Myths Vs. Facts: The Effects of Screen Time on Children

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Picture this, you have come home from work. Your son is busy on the television even after warning him. You decide to switch off the television and the child goes to his room and uses his tablet. It is evident, he is addicted. Just what enough screen time is good for your child? Over the years, there have been varied debates regarding the impacts of screen time on the development of a child. This has resulted in various opinions and myths developed to sway the masses towards a given policy area and acceptable perception. However, it is important to understand the facts regarding the issue to dissuade the myths about child growth. Parents, in particular, should understand the facts of the matter and develop effective and more developed policies to achieve reliable and more structured outcomes for the long term. The distinction between the myths and the facts helps develop effective parenting practices and centering child development towards the right manners. Parents should recognize that too much screen time affects the child's sleep pattern, puts them at risk of attention problems, anxiety, and depression, and predisposes them to negative health issues such as obesity.

The impact of screen time on the sleeping pattern and quality of the child may be associated with addictive capabilities. As Hale et al. (2018) explain, prolonged screen time results in insufficient sleep in 30% of toddlers, pre-schoolers, and school-age children. The disruptive effects of screen time during bedtime come in various ways. First, the most common effect is that it causes the child to push back the sleeping time. Thus, the lack of supervision means they can stay up late watching these shows and programs, impacting their sleeping times. Also, as the child grows and develops, they are more likely to experience instances of insomnia

which can affect their abilities to develop. Such problems impact their cognitive functioning, especially within the classroom setting.

Increased and prolonged screen time may also predispose the child to various mental health problems, including attention problems, anxiety, and depression. The child faces an increased reliance on gadgets, making it difficult for them to transition into their everyday lives. The overreliance on the screens creates a sense of helplessness whenever the child is away from the gadget (Hinkley et al. 2018). In other cases, they may also have problems developing and maintaining effective relationships with their peers. These factors showcase the impact of the screens in their lives when working towards meaningful relations.

Likewise, depressive disorders have been on the rise in the country in recent years. Li et al. (2022) note that there were 279.6 million cases in 2019, translating to an increase of nearly 65%. In addition, 20% of the cases reported tend to have long-term physical issues such as eye problems which can impact their lives (Boers et al. 2019). Increased screen time contributes to the problem by allowing individuals to use their gadgets during their free time. The attribute builds up as the most preferred sedentary behavior. Hence, it shows the negative impacts and future instances of problems that tend to arise in their use. Consequently, it becomes primary to develop effective guidelines and mechanisms which can be used to reduce screen time and limit mental health problems. School-going children are at increased risk owing to the lack of enhanced studies on their mental health. They pose a greater threat to the issue, opening up the need for substantive and more intellectually defined outcomes for them.

Many parents may say they watched TV growing up and they turned out fine. However prolonged screen time affects the ability of children to develop social skills. They face problems integrating and interacting with their peers in social spaces. Studies show that they face issues in

developing face-to-face interactions, thus, affecting their empathy levels (Ponti et al. 2017). Their inability to read faces and develop interactive social measures affects how they build relationships as they grow up. Face-to-face interactions help ensure students internalize shared ideals with regards to the nonverbal cues and the impacts which develop from their use over time. The lack such a guideline in the operative area can be an extensive problem and issue for their growth. The child, thus, tends to prefer lone company and may be at risk for further problems and extensive damage to their health. This opens up the need for effective and more structured success goals, which are useful in finding long-term solutions.

Screen time in children further affects their physical development and growth. The over-dependence on the screen may impact the child's ability to engage in other physical activities, such as playing with peers. They tend to become lazy in interactive measures, denting their capacity for effective development in line with the childhood needs for growth. For instance, the lack of adequate sleep can affect their physical health, predisposing them to various conditions such as obesity (Fang et al. 2019). They may also develop long-term sleep problems as they grow into adulthood.

In some other cases, screen time is also linked to chronic problems. The child may have issues with their neck and back as they grow older (Pirnes et al. 2022). Also, they may face severe problems with their eyes, projecting the problem's negative effects and the need for enhanced solutions to it. The reviews may provide problems in the future that may require more advanced healthcare issues. For instance, the risk of obesity is accompanied by an array of cardiovascular diseases that can affect the child. Thus, it becomes important to develop rightful policies that address the problem and determine an effective, tangible solution.

Studies have also been developed that attempt to link the problem with explosive behaviors in adulthood. The studies develop the link by analysis of the brain stimulation levels from overexposure in childhood. The prevalence of certain behaviors linked to depression and anxiety may result in the actions. The analysis looks at the issue from a wider point of view, where “overstimulation causes kids to have poor focus and depletes their mental energy, which often leads to explosive behaviour” (Djalalinia et al., 2020). The extensive measure can be linked to individuals with triggering aspects that can affect their success even in adulthood.

Essentially, the laid down facts help better understand the issue and the need for rightful options in addressing them. The facts laid out are backed by evidence-based research. It helps in reiterating the important perspectives shared with the audience and the impact that can come from prolonged use over time. It also opens up substantive avenues for analysis when trying to find what is meaningful and how it may be structured to help the child. The important role undertaken in their development means that support structures should be aligned with them in each area.

One of the common myths is that parents are unable to control child screen time due to the existence of a wide range of devices and materials. As a result, the myth has led to parents failing to take responsibility for their children's access to these devices. This is a myth as it is away from the facts presented on the issue. Parents can use first-hand protective features to guard their children's screen time. This can be done through restrictions on devices, even when they are away. In addition, parents also need to be strict on bedtime to enable the child to develop a pattern that supports longer and more stable sleeping patterns.

Moreover, there has also been a popular myth that only violent video games can affect a child's mental health. The myth has led to various parents restricting their children's access to

games while failing to limit their screen time. This factor affects the physical and mental health of the children as they grow up. It is important for parents to learn that screen time, in general, is harmful and needs to be controlled. The focus should be not only on violent video games but also on other forms of screen time. The knowledge can be effective on the support of better counteractive measures which eventually deal with this problem.

Another common myth amongst parents is that background t.v and noise is harmless to the child's growth. This makes the parents periodically leave their children in the house with background noises, unaware of the impacts. It has been shown that Television can lead to distractions to the child, especially when they are given certain tasks (Boers et al. 2019). This has a long-term effect in the form of the attention span of the child. They become easily distracted from play or even interactions with caregivers. Thus, reducing or turning off the background noise is integral to facilitating quality interactive sessions, which are useful in developing better communication factors.

All in all, various myths and facts exist about the limitation of screen time. The association with the impacts on the children helps show the long-term measures and features which can affect them. Thus, parents need to understand the facts backed by scientific evidence-based research. They should shun the myths that have not been verified and put their children's lives at risk. Through these platforms, they get to ascertain meaningful and more inclined goals that align with their children's needs as they grow and develop over time.

I am concerned about the issue as it affects a huge portion of families today. The available data reveals a huge prevalence, which tends to affect the people and their impacts. I am also personally as my brother has had sleep problems because of the addiction. Therefore, I

believe that better and more structured outcomes can go a long way towards getting desirable situational factors that help people meet their targeted impