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AP Language and Composition

Editorial Final Draft

Smartphones- A New Type of Addiction

Could you survive a day without your phone? A lot of people might think yes, but it is easier said than done. No phone for a day means no texts or calls from your friends. No checking social media every five minutes. No playing games on your phone when you're bored in class. No taking pictures of things you think look pretty or interesting. No listening to music from your phone. Do you still think you could survive? If you do, you are most likely in the minority. In the modern world, smartphones consume the lives of almost everyone, especially teenagers and young adults. [Half of teenagers](#) even admit to being addicted to their phones. Phone addiction plagues our society because people have showcased their incapability of functioning without their phones which has affected their day-to-day lives.

Technology has had a massive impact on society in a short amount of time. People who grew up without smartphones and the Internet had a completely different childhood, and they look at kids growing up now in wonder. In [an article by "The Atlantic"](#), the author groups people born between 1995 and 2012 as the "iGen" because their childhood consists of smartphones. These children have always used smartphones and cannot remember a time without it because they are the same age, if not younger, than smartphones. They have also been a part of trends where kids spend less time on their homework and less time sneaking out from their parents. They are also not as inclined to work or get their driver's license. This means children and teens

these days have more free time, but what are they doing with it? Of course it is spent on their phones. People encounter less face-to-face interaction with social communications based on texting, calling, or snapchatting.

Some argue that people are more social with phones because they can connect with more people and with less effort. Humans are a social species and with phones we have found a new way to socialize. [According to Professor Robert Barton](#) from Durham University, “... [humans] are highly social and we have a want of and need for social interactions, and a desire to know what’s going on in a social world. It’s not antisocial, it’s social”. Social media is one of largest and most popular uses for smartphones and confirms the idea that humans are social. Almost everyone has an Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and/or Snapchat. Through these mediums one can connect with and keep in touch with someone across the globe. If you have a family member in a different country you are able to video chat with them and stay updated on each others lives. Social media also leads to meeting and making connections with new people through mutual friends or even on dating websites. Although this may explain why we are constantly feeling the urge to use our phone, it does not deny the fact that humans are indeed addicted to their phones. As we use this newer, better form of communication we become reliant on it which in turn, turns into an unhealthy attachment. Smartphones have fixed the issue of long-term communication, but in the process they have created a new problem which is phone addiction.

Phone addiction also contains dangerous consequences. The generation that has grown up with technology like smartphones is the generation that suffers the most from mental health disorders. [A study](#) done by professors in Italy and France has recorded the effects of phone addiction and just how serious they were. At two independent schools in France and Italy,

students were required to give up their phone for a whole day for part of their grade. As soon as the students heard this, anxiety spread across them. They began to wonder how they would fill the large amount of time that was usually filled with phone time. Another study that took place in the US found that taking away students' phones created symptoms of withdrawal, which is a key characteristic of having an addiction. Confiscating their smartphones led to a higher blood pressure and heart rate, which also led to them performing worse on mental tasks. Although there is not evidence that 100% blames phone addiction for mental health disorders, a strong correlation has been found between the two. The study in France and Italy found that "48% of those who spent five or more hours a day on their phones... had thought about suicide or made plans for it vs 28% of those who spent only one hour per day on their phones". As mental health problems have increased throughout time, research has found technology to be the biggest difference in the lifestyles of children and teens in the past and now.

On the other hand, not everyone thinks that humans have an addiction to smartphones. According to the article ["No, You're Not Addicted to Your Phone. Neither Are Your Kids"](#) the actual definition of addiction is much more severe than how people actually define it. The real definition is more along the lines of "'a habit [that] changes into an obligation [that creates] craving, excessive behavior, psychological and physical withdrawal symptoms'". People could argue that modern-day phone addiction is that severe though. People are truly obsessed with their phones and freak out when they don't have it. A smartphone is used for almost everything- necessary or not. There even are withdrawal symptoms because without phones, people feel anxious and panicked. The article also defends going on your phone during a conversation because a conversation doesn't require someone's full attention. This is not really true because I

have tried talking to someone while doing something on my phone and it's hard to keep up the conversation. The same has happened when I am talking to someone using their phone. The person that I'm talking to doesn't really know what I'm saying and I end up repeating myself. We tend to make justifications for our heavy phone usage instead of admitting that we do have an addiction to them. In reality the majority of people couldn't survive with their smartphones.

Phone addiction may seem like something that doesn't apply to you, but it probably does. When writing this editorial and looking at other articles, I think to myself that no, I am not addicted to my phone. But as I change the song I'm listening to on my phone or reply to a text message I begin to realize that, yes I too am addicted to my phone. If you really think about what a day without your phone would look like, you realize how much you use your phone. You start feel anxious and a little panicked. Say you're going to school and you forgot your phone at home. You have a quiz that day, but you don't well because you're too worried about how you're going to get through the day without your phone. This is quite a common scenario because people, especially teenagers, are so attached to their phones that they don't know what to do without one. This addiction is much more serious than it sounds because it affects a person's mental health. High phone usage is correlated to worse mental health conditions. Phone addiction plagues our society, but we can change that. Will you let your phone take over you?

Mentor Texts

The first article I looked at for inspiration and insight for my editorial was the article [“50% of Teens Think They’re Addicted to Their Smartphones”](#). This article by Kelly Wallace from CNN used a mixture of facts, other sources, quotes, and personal experiences to create a strong argument. By including other sources the reader not only has resources available to learn more, but can trust the information in the editorial more because it is backed by other people. In my editorial I tried to make a stronger argument by including five hyperlinked sources that I felt would back up my claims. By including personal information the author also strengthens her argument because personal experiences make a claim seem more real. I liked this part of the CNN article because it gave even more, but different, evidence, so I included some personal encounters too. The other article I looked at for help with my editorial was an article from Forbes called [“Phone Addiction Is Real- And So Are Its Mental Health Risks”](#). This piece by Alice G Walton focused more on the logos side of an argument by providing solid factual information. It explained a study that examined the severity of phone addiction. I really liked this study and the information it found, so I also included it in my editorial. By using statistics and other facts, this piece contained credible information because you can’t deny a fact. I also drew inspiration from the intro of that article because it establishes a background of what phone addiction consists of and how that relates to the reader or any person. In my intro I tried to make an intro that serves the same kind of purpose.