

# Internet access for children should be regulated by legislation

[Family](#)



Technology Advances in modern technology have radically changed the way we conduct our daily lives particularly the way we communicate, socialize and conduct business. While modern technology has had a profound effect on efficiency and economy it has at the same time encouraged a sedentary lifestyle that can have serious consequences for mental, social and physical development particularly for the youth. For instance, liberal access to the internet has cut back on time so that individuals can obtain information with the mere click of the mouse. Previously, information could only be obtained by inspecting print resources. In this regard, the value of time has been lost since it is now possible to complete a number of tasks simultaneously. Certainly, the ability to complete a number of tasks at once is beneficial in terms of productivity and matching supply with demand for commercial entities. However, the average young person can develop an unhealthy dependency on the internet to such an extent that it negatively impacts the value of his or her education. For instance, a student with a reading assignment is more likely to give in to the temptation to read a summary of the book on the internet, rather than read the book itself. Moreover, the internet also acts as a barrier to interpersonal relationships by providing a virtual world in which users subscribe to social networking. Moreover, time spent on the internet is time spent away from friends, family, acquaintances. The average child spends twice as much time on the internet than he or she does in a class room (Bennet 2009). In this regard the internet culture is driving the development of the young so that they are deprived of interpersonal relationships, a key component for healthy social and emotional development (Altman and Taylor 1973, 28).

Time spent on the internet also means less time engaging in physical activities and the lack of exercise is linked to health problems in teens and young persons in general. Jones and Bradley (2007) maintain that habits developed at an early age can have long term health consequences (433). Specifically, a lack of exercise in adolescence and young people in general can lead to obesity and other health problems such as heart disease (Jones and Bradley 2007, 434).

Taking into account the serious consequences for children and teens with respect to the internet culture, legislators should consider enacting laws that restrict access to the internet by persons below a certain age. Recognizing that the internet serves very useful purposes, particularly with respect to its data base of information, it is entirely unreasonable to pass legislation that prohibits children using the internet. It is therefore not the internet itself that harms children in terms of social development. Likewise, the internet itself does not compromise the health of the child. It is the excessive browsing habits of children and young persons that put their psychological and physical health at risk. It is the excessive use of the internet that exposes the child to social insulation and encourages a sedentary lifestyle.

It therefore follows that internet access for children should be regulated by legislation. This legislation should limit access to children under a certain age, preferably under the age of 12 to strict parental control. Parents or guardians should be legally responsible for supervising internet access and monitoring the time that children in their care are accessing the internet. Failure to do so should be an offence, specifically, contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

## Bibliography

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