

# Texting in teenager life

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



Thanh Nguyen Texting in Teenagers Lives As technology has grown, the ways to get in touch with someone instantly have as well. With the advent of cell phone and the Internet, we've become accustomed to being able to find out what someone is doing, right now, at all hours. Especially, for America's teens, cell phones have become a vital social tool and texting the preferred mode of communication. Texting provides an opportunity for a quick, concise, effective means of communication. However, texting still have the harmful effects and definite influences to their lives, health and development. Today, in business cell phone market, as the manufactures compete vigorously on forms, designs and especially on price, the number of teenagers who using cell phone is increasing day by day and causing the phenomenon ". In the article " Teen Texting Soars; Will Social Skills Suffer? " of Jennifer Ludden, according to a new poll by the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project, 75% of teens between the ages of 12 and 17 now have cell phones, up from 45% in 2004. And the number of them who say the text-message daily has shot up to 54 percent from 38% in just past 18 months. There's now an expectation that teens will contact each other via text, and they expect a kind of constant, frequent response. In the article: " Texting May Be Taking a Toll" of Katie Hafner, according to the Nielsen Company, teenagers sent or received an average of 2, 272 text messages a month in the fourth quarter of 2008, almost 80 messages a day, more than double the year before. Dr. Martin Joffe, a pediatrician in Greenbrae, Calif., recently surveyed students at two local high schools and said he found that many were routinely sending hundreds of texts every day. Meanwhile, in the article " It's Official: Teens prefer Texting to Talking",

based on the survey fielded to 500 American teens through the use of social networks, teens text for some main reasons such as making plans with friends (20%), gossip (10%), flirting (7%), checking with parents (3%), latest news (3%), sports (2%), etc. This survey also shows that 28% teens text at home, 18% while on computer, 17% while riding in a car, 14% in class, 11% during a meal, 10% during a movie and 2% while driving. Texting helps teens communicate and connect with the world around them easily. They can share their feelings, moments and plans to their friends and people they know anytime and anywhere. They can also have fun and release stress through the funny story or text that people share with them. There's now an expectation that teens will contact each other via text, and they expect a kind of constant, frequent response (Ludden). They do it late at night when their parents are asleep. They do it in restaurants and while crossing busy streets. They do it in the classroom with their hands behind their back. They do it so much their thumbs hurt (Hafner). Texting has become an established part of teens' lives. However, while teens feel comfortable and familiar with texting, the parents, psychologists and educators feel worried about the negative impacts of texting on health, lives and the development of teenagers. It is leading to anxiety, distraction in school, falling grades, repetitive stress injury and sleep deprivation (Hafner). According to the article "Too much texting? The New York Times assesses the impact of texting messaging on health", text messages allow teenagers to communicate in places where cell phones are not allowed, primarily school. It's fairly easy to hide a cell phone to hide and text, and texting teenagers are not focusing on the lesson at hand. In the article of Jennifer Ludden, the

Pew report finds that most schools ban texting in class, but allow it in the halls or at lunch. At school where cell phones are forbidden, 58% of students with mobile phones say they've sent a text message during class. For example, Annie Wagner, 15, a ninth-grade honor student in Bethesda, Md., said that she could text by putting her LG phone under her coat or desk and pretended getting something out of her backpack (Hafner). Maybe, like Annie, many teenagers do the same thing as her while texting in class, which decrease their attention to understand the lesson clearly and make them get bad grade. Meanwhile, teachers are often oblivious because texting in class is a rampant and huge issue that they cannot control and they also do not have time everyday to police it (Hafner). According to the article "Texting and Education: What Teachers Are Saying about Kids Who Text", both parents and teachers have felt like texting will destroy proper English and was a distraction from serious learning. One of the biggest fears about texting has been its shortcuts that seep into teen's language use, along with mangled, abbreviated and simplistic syntax. In a study that featured a conversational essay about happiness when teens were asked "What does it mean to be happy?" teens that used more texting shortcuts performed better than their peers who did not. While some press has reported on "textism" entering student's schoolwork research actually show it's very rare. Educators have even taken this a further step by asking students to translate passages from classic literature to texting —speak to demonstrate a comprehension of language and the differences in context. This is in line with the current research that shows that: Texting-speak are not a mangled form of English that is degrading proper language, but instead a kind of "pidgin"

language all its own that actually stretches teen's language skills. As with anything an overuse of texting or texting in the wrong circumstances as listed above is never beneficial. In addition, texting can be a convenience, but for most people it quickly turns into obsessional behavior. Texting can lead to the inability to shut down outside communication. Texting puts people in instant contact, and there is an outward societal influence that makes everyone thinks that they need to be accessible at all time. A text message warrants a response as soon as possible. Plus, teenagers often feel an inherent need to know what's going on with their friends and people they know; text messaging puts them in touch instantly with the latest happenings (Too much texting? The New York Times assesses the impact of texting messaging on health). Beside, according to Michael Hausauer's study, a psychotherapist in Oakland, Calif., teenagers had a terrific interest in knowing what's going on in the lives of their peers, coupled with a terrific anxiety about being out of the loop. Texting can be an enormous tool, which offers companionship and the promise of connectedness. At the same time, texting can make a youngest feel frightened and overly exposed (Hafner). According to the article "Texting and Teen Developemt", teens feel that there is no choice because if they don't have it, people will think there's something wrong with them, people will think that they don't want to get back to their friends. That's why physicians and psychologists is beginning to worry about the texting phenomenon, which cause the anxiety and illusion thoughts of teenagers. Moreover, excessive texting can potentially lead to health problem. Intensive repetitive use of the upper extremities can lead to musculoskeletal disorders. There are some reasons to be concerned that too

much texting could lead to temporary or permanent damage to the thumbs (Hafner). Besides, keeping the phone on at night and putting it near the bed can cause the sleep problems. Many teenagers still keep waiting for their phone to light up and signal an incoming message and responding to texts late at night. Constant texting can cause them to wake up frequently and never settle into a deep sleep. Plus, that parts of the body near the waist, such as the kidney, could be harmed by text messaging, since the phone is often held at this level when sending and receiving text message (Too much texting? The New York Times assesses the impact of texting messaging on health). In addition, some physicians and psychiatrists fear that texting might be causing a shift in the way adolescent develop. According to Professor Sherry Turkle's study, among the jobs of adolescence are to spate form their parents and to find the peace and quiet to become the person they decide they want to be, texting hits directly at both those jobs (Hafner). It is harder for the teenagers to break free from their parents as they grow into autonomous adults if they keep texting their mothers 15 times a day, asking for very simple and small thing such as " Should I get the red shoes or the blue shoes". It can lose their ability to decide what they want to do and who they want to be (Hafner). Texting can also affect to the ability to feel and express feelings when teenagers have to face directly with a problem, a certain event. Turkle also says that intimacy is also hampered by texting behavior because teens use texting as a way to avoid the risks of face-to-face, the risks of being turned down. For example, they do not really know the difference between an apology and a confession. " Their idea of apologizing is to send a confession in a text", Turkle said, " But an apology is

really different. An apology is when you face someone, you see that you've hurt them, you feel bad, and you try to make it right in a kind of delicate negotiation of a conversation. If you're texting all the time, you're not learning how to do those kinds of things." (Texting and Teen Development). In Los Angeles, Nini Halkett has taught history there for two decades and laments the bad spelling and writing that seems to worsen as texting becomes more widespread. As her students are increasingly immersed in texting, Halkett also finds them increasingly shy and awkward in person. " They can get up the courage to ask you for [a deadline] extension on the computer," she says. " But they won't come and speak to you face-to-face about it. And that worries me, in terms of their ability – particularly once they get out in the workplace – to interact with people. " As in Pew focus groups, the teens admit they use texting to avoid confrontation or uncomfortable situations (Ludden). It's almost like they lose the sense of feeling their own feelings because they prefer sharing their feelings by their messages, which only are symbols and simplistic synthax on the virtual electricity screen, to expressing them in their real face, real life and real partners.