

Digital devices dominate teenagers' time

Cellphone addiction becomes mainstream

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by **Supple**

From the minute she gets up, throughout the school day and into the evening, sophomore Melynna Martinez can't put down her phone.

"Phone addiction is a serious problem," Martinez said. "I can't live without my phone. There's not really time when I'm not on it."

Martinez is among a growing number of teens who struggle with digital device addiction, based on a recent survey released by Common Sense Media, a non-profit organization devoted to advocacy of safe technology use by children.

According to the study, 50 percent of teens feel addicted to their mobile devices, and 72 percent feel the need to immediately respond to notifications by text or social media.

"We found that one out of every two teens feels addicted to her mobile device," Common Sense founder and CEO James P. Steyer wrote. "We also found that parents and teens agree that mobile use is distracting, a regular source of conflict, and in some cases, truly problematic."

The findings are not unique. Both Science Daily and WebMD provide similar results.

Nicholas Carr, author of "The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains" comments on cell phones.

"By design it's an environment of almost constant interruptions and distractions," Carr said.

"The smartphone, more than any other gadget, steals from us the opportunity to maintain our attention, to engage in contemplation and reflection, or even to be alone with our thoughts."

In a poll of 49 students at our own school, 55 percent felt that

they were addicted to their cell phones. Of those polled 33 percent said they weren't addicted to their phone and 12 percent said that they didn't know.

"I'm addicted to my phone because it lets me talk to all my friends and family," junior Grace Spruce said.

Common Sense Media reports that 78 percent of teens check their devices hourly and 52 percent of teens feel that they spend too much time on their phones.

"Phone addiction is the reason face-to-face conversation is dead!" world history teacher Michelle Brown said.

To prevent further addiction WebMD suggests being aware of our feelings and situations when we want to check our phones and try to not use our devices in certain situations.

"We have to disconnect to connect." sophomore Brailyn Betsy said.

According to Common Sense Media

- Teens spend 8:56 hours using media
- 50% of teens use social media and
- 60% of teens text while doing homework according to a Common Sense Census

According to Science Daily from the University of Illinois

- People who describe themselves as having addictive behaviors towards cell phones and the internet scored higher on depression and anxiety scales

According to WebMD

- In a Harvard Business School study of managers/professionals:
 - 70% said they checked their phone within an hour of getting up
 - 56% check their phone within an hour of going to sleep
 - 48% check over the weekend, including Friday nights
 - 51% check continuously over vacations
 - 44% felt they would experience anxiety if they lost their phones and couldn't replace it for a week

How many times do you look at your phone in a day?

- 1) 1-10 times
- 2) 10-20 times
- 3) 20-30 times
- 4) 30+ times

Could you go a day without your phone?

- 1) Yes, I don't need it.
- 2) Yes, I could if I had to.
- 3) No, I would miss not having it.
- 4) No way!

Have you ever been in trouble because of your phone use? How many times do you do so in a week?

- 1) Yes, all the time
- 2) A couple times
- 3) Once
- 4) Never

Are you addicted to your phone?

If you scored between: 18-22, you're addicted to your phone!

12-17, you're in danger of becoming addicted. You should probably cut back.

6-11, you're using your phone in moderation.

Do you frequently neglect your family or friends because you would rather be on your phone? How many times do you do so in a week?

- 1) 0-1 days a week
- 2) 2-3 days
- 3) 4-5 days
- 4) 6-7 days

Do you ever feel bad or guilty about your phone use?

- 1) No
- 2) Yes

How willing would you be to let your friend borrow your phone for a day?

- 1) That'd be fine, I trust them.
- 2) Is it an emergency?
- 3) But... I need it.
- 4) I wouldn't trust my friend with my phone.

