

“The benefits of owning a mobile phone far outweigh the disadvantages”

We live in an advanced technological world and the mobile phone has become a necessity in most peoples lives. One can't imagine life without a mobile phone. However as well as the advantages for having a mobile phone, there are many disadvantages / dangers to owning a mobile phone and everyone needs to be aware of these.

Approx 95% of households in the UK own a mobile phone. ([statista.com](https://www.statista.com) Feb 2020)

Reasons in favour of this argument

1. One of the main advantages of owing a mobile phone is Safety. Having a mobile phone you can have instant access in keeping in contact with family and friends day or night.

Research has shown that parents feel happier if their son or daughter has a mobile phone because if their kids are out, a quick text or phone call lets the parents know that their child is safe at a friends house, the library, or at other activities.

Kids get to a certain age when they want more independence, giving them a mobile phone can give parents peace of mind about their whereabouts while allowing them their freedom. Most mobile phones have GPS on them so parents can always track their activity. As well as keeping parents happy, having the mobile phone can also build the child's confidence.

I support this argument because it gives the parents the comfort they need when their kids are out and it also gives the child the independence they want. Having that access to be able contact anyone, day or night, keeps everyone safe.

2. Another point to support the above argument is the Educational Value. Connection to the internet opens many forms to help with homework and many other daily tasks/activities.

Recent research has shown that there are over 2 trillion google searches per day (2020) this shows us that people are liking the idea of obtaining information with a touch of a button.

Homework has changed a lot since parents were at school and if a child has difficulty understanding something which parents can't help them with, with a touch of a button help is there. There are so many different websites and learning

forms for all age groups and kids seem to like the idea of learning things by searching the web. The internet not only can help with homework, it can help you learn and understand all that's going on in the world.

3. Another positive aspect of owning a mobile phone is the Increase in Social Interaction.

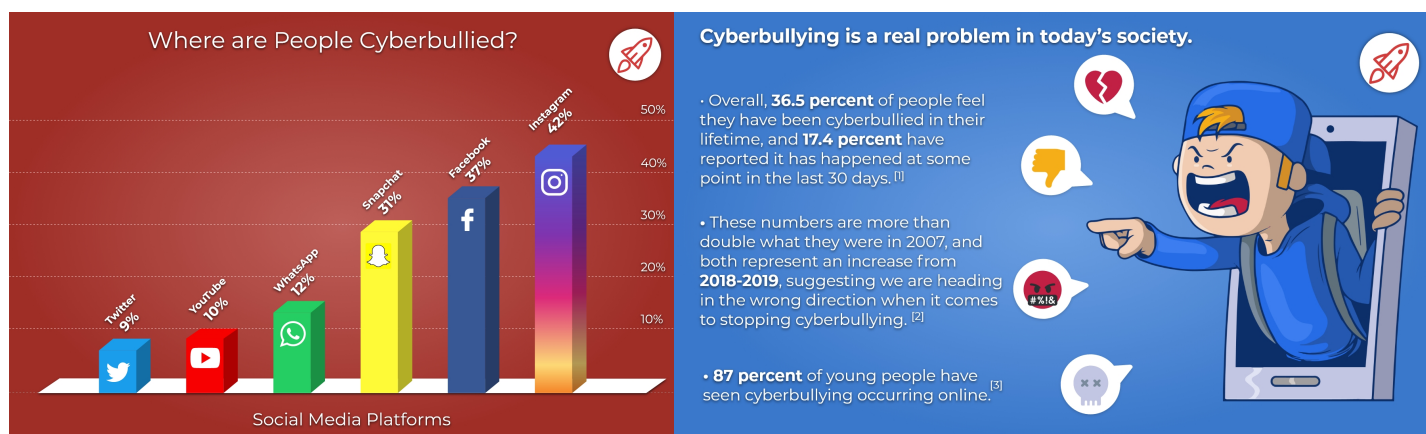
According to scientific research smartphones can facilitate the communication and social skills of children with autism. We have seen from research/books that a mobile phone can give a child a lot of confidence and if the child has difficulty making friends, a mobile phone can boost social interaction with others.

