

Social networking sites and children: helpful or harmful



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Social Networking Sites are one of the most popular applications for people to use. These social networking sites are usually focused on different kinds of relationships, for example, LinkedIn for professionals, YouTube for entertainment, or MSN and Facebook for personal users. Through social networking sites, people can communicate with people instantly, check the news quickly, and receive daily updates from family. Why are Social Networking sites popular? Consumer Reports shows that more than 7.5 million American kids under the age of 13 have joined Facebook in 2011.

As posted by CNN in May 21st 2012, "Is the Internet hurting children?", Chelsea Clinton and James P. Steyer also say that more than 90% of all American children have an online history when they are two years old; more than 50% regularly interact with a computer or tablet device when they are five; many kids start to play video games when they are seven or eight. The author also asserts introduces that teenagers send messages an average of 3,400 times a month. These figures are really amazing, aren't they? Nowadays, children use the Internet very often. Thanks to the social networking sites, children have more ways to learn about the world.

In fact, there are a lot of advantages for kids that use social networking sites, such as spending less money, staying in touch with friends and developing needed skills. The first advantage of social networking sites for children is spending less money. Children grow up very fast. As posted by website design, Benefits of a Social Networking Site for Kids, the author said "These sites can keep children entertained for hours without costing parents too much. Many of the games that are offered online cost users to play them. On social networking sites, kids can play free online games."

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In my opinion, children love to shop because they don't know how much the toys are. If parents don't want to buy, children will try their best to influence their parents, such as crying, shouting, misbehaving, etc. We are sure that one day they don't want to see these toys again, so toys will be wasted. Because of the Social Networking sites, parents can find cartoons from YouTube. For parents, they save money; for kids, they can play games and see cartoons through the social networking sites. The second advantage of social networking sites for children is the possibility to stay in touch with their friends.

As reported by Parenting Today's Kids, The Benefits of Social Media written by Dr. Vicki Panaccione on November 21, 2012, says that " Not everyone on social media is a predator...there are many kids from around the world out there eager to meet new friends and exchange ideas. This is a great way to connect with the world! " In my view, Social Networking Sites can help children make stronger friendships because they can discuss affairs with each other easily and quickly. Because of social networking sites, children can communicate with their friends whenever they want and wherever they are.

The third advantage of social networking sites for children is developing needed skills. If children want to learn how to cook a meal, they can research recipes in the social networking sites. Children can follow the steps and they also can do very well. For example, my 12-year-old cousin in China, Jessica Lu, did not know any social skills until 10 years old. American parents will be surprised on it because 10-year-old children in the United States can do

some activities, such as easy cooking, sweeping the floor, washing dishes, etc.

My uncle started to broadcast his American friend children's video about cooking eggs to Jessica when she was 10. Jessica was interested in it and she started to try to follow the steps through the videos. Finally, she finished her first attempt and it was successful. In my opinion, parents should let their children try to do something because children have to learn certain skills. If parents are always worried about their children to work on something, how can they grow up? How can they live without parents' helping? Parents cannot follow children forever. Recently, there is a very popular game called Candy Crush Saga.

Lots of my friends send me a request to join the game, which is "XXX invites you to play Candy Crush Saga". Actually I am not good at playing games, so I always ignore these requests. One day, my friend Yan Huang, who studies Biological Science in DVC, called me suddenly, "Why don't you accept my invite? I have already sent lots of requests to you, but you constantly ignore me! I want to increase my levels quickly. If you play, it can help me to play more levels easily!!! " When I have meals with my friends, everyone talks about the game. They discuss how to improve their skills and increase their levels easily.

I have no what to discuss with them because I haven't played it before. To my surprise, my 12-year-old cousin Jessica Lu also plays this game. She said that her classmates play this game all day and night. Some of her classmates don't finish their homework and play this game in class. In spite of having advantages, some drawbacks from social networking sites are also <https://assignbuster.com/social-networking-sites-and-children-helpful-or-harmful/>

apparent for children's life, such as decreased learning and research capabilities, wasting time, and effect on health. First, using too many social networking sites can reduce childrens' learning and research capabilities. I went to my high school in China.

There is a really pretty high school and everything is really good. I also asked my English teacher about this topic when I was in high school. Dr. Shunan Yu, my high school English teacher in China, has ever told me that he hates students searching for sources in the Internet because he always finds the same sources in students' paper. According to him, I can understand that everyone uses the same website to search for sources, such as Google. When people search keywords of the information in Google, there are so many pages appearing and children can get the information easily and quickly.

Because of the Internet, children don't really want to read books and go to the library for searching sources today. They recognize that everything can be searched on the Internet. They are becoming lazier and lazier. How do students know that the sources on the Internet are accurate or not? The article Reliability of Information on the Internet: Some Distinctions, reported by Anton Vedder and Robert Wachbroit in 2004, said that " Inexpert people might confuse a high relevance of a source of its reliability. Relevance is no more a mark of reliability than being a frequently borrowed book in a library is a mark of its reliability".

That means everybody can post information on the Internet. In my view, this drawback seems to be the most important factor between children and the internet. No one can promise whether sources are all correct or not.

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Everyone should pay attention to this issue. Second, it is easy to waste time. Zoe Fox's article, *This Is How Much Time You Spend on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr* published in Nov. 28, 2012, gave us the figure that since 2006, the amount of time that the average person spent on social-networking sites has more than doubled, from 2.7 hours to 6.9 hours per month.

According to this figure, children, while doing the research online, get attracted to using social networking sites and sometimes they forget to research. This wastes their time and students cannot focus on their studying. Even though children's parents require them not to do other things, children still neglect their parents. When parents go out for a while, children will use social networking sites and start to waste their time. They begin to lie to their parents. Thanks to this drawback, I have a survey between children and my classmates in Survey Monkey.

In my survey, I ask my participants "If you are parents, how long do you recognize that your kids use social networking sites per day?" I am really surprised at my results because 79.9% of them choose "less than 2 hours". In my opinion, children recognize that using Social Networking Sites for a long time will waste their time, but they cannot stop using. So, parents should make the time limit to control children's time. And children should build up the strong self-control abilities. Third, it is going to have a bad effect on health if we use social networking sites before we go to bed.

Lots of children love to read the messages before they go to bed. Although parents warn to their children to not use mobile before sleep, children will hide in one place which they think their parents won't see their actions. As written by ROBERT MACKEY, *Is Social Networking Killing You?* published on <https://assignbuster.com/social-networking-sites-and-children-helpful-or-harmful/>

February 24, 2009, he says that " British scientists have recently suggested that spending all day, and — admit it — much of the night networking on a computer might in fact be bad for your body and your brain. " In my opinion, it is a very bad habit. It is really harmful for our eyes. Before I use a smartphone, I didn't get astigmatism.

Not only children, but there are also adults, are using social networking every day. In my survey of Monkey research, 36. 8% people use social networking sites from 2 to 3 hours per day. I am also in this group and it is very usual now. To my surprise, 21% of people use social networking at least 4 hours per day. They spend too much time on it. Because of the smart phones, we can check our social networking sites instantly. Nowadays, it is too difficult to find children who do not wear glasses. Because of this topic, I had a fun interview with my roommate Wendy Sun, a short-hair girl with glasses.

Wendy was born in Beijing, China and she is a student in DVC bridge program now. She is 18 years old. She loved to hold a deer doll because it was really cute. She wore a blue shirt, blue jeans, a pair of colorful shoes with wings by Addias. She had a cold, so her voice changed a little bit. We were sitting on the bed in her room, which was a little messy and small. Our topic was Social Networking Sites and Children. In her opinion, Social Networking Sites can let children know more about sharing. She thinks that sharing is a really important because it can let children not to be selfless.