

Ellie Gura
Student

Minsthorpe Community College
Minsthorpe Ln, South Elmsall WF9 2UJ, UK

Dear Minsthorpe Community College,

I am an eighth grade student at South Orangetown Middle School. The reason I am writing to you is because I read your article "Can teens go a week without technology?" and I was hoping you would find the time to read my essay, thank you.

Position Paper

The issue of teens acting as if technology is a drug is often overlooked and ignored. Many articles claim teens can't go a week without technology or they are missing social cues because of being so attached to technology. According to pewinternet.org 73% of teens have access to a smartphone. 15% have a basic phone and 12% don't have a phone. Which percentile do you fall into? Teens often spend their time on their phones whether it be snapchatting, instagramming or texting. According to CNN.com teens spend nine hours using media. "It just shows you that kids live in this massive 24/7 digital media technology world, and it's shaping every aspect of their life."

Students at Minsthorpe Community College are taking part in a school's reconnect program. Which aims to get them thinking about their relationship with, phones, social medias, tablets and other technologies. For 5 weeks they will explore today's digital culture looking at how technology can enhance lives as well as the issues associated with it, such as sleep deprivation and anxiety. The plan will finish with pupils and staff being encouraged to switch off their screens for a week and do offline activities. I believe the students who complete this are the ones less addicted to technology and the ones who do not complete it should work on not using technology as often as they do.

"I would rather not eat for a week than get my phone taken away. It's really bad, I literally feel like I am going to die." Said Gia, a 13-year old. Another 13-year old said, "When I get my phone taken away I feel kind of naked. I do feel kind of empty." These two young teenagers saying they'd give up eating for a week, saying they feel like they are going to die or that they feel naked without their phone just shows you how attached they are to something that is detrimental to them. Marion Underwood (a child clinical psychologist) said, "I think they are addicted to the peer connection and affirmation they are able to get via social media." To know what each other are doing, where they stand, to know how many people like what they posted, to know how many people followed and unfollowed them...that I think is highly addictive"

You can use technology to help you with school work. For example McGraw Hill online textbooks, if you forget your textbook at school you can get the questions on the online textbook. However, technology is not always reliable. If you can't get onto the online textbook and you do not have your textbook with you, you can't get the questions for homework or to study for a test.

In conclusion teens spend a long amount of time using technology and checking and posting on social media. The amount of hours they spend on social media is absurd and should not be that high.

Thank you for reading my position paper essay and I hope you can respond to my questions. How many pupils and staff participated in the 5-weeks? How many successfully completed the 5-weeks? Thank you

Sincerely,

Ellie Gura

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