

# Should mobile phone usage be allowed in schools?

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Mobile phones are inexcusably one of the most important and vital items in everyday life. Phones replace our calculators, alarm clocks, calendars, newspapers, and everything in between. Want to see the latest news? Check your phone. Need to Google something? Check your phone. Need to be entertained? Check your phone. The cellphone is our go to device in every situation because of its efficiency and convenience. Besides being a miscellaneous device, a cell phone is a favorable way to stay connected to family, a safety net you can fall upon during emergencies, and a great classroom tool teachers can use to enhance the learning experience. There is no doubt that it's important that students stay in touch with their parents during school hours. A study shows that 48% of parents use their children's phones to monitor their locations and whereabouts, ensuring the child's safety.

Even if you're as heartless as the Evil Queen, a mother/father will always look after their young. Often, students forget their lunch bag or P. E bag at home and it's ideal that students can contact their parents without the hassle of borrowing a teacher's phone. Some are even required to use a school phone in the office, even in urgent cases, such as a forgotten project that is due in next class. A sudden change of plans could mean that the student is stranded at school with no contact to their parents whatsoever.

Imagine your child just stranded at school during after-school hours, without any means of communication to you. In the end, it should not be a problem for students to keep in touch with their parents via cellphone. Emergencies are very rare but they do happen, and having a phone with you could be a matter of life or death. For example, if you are injured with no person

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present, then one phone call could be your saving grace. A person could be injured and instead of running for help and leaving them unattended, you could call a better equipped adult to handle the situation.

A few years ago, at my previous school, my friend was running and tripped. He had knocked one of his front teeth out from the impact of his fall. I remember being absolutely terrified at the sight of my friend wailing with a mixture of blood and saliva dripping everywhere. If I had had my phone, it would have been possible for me to call for help, instead of running and leaving him unattended. In short, the moral of the story is always better safe than sorry.

There are a variety of apps that can support and enhance the learning experience in classrooms, something every teacher would want for you. Examples include iLearn United States, an app that turns learning about states into a fun game, or Kahoot! a popular learning game that spurs the students' competitiveness. Using social media as a classroom tool is also a resourceful option, which has been proven to be useful by one of my previous teachers. A recent study found that 88% of students have a cellphone, while 73% have a smartphone, enabling students to take on learning from another perspective. Some critics may claim that the management of students' phones is extremely difficult, but if simple rules such as turning your phones on silent during class are enforced, it could be the turning tide in the education system.

Teachers shouldn't be concerned with the petty collecting of electronic devices. Instead, they should do what they are supposed to do: Teach. If

teachers can't even manage their students should they really be teaching? It has been argued that cell phones are an incredibly intrusive distraction in classrooms. Complaints have been surfacing everywhere that students who quickly check their email or Google a question, are quickly sucked into the web of social media, completely unable to process the lesson that is taking place. Regardless of the rules your school sets on phone use, we all have fallen prey to the common distractions of social media. Unfortunately, this responsibility should fall upon the teachers because of their inadequacy to keep their student's habits in check.

Of course, this job also extend to the parents, but it's the teachers that should have been guiding the students to appropriate usage of their devices in school. Afterall, just taking away the device from the students doesn't do much. If you can educate them such that they learn how to beneficially use their technology, it will do them more good in the long term. Schools need to to change, if not eliminate some overly strict rules set on the use of cellular devices on campus. The rules forced upon phones could be limiting what other resources teachers could be using, blocking contact from students' guardians, and possibly hurting students unintentionally.

Teachers want to be able to teach without distractions, students want to be able to have a little bit of freedom, and I am certain that if we all compromise, it's possible for us to come to some solutions.