



Digital devices and developing child

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ABSTRACT

This article provides an overview on the effects of digital devices use on children's physical, cognitive, and social development. While no one can argue the benefits of advanced technology in today's world, connection to these devices may have resulted in a disconnection from what society should value most, the next generation. Rather than providing children with more video games, TVs in the car, and the latest iPods and cell phone devices, creating a deep and widening chasm between parent and child, let's resolve to do more hugging,

playing, rough housing, and conversing with our children.

Keywords: Digital devices, developing child

INTRODUCTION

Juggling work, home and community lives, parents now rely heavily on communication, information and transportation technology to make their lives faster and more efficient. Entertainment technology (TV, internet, video games, and iPods) has advanced so rapidly that families have scarcely noticed the significant impact and

changes to their family structure and lifestyles. In the past, family time was often spent doing chores, and children had expectations to meet on a daily basis. The dining room table was a central place where families came together to eat and talk about their day, and, in between meals, the table was the centre for baking, crafts and homework. Today's families are different. Technology's impact on the 21st century family is fracturing its very foundation and causing a disintegration of core values that used to hold families together.

It's not alcohol or a drug, but cell phones and iPads are also a problem for kids, says a University of Alberta expert who has launched a new project to measure children's usage.

Kids are struggling to control the technology, yet getting access to it at younger ages," said Jason Daniels, a researcher with the Faculty of Extension who is exploring long-term fallout of too much time. Often the first thing they see in the morning and the last thing before bed is a digital screen.

Hazards of digital devices

Children's developing sensory and motor systems have not evolved biologically to

accommodate the sedentary, yet frenzied and chaotic nature of today's technology. Rapidly advancing technology has contributed to an increase of physical, psychological and behavior disorders that the health and education systems are just beginning to detect, much less understand.

Diagnoses of ADHD, autism, coordination disorder, sensory processing disorder, anxiety, depression, and sleep disorders can be causally linked to technology overuse and are increasing at an alarming rate.

Attention deficit: Hyperactivity

Disorder (ADHD) is a mental disorder. It refers to problems like paying attention, excess activity or has difficulty controlling behavior which is not appropriate. This can occur in children and cause them to be fidgety, unable to focus, restless and easily distracted. This change in behavior can cause problem at school or at home as well. **OF MOST CONCERN ARE THE FINDINGS THAT PLAYING VIOLENT COMPUTER GAMES MAY INCREASE AGGRESSIVENESS AND DESENSITIZE A CHILD TO SUFFERING, AND THAT THE USE OF COMPUTERS MAY BLUR A CHILD'S ABILITY TO**

DISTINGUISH REAL LIFE FROM SIMULATION.

Persistent hyper-vigilant sensory system Further analysis of the impact of technology on the developing child indicates that while the vestibular, proprioceptive, tactile and attachment systems are under stimulated, the visual and auditory sensory systems are in “overload.” This sensory imbalance creates huge problems in overall neurological development, as the brain’s anatomy, chemistry and pathways become permanently altered and impaired. Young children who are exposed to violence through TV and video games are in a high state of adrenalin and stress, as their bodies do not know that what they are watching is not real. Children who overuse technology report persistent body sensations of overall “shaking,” increased breathing and heart rate, and a general state of “unease. This can best be described as a persistent hyper-vigilant sensory system, still “on alert” for the oncoming assault from video game characters

Lack of connection with family: As children are connecting more and more to technology, society is seeing a disconnection from themselves, others and nature. As little children develop and

form their identity, they often are incapable of discerning whether they are the “killing machine” seen on TV and in video games, or just a shy and lonely little kid in need of a friend. TV and video game addiction is causing an irreversible worldwide epidemic of mental and physical health disorders, yet technology overuse continue to escalate in both home and school settings. The catch is that technology is killing what we love the most connection with other human beings. Connection is integral to that developing child’s sense of security and safety. Healthy attachment formation results in a happy and calm child. Disruption or neglect of primary attachment results in an anxious and agitated child. Family over-use of technology is not only gravely affecting early attachment formation, but also having a negative impact on child psychological and behavioral health.

Less physical activity: Children now rely on technology for the majority of their play, grossly limiting challenges to their creativity and imaginations, as well as limiting necessary challenges to their bodies to achieve optimal sensory and motor development. It has been known for some time that getting out in nature and vigorous exercise improves attention

and learning ability, yet many schools are spending increasing amounts of money purchasing computers and allowing unrestricted access to technology during recess and lunch. It appears that today's families and schools have been pulled into the "Virtual Reality Dream". Choosing to isolate themselves from their "pack", children now crave violent and immediate gratification found in TV, video games and internet technology. Leads to Obesity: Small kids avoid physical activities once they have any gadget in their hands. Therefore, playing with electronic gadgets and eating a lot of fast food without doing any physical activity, adds many pounds of weight. Children don't realize this in the beginning but suffer throughout their life due to the same.

Dries up Eyes: Electronic devices, such as mobile phones and computers are the main causes of eye problems in children. The fluid present in eyes starts drying due to the overuse of these gadgets. Constant strain might also lead to this situation. This, in turn, causes multiple eye infections and affects the vision as well.

Effects on sitting posture: One of the worst effects of the use of gadgets on the health of innocent kids is multiple back

pains. As they constantly remain engaged with gadgets in a sitting posture, it affects their back and often causes intense pain.

CONCLUSION

- In this digitalised world it is difficult to keep children away from gadgets but we can limit their time.
- Encouraging child to use it in educational field or study purpose can lead to drastic change in their lives. Use of gadgets in a constructive way can lead to healthier and efficient minds.
- Engaging children in outdoor activities will strengthen their physical health and keep them fresh and active.
- It's important to come together as parents, teachers and therapists to help society "wake up" and see the devastating effects technology is having not only on our children's physical, psychological and behavioural health, but also on their ability to learn and sustain personal and family relationships.

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