**The Benefits of Owning a Mobile Phone Outweigh the Disadvantages**

Overview

Mobile phones are used by many, many people in their daily lives from children to adults. Here in the UK, media regulator Ofcom conducted a survey of over 3200 UK children which showed that half of the 10 year olds surveyed owned a phone and a report by Childwise which surveyed roughly 2200 children and showed that over half of the children who owned a phone kept it near their bed when sleeping. These results show that usage of phones by children is rising and becoming more of a part in their daily lives. I believe this is good and I will show the reasons why.

Reasons

One of the reasons why a child should own a phone is for communication. Children who own a phone can always keep in contact with friends and family which can help a parent keep an eye on their child when not in close contact with them. This can also help children stay connected with friends and to organize meet ups, for example to have an ice cream or to play at the local park. Phones can also help children talk to distant relatives or during a lockdown like what we are in currently, say hello to family who they have to social distance themselves from.

Another point to support this argument is independence from children having a phone. Parents can give more independence to children because a mobile phone can help a child stay connected with parents, even if they are in separate locations. Being able to safely let your children go out with friends and walk home, helps the parent and child feel more at ease, the parent by knowing they can get in touch at any time with their child and the child by knowing they can go out without parental supervision while still staying in touch.

At the same time however too much independence could lead to children watching and reading inappropriate content on the internet. However, if a parent makes sure a child is educated on how to stay safe on the internet, the child can be wary of the dangers of the Internet. Events such as Safer Internet Day and Internet Safety talks in school also can educate a child.

Some children who own phones can become ‘addicted’ to them however, never leaving their phone and always being on it. The solution to this is if you are a parent, set limits for phone usage and try to encourage the child to do other activities like playing a board game, or going outside.

It is well pointing out that if a child owns a phone it is easier for them to find information on the internet. This helps children stay in step with the daily news and gives them easier access to educational resources for researching subjects for school such as research for a fact file on a rainforest bird to researching a country for Fairtrade.

However, Cyber-Bullying can be a big problem for any child with a phone. From making fun of peoples looks anonymously to straight up insulting them, Cyber-Bullying is always on the mind of parents wanting to get a phone for their child. Making sure children are well educated on Cyber-Bullying and the effects of it will help make sure they can respond to instances of it more effectively and will bring down how much Cyber-Bullying happens due to the children knowing how it could affect a person.

Conclusion

Overall phones are and should be a necessity for most of our lives and if children are educated on use of their phones and the internet, phones will be safe for them. And that is why I think The Benefits of owning a phone far outweigh the disadvantages.