

The impact of mobile phones on teenagers essay sample

[Technology](#), [Mobile Phone](#)



1. Abstract

Currently, more than one third of children aged ten to thirteen own a mobile phone. It is therefore a necessity to inform today's youth of the effects of owning a cellular phone. By reason of request from Mr. Howard, Prime Minister of Australia, to hear the concerns of Australia, a conclusive survey was conducted and revealed that children and teenagers are not aware of the major issues regarding mobile phones. Consequently, these issues need to be recognized by youth and society in order to prevent the harmful effects regarding addiction, health and debt amongst teenagers. These findings will be discussed in great detail in regard to health effects, addiction and debt along with recommendations to alleviate and solve these issues.

2. Introduction

2. 1. Background

Mr. J. Howard, Prime Minister of Australia wished to hear the concerns of Australia youth at a forum and as a result, research has been undertaken on the impact of mobile phone technology on teenagers.

2. 2. Problem

Comprehensive research and information has determined that mobile phones have harmful effects on teenagers concerning health, psychological addiction, and debt. These factors could generate more hardships for young adults; mis-educating and confusing youth from an early age. The surveys conducted for this report have concluded that eighty-nine percent of

teenagers are unaware of these effects. A survey by Ingenuity Research found that more than one-third of children aged ten to thirteen own a mobile phone. A New South Wales Office of Fair Trading survey revealed that mobile phones were considered 'essential lifestyle necessities for young people'. Almost fifty percent of young people aged under eighteen in that survey put mobile phone bills at the top of their list of debt.

2. 3. Purpose of Report

This issue, impacting on Australian society, will examine the effects of mobile phones on teenagers. Recommendations will be made for alleviating and solving the problems previously stated. The report will follow the format requested.

3. Body

3. 1. Account

Australians are recognized as rapid adopters of technology, and their take-up of mobile phone technology has been no exception. Australians favor the convenience of a single phone number where they can be contacted regardless of their location. Young Australians, in particular, are embracing mobile technology. They are using services such as text and multimedia messaging in increasing numbers to enhance their lifestyles and keep in contact with their networks of peers and work colleagues.

3. 2 The Effects on A Persons Health

As previously stated, eighty-nine percent of teenagers in Australia are unaware of the harmful health effects of mobile phones. Statistically, cellular phones increase the risk of brain cancer. Cellular phones can do physiological damage through heating effects. They can cause symptoms such as headaches, earaches, blurring of vision, short-term memory loss, numbing, tingling and burning sensations, bad sleep, fatigue and anxiety (Associate Professor Carey Denholm 2004). Not only this, it is thought children and teenagers could potentially face more potential health risks from mobile phone emissions because their skulls are thinner and their brains are still developing. (Sir William Stewart, 2000)

Dr. Andrew Davidson, from the World Health Organization, has reported in the "Medical Journal of Australia" (1998) that incidents of brain tumours at a hospital in Western Australia increased fifty percent for men and sixty-two percent for women due to the use of cellular phones (see appendix B). The statement was based on the rise of the disease in the decade from 1982. Mobile phones have only existed for approximately twenty years. The percentages of brain tumours are likely to rise and affect teenagers as they are exposed to them in the present day. This is because one-third of children already own a mobile phone and will perhaps continue owning one for approximately seventy years; a further fifty years then the diseased men and women who were exposed to mobile phones.

3. 3 Psychological Addiction

According to article, " Cell Phone, the Newest Teen Addiction" (2004) cigarettes are slowly being replaced by an equally addictive obsession, the mobile phone. (See appendix). It was noted in the same article that like cigarettes, mobile phones give teenagers a sense of individuality and sociability, a desire to rebel, and the need to bond with friends. On the surface it may seem mobile phones are healthier and less addictive than cigarettes. However, the risks and effects of mobile phones have just as many harmful outcomes. The extract below from " The Sunday Morning Herald" , " Mobile phones becoming a major addiction" (2003), states just one outcome of mobile phone addiction.

" Psychiatrists say mobile phone addiction is an obsessive-compulsive disorder which looks set to become one of the biggest non-drug addictions in the 21st century...Mobile phone addiction can totally isolate its victims, ruin them economically and even turn them into criminals."

3. 4 Case Study

An article from " Sunshine Coast Daily" (2003) (appendix C) reports that a nine year old Sunshine Coast student wrote an assignment in " SMS" style. She spelt words such as ' because' as ' cos' and when asked to spell ' because' she could not remember. This new process of communication learnt by young children such may found their literacy education, if not ruin. Although teenagers would have poor English skills when it comes to high school education, many aspects of their life would be affected; such as job applications, career paths and even filling out forms. From grade one the

years of primary school are spent teaching the basic foundations of English. It is in these years that the child memorises spelling and structures. If children learn English incorrectly the inevitable damage is hard to reverse. Imagine what may happen if these children were brought up using “digital language”. For example, the sentence “What are you going to do this afternoon. Can you meet me at the shops?” would typically be “Wat r u goin 2 do thisarvo. Meet me @ da shops?”

3.5 Debt

“One in four young mobile phone users are having difficulty meeting their monthly phone bills.” (M. Fern 2001)

At a time when young people are supposed to be concentrating on their schoolwork without the pressures of adulthood, research by the Communications Law Centre found that a significant number of young people have to deal with depression arising from mobile phone debt. (Matthew Lendrum 2002) Furthermore, eighteen percent of those with mobile phones wither don't read or don't understand the contracts they have signed. (M. Fern 2001) High-pressure marketing combined with social pressures has encouraged some young people to dive head first into mobile phone use without the experience to cope with the legal and financial implications.

4. Conclusion

Consequently, mobile phones are an impacting issue on the youth of Australia. With the rapid embrace by the youth of Australia for mobile

technology, teenagers are greater at risk of brain cancer and physiological damage. It can also be seen that mobile phones may cause teenage addiction and thus result in isolation and economic ruin. Furthermore, mobile phone debt, as teenagers do not have the experience to cope with the legal and financial implications. It is these reasons that the youth and society of Australia must recognize the harmful effects on teenagers owning a mobile phone.

5. Recommendations

Based on this investigation, the following recommendations can be made:-

- Teenagers should use them less frequently
- Teenagers should use phones only for essential calls
- Stations that transmit and receive signals should be tighter
- Leaflets should be delivered to every house explaining technology and potential risks
- Should give information about the responsibilities of owning a mobile phones such as the ramifications of non- payment bills
- Children under the age of sixteen should have prepaid cellular phones.