

As whether we like it
or not, as



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

As Christian Lous Lange once said, “ Technology is a useful servant but a dangerous master.” Whether we like it or not, as we progress more and more, technology will continue to rapidly change society, and become even more prevalent in our everyday lives. Technology is one of the world’s, if not, the world’s most magnificent phenomenon. Occupying every field, it affects people both positively and negatively.

As apart of today’s younger generation, I was raised as technology became more advanced. I was able to see how a once large boxy desktop would one day progress into a thin accessible computer, and how a flip phone would turn into a touchscreen. Kids today are easily able to navigate their way through computers and cell phones. But as we continue to advance as a nation, there begs the question of how it is really affecting us as people. Not just how it can make our lives easier, but how it affects us intellectually and mentally. The discussion that follows will explore how an increase in the use of technology has been shown to lead to addiction, ADHD, feelings of failure and isolation for some. First and foremost, with the limitless amount of freely available social media sites, the most popular social media site today is Facebook, with over 2 billion users.

According to Business Insider, Facebook is largely used as a communication device. The reason for it being used on such a large scale is its easy way of communicating through instant messaging, commenting and photos.

However, regular use of social media has proven to cause many serious mental health affects. A review study from Nottingham Trent University looked back over earlier research on the psychological characteristics,

personality and social media use. The authors concluded that “ it may be plausible to speak specifically of ‘ Facebook Addiction Disorder’.

Traditional addiction criteria usually seen in drug and alcohol addictions, such as neglect of personal life, mental preoccupation, escapism, mood modifying experiences, tolerance and concealing the addictive behavior, “ appear to be present in some people who use social networks excessively.”

Studies have even shown that some people experience symptoms of withdrawal such as anxiety, accompanied with physiological changes.

Secondly, studies have also shown technology to be the cause of cases of ADHD. A new study from Duke University has found more use of technology is linked to later increases in attention, behavior and self-regulation problems for adolescents already at risk for mental health issues. “ Also, on days at-risk adolescents use technology more, they experience more conduct problems and higher ADHD symptoms compared to days they use technology less,” said Madeleine J.

George, a Duke Ph. D. candidate and the lead author of the study.

The researchers found that on days when adolescents used their devices more — both when they exceeded their own normal use and when they exceeded average use by their peers — they were more likely to experience conduct problems such as lying, fighting and other behavioral problems.

One point to this study worthy of consideration, however, is the fact that the adolescents used in this study were already at risk of mental illness. It has not been proven that these results extend to the general population of adolescents. However, the results of this study are of particular concern

since teens seem to spend so much time on social media. Thirdly, Public Health England (PHE) says there is an association between the amount of time spent on social media sites and “ lower levels of well-being.” According to this report, recent improvements in children’s well-being over the past 20 years has now been “ curtailed and may be in reverse”.

One in 10 children now has a mental health issue, and a third of teenagers feel “ low, sad or down” at least once a week. One of the causes appears to be cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet. The 2014-2015 School Crime Supplement by the National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice Statistics indicates that, nationwide, about 21% of students ages 12-18 experienced bullying. Finally, in addition to the psychological effects of addition, the increasing use of technology has also caused strong feelings of jealousy.

Several social media sites provide the opportunity for others to share their vacations, successful lives, and perfectly behaved children. It is natural for people to compare their lives to others. When your own life doesn’t measure up, it can lead to feelings of failure and even isolation. Unchecked, these feelings can lead to depression.

The more we use social media, the less happy we seem to be. “ One study a few years ago found that Facebook use was linked to both less moment-to-moment happiness and less life satisfaction—the more people used Facebook in a day, the more these two variables dropped off.” The authors

suggest this may have to do with the fact that Facebook conjures up a perception of social isolation, in a way that other solitary activities don't. "On the surface," the authors write, "Facebook provides an invaluable resource for fulfilling such needs by allowing people to instantly connect.

Rather than enhancing well-being, as frequent interactions with supportive 'offline' social networks powerfully do, the current findings demonstrate that interacting with Facebook may predict the opposite result for young adults—it may undermine it." In conclusion, a new analysis of data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Health Interview Survey shows that serious psychological distress, or SPD, defined as severe sadness and depressive symptoms that interfere with a person's physical well-being, is on the rise. Technology is similarly on the rise and the correlation between the two is evident. An increase in the use of technology has been shown to lead to addiction, ADHD, feelings of failure and isolation in some. While there are certainly a number of negative effects for mental health, at the same time, technology is making resources, information and help more accessible.