inflexibility, material visualizations, delusion, sleep disorders, lower self-confidence, mood disorder and substance abuse disorder.

Kesari *et al.* found that cell phone radiation may build the reactive oxygen species, which is responsible for the development of metabolic and neurodegenerative diseases.

New Time Mobility Poll 2012 announced that 84% individuals could not spend a single day without their cell phone.

Objective of the Study

If excess use of cell phone creates problem in adolescent's behavior.

Symptoms of Cell phone Addiction in Adolescents

1. Reaching out to cell phone the first thing right after awake. There are 35% of people think of their cell phones the moment they wake up and only about 10% of people think of their significant others.
2. Fail to cut down the cell phone use. Almost 40% of cell phone users never disconnect themselves from their phones, even when they are on vacation.
3. 71% of people sleep with their cell phones by their side. As high as 44% of 18-24 year-olds fall asleep with their phones still in their hands.
4. Becomes anxious when cell phone is not out of sight. Over 44% of Americans say that they cannot go on a day without their cell phones with them.
5. Using your phone whenever feel bored or have nothing to do.
6. Other people complain about cell phone use.
7. Spending more time into using cell phone.
8. Conscious use in prohibited context or potentially dangerous situation (eg. Texting while driving).
9. Emotional disturbance in behavior.
10. Try to check phone and messages even at bedtime which is resulted as insomnia or sleep disturbances.
11. Need to respond immediately to message and alerts.

Impact of Cell Phone Dependency on Adolescent's Behavior

The mental and physical health is being suffered. Only 10% children play and invest their energy outside every day. Time spent in nature builds physical and mental health. It helps to develop self confidence, awareness, responsibility, creative mind, ability to think and reduces pressure and weakness.

Today, gadget free discussions with parents or others are rarely seen. This could hurt and damage parent-child relationship and socialization of an adolescent.

Adolescents spend less time with their friends face-to-face. They do not learn how to give and receive friendship and how to resolve conflicts. They become more uncomfortable in social settings and create a false, lonely existence for themselves.

The adolescents needs 8 to 10 hours sleep every night. Physical, mental, cognitive and emotional development occurs during this age rapidly. Studies showed that 57 percent a greater number of adolescents were restless in 2015 than in 1991, preceding the appearance of mobile phones. Between 2012 and 2015, 22 percent of adolescents neglected to get even seven hours of sleep for each night because huge numbers of them were on their mobile phones. They felt difficulty to concentrate in school and their grades were low. They felt less motivated, tired and physically weak, anxious, stressed and depressed.

The adolescent's suicide rate was higher than the adolescent's homicide rate. Girls are especially vulnerable to symptoms of depression. A report in *Psychology today, 2014* found that one-fourth to one-third of college students meets the criteria for anxiety or depression. Studies found that youngsters from age 16-24 are suffering from back pain, headache, stiffness in fingers, muscle stiffness due to the heavy use of cell phone.

According to a poll conducted by Fight Crime Invest in Kids, nearly one-third of the adolescents are victims of cyber bullying. And almost half of the victims do not know the identity of the perpetrators.

A survey conducted to a group of students and found that those who spend long hours using their phones were less fit than the other average that spent less time on their phone.

The bright light emission from phone will disturb sleep time and affect melatonin, the hormone that helps sleep timing.

Conclusion

Studies and research have proven that the presence of cell phone has made people become less productive. Phone distract from work and takes attention away.

The blue light emission from phone can damage retina. It can cause muscular degeneration and loss of vision.

Constantly plug a headphone to ears while using phone may bring up some hearing issue. The National Institute of Deafness showed that about 26 million Americans are having a problem with noise-induced hearing loss, and one of such noises is from headphones.

What Can Help To Overcome This Problem

Parent's attention and efforts can help to reduce this behavior disorder from their adolescents and from society as well.

1. Parents are the role model of their child. A child does what he learns by their surroundings. Set the example of how to use and limit phones, social media and technology by setting cell phone limit and use it thoroughly.

2. Getting outside with adolescents makes a connection with parents. Play some outdoor games with the child and explore new ideas and discuss on current affairs. This will help to improve their emotional intelligence, creativity, self-confidence and ability to fight.
3. Let the child play with friend so he/she can learn to solve problems.
4. Set electronic curfews for the whole family. No phones at dinner. Charge all phones in parent's bedroom overnight. Everybody needs a break for mental health's sake.

What Can Adolescents Do

1. Adolescents should create an unplugged zone because it can help to spend quality time with family or with their own self.
2. Adolescents should remove all unnecessary Apps and spend their times for other more productive activities.
3. Adolescents should prohibit the usage of phones. Prohibit the use of cell phones at dinner and other important occasions.
4. Adolescents should set customer notifications because it force to check phone once which can be very disturbing and cause stress.
5. Adolescents should Schedule their time to reply messages and emails.
6. Experts have shown that the first 60 minutes after wake up and the last 60 minutes before fall asleep play an important role in life. So don't spend time playing phone during these hours. Instead, use it for other useful and constructive activities such as reading books, family time, planning, or meditation.
7. Use an alarm clock instead of using phone as a clock.
8. Adolescents should get an alternative cheaper phone
9. Experts have shown that if someone has phone near to him/her during sleep, he/she can experience nightmares, inability to sleep, disturbance, and waking up several times.
10. Adolescents should stop using cell phone for entertainment
11. Adolescents should give themselves empowering reasons. Human beings are motivated by reasons and purposes. Successful people are able to produce extraordinary results because they give themselves stronger reasons to work on their dreams. Similarly, to overcome cell phone dependency, give a strong and emotional reason to stop.

Psychological Treatment

1. Cognitive Behavior Therapy can help your adolescents to change maladaptive thoughts and behaviors into healthy and positive ones.
2. Individual process therapy can help adolescents recognize and work through feelings and experiences that contribute to problematic use.
3. Practice mindfulness .
4. Practice adaptive coping strategies like exercise, deep breathing, and progressive muscle relaxation.

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