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Beware when Byting the Apple

*The impact of the iPhone on the wellbeing
of young people*



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As the 21st century is underway, the use of mobile phones has become a part of everyday life. In 2018, it was estimated that over 80% of American teenagers owned an iPhone. But what is its impact on this large demographic and how has it changed how we live? This article will explore the iPhone's positive and negative impacts on young individuals' lives.

For young individuals, being considered 'popular' is an important part of life. Apple plays into this, by marketing the iPhone as a luxury, high-status item. Owning the latest iPhone means you are up to date with technology and are rich enough to afford it. Because of the iPhone's status, children and young people can often feel pressured by their peers to buy the latest model as an important accessory that qualifies them to feel 'cool' and fit in with the popular crowd. When individuals are unable to reach this high expectation, they are at risk of feeling bad about themselves, exacerbating the development of mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, that can surface during adolescence.



Since the first iPhone's release in 2007, internet usage by children and teenagers has increased. The iPhone has made the internet easier to access. Social media apps, such as Instagram and Snapchat, have given rise to a dramatic increase in cyberbullying. Factors such as potential anonymity, lack of privacy, and instant messaging have made cyberbullying very easy, and this form of bullying is now one of the largest contributors to depression in young adolescents, as Major Depressive Disorder has been steadily increasing since the iPhone's release in 2007. Easy access to the internet has also led to young individuals being exposed to explicit content, such as violence and pornography, which are detrimental in the development of young people, as this causes unrealistic ideas about sex, and the normalisation of violence.

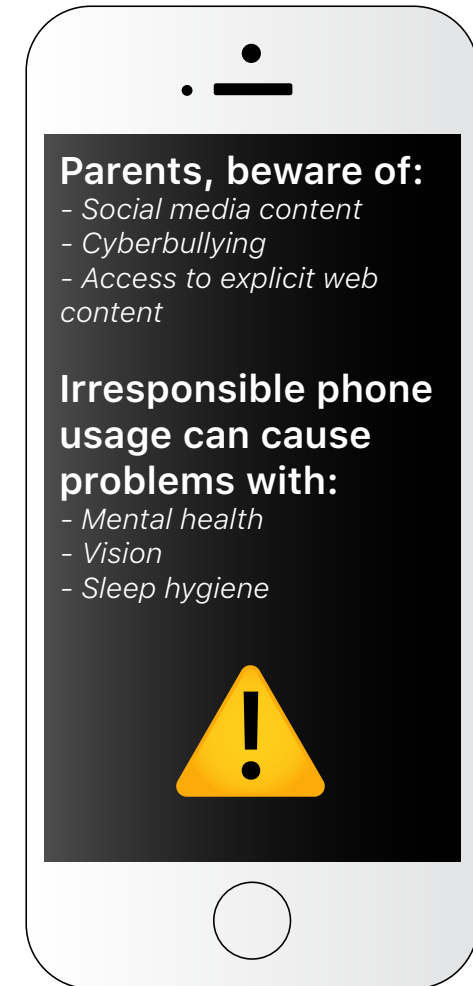
Phone usage has become very normalized, to the point that some are unaware of the effects it can have on our health, especially for young people. Sleep is very important for children. A lack of enough sleep can affect not only physical health,

but also academic performance amongst adolescents. Phone screens are known to emit blue light. This affects the production of melatonin in the brain, which induces sleep. Other implications from this light can include damage to the eye's retina and potential damage to an individual's vision. To combat this issue, Apple has included the night shift feature, which filters out the blue light from the display.

Despite the negatives previously discussed, there are benefits for letting a child own their own mobile phone. The largest appeal would be to increase their safety and security. Parents are now able to text or call their child and make sure they are safe, and children are quickly able to contact an adult if they are feeling in danger. There are also many security apps that allow a parent to see their child's location and alert them in case of emergency. Giving a child their own phone is also important, in recent years, to develop the child's social connections and interactions with others, and it can boost their confidence in themselves. To deny a young person a phone is to, in essence, put

them at risk of social exclusion. Another key factor is the quick access to information, supporting their learning, and access to information about important life decisions (although the quality of information being consumed can be problematic).

With these factors in mind, we can understand the appeal for a parent to let their child own their own phone. While there are benefits in letting a child own their own mobile phone, such as improving their safety and sociability, there are many negative impacts that affect the wellbeing of a youth's physical and mental health. Developers of these devices must take responsibility to improve the aspects that leave children and young people at risk. Apple's iPhone is ahead in this area, providing an experience that is much more 'child friendly', but we have a long way to go before these issues are fully resolved. More research is needed to guide the development of high quality, child safe, devices.



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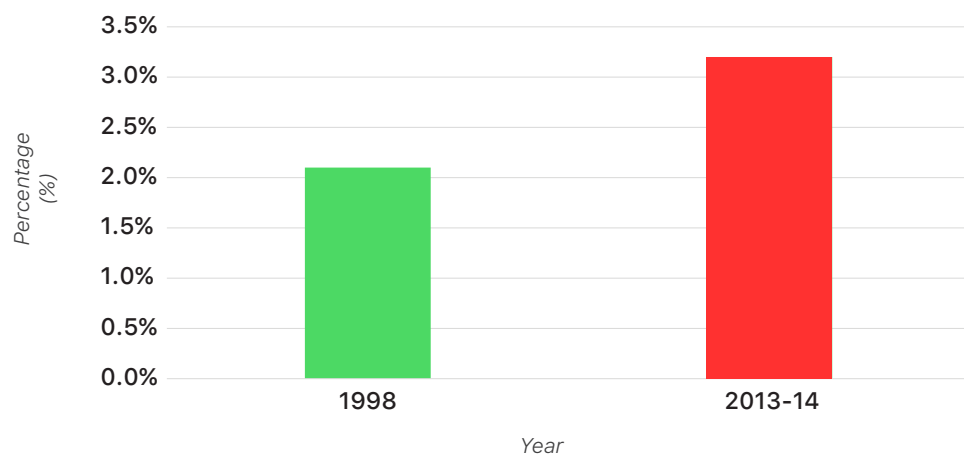
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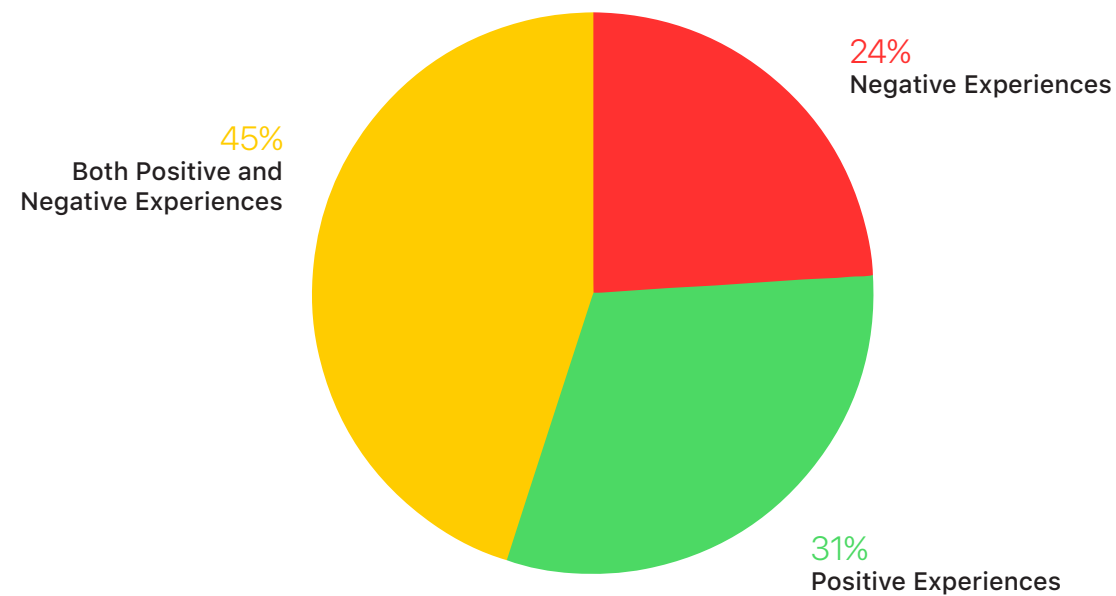
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**Incidence of Major Depressive Order Among
Young People Aged 6-17 in Australia**



**Teenagers' Experiences
Using Social Media**



Daily Time Spent on Social Media

Average h:mm spent engaging with/connected to social networks/services during a typical day