Social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc, allows kids to reach out to other kids and share interests. Within the current climate, everyone in isolation, forms such as Zoom and Microsoft teams has helped lots of people keep in contact with each other and share new things.

Reasons against this argument

1. At the same time it has to be recognised that there are many reasons against the above argument such as the dangers of internet eg; Cyberbullying and Online Predators.

* In research studies it has been revealed that...



A report, Latest Research; Parenting in the Digital Age, found 24% of 8-17 year olds met someone in real life after initial online encounters.

In research studies it has been revealed that 33% of teens are Facebook friends with other people they have not met in person.

Cyberbullying and Online Predators, is becoming a growing problem for today's kids/youths and sadly it is not getting any better but many websites/forms are trying to help put a stop to these major problems. Cyberbullying can cause emotional and destructive behaviour and that is why if you have experienced it, it is always good to talk to family, friends, a well trusted adult or helpline websites about it. Parents always need to teach their children about these online dangers and make sure that their children are always open to who they are speaking to online. Parents should have conversations with their children from a young age about cybersecurity. This will help their kids develop the skills they need to be safe online.

2. Another example of the disadvantages of mobile phones is Isolation due to being addicted to Social Media/ Games.

Social Media Addiction is becoming a global problem that keeps growing. As of 2018, 3.1 billion people, roughly one-third of the global population, use social media. Globally, the number of social media users has grown by 13% (362 million) in the past year.

A study conducted at San Francisco State University surveyed students about their smartphone usage and general digital habits. It found that the students that used phones the most reported feeling more lonely and isolated than students less dependent on their devices. The most frequent users also reported higher levels of depression and anxiety. (2018)

Whilst many people see nothing wrong in spending hours on their mobile phone surfing the web or gaming, we can see from research that this is a problem. Many people have become addicted to their phone and have lost all social interaction with friends, family and the outside world. As a result of this many people have all of a sudden found themselves alone and unable to mix with society, this leads to depression and other health problems. At an early age parents need to restrict screen time and set boundaries/rules when kids first get a mobile phone.

3. It cannot be ignored that having a mobile phone can cause kids as well as adults to have major Health Problems eg cancers, weight problems, depression/ anxiety, sleep problems, eyesight problems, accidents etc.

In May 2011, the World Health Organization (WHO) classified RF radiation as 'possibly carcinogenic for humans, based on an increased risk for glioma, a type of brain cancer'.

The UK Department of Health recommends that children under 16 should use mobile phones for short essential calls only.

Several studies have shown that high mobile use was associated with sleep disorders. Major contributing factors to interrupted sleep patterns are getting awakened in the middle of the night due to mobile rings and vibrations and increased use of mobiles post-evening until midnight.

Lots of people use their mobiles to read or surf the web etc apart from texting. when you do so, the glaring screen and small font size put a lot of strain on your eyes, especially if you are reading in the dark.

In the above research studies it has shown some of the many health problems associated with owning a mobile phone. Kids at an early age should be informed about over usage of their phone and the associated health problems and the knock on effects it has on their lifestyle and future such as; obesity, due to sitting for long periods on a screen, which leads to body image and eating disorders in later life, decreased sleep and distractibility contributing to poorer academic performance which can lead to poor exam results and poor career prospects in the future. If kids are made aware of these problems, they will hopefully take the necessary precautions early. It all about using you phone in moderation, being responsible and safe.

Conclusion

In conclusion, It has been recognised that there are pros and cons to every argument and weighing up both sides of the discussion is important to get a balanced opinion. With an advanced technological era, I feel that the benefits of owning a mobile phone far outweigh the disadvantages. Even though I have seen from the research that many lives can be ruined from owning a mobile phone, to keep up with todays ever changing society I feel that a mobile phone is essential, but being aware of the dangers is always important to remember and parents need to make their kids aware of these when they give their son or daughter a mobile phone for the first time. Owning a mobile phone can open the doors to a whole new exciting world.