

Technology

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Technology It goes without saying that there are many benefits to technology. For example, the Internet provides us with instant access to an unlimited amount of information. We can connect to anyone through social networking. Not to mention, Smart phones include applications to manage every detail of our lives. Yet, with all these advantages, the disadvantages are hard to ignore. In social or even professional settings, people are checking their e-mail, cell phone, and Faceable profile, distracting themselves from the physical world. This has led to a lack of communication skills, and thinking ability.

Our relationships, jobs, and our brains are affected in negative ways. The way we use technology is affecting our brains. Our brain is shaped by our habits and daily life. The nerve cells that make up our brains actually change in response to our experiences and stimuli. As technology has grown, attention spans have shortened, communication skills have suffered, as well as our ability to think abstractly. Scientists say that juggling email, phone calls, and other technology distractions, is affecting our ability to focus (Attached to technology). Technology benefits our brains in a couple of ways.

Imaging studies show that Internet users become more efficient at finding information, and video game players develop better visual acuity. However, these habits can be damaging if not done in moderation. The stimulation of technology can trigger dopamine levels to rise in the brain, due to excitement. Researchers say this can be addicting, and without it, people feel bored (Attached to technology) Social networking sites, such as Faceable, allow us to connect with others over the Internet. The problem is

that this can hinder personal relationships. Face-to-face communication is practiced less.

Some people use e-mail to send difficult messages because it is less emotionally involved. In this way, one is protected from the negative emotional response, providing the illusion that no harm is done. However, this also means, these difficult messages lack empathy, and may relay a different message than what was intended (The effect of Technology). When writing electronic messages, people tend to use many abbreviations and less punctuation. Due to this, grammar and spelling are lacking in professional settings. I once had a professor that made it known, that if we e-mail IM, he will not reply unless it is written in full sentences.

More and more, he had been receiving e-mails from students that were not appropriately written for a professional setting. It should go without being said, that in professional settings, one should not type messages like they would on Facebook, and yet it's happening. Not only is grammar suffering, but our relationships in professional settings, as well. Technology has become a distraction from the real world. Students, growing up in the digital world face a new challenge to focusing and learning. Researchers say the era of technology is even more powerful for children. Because their brains are still developing, they can be easily habituated.

Even though parents and educators express a worry about students' digital habits, they are using more and more technology within the classroom. It's used as a way to connect with students and give them essential skills for the digital age (Growing Up Digital). Though these skills are essential, how much

is the presence of technology in the classroom inhibiting students' learning? According to a study by Patricia Greenfield, a professor of psychology at UCLA, students that were given access to the Internet during class, did not process what the speaker said nearly as well as students who did not.

When the students were tested after lecture, those who did not have access to the Internet, scored significantly higher (Is Technology Producing A Decline). With the fast growing pace of technology, it is hard to know what the long term effects will be on society, but the effects to our lives is ever present. It is important that we learn to set our digital devices aside to communicate face-to-face and work without distractions. Technology has so many benefits, but moderation is needed to suppress the negative effects.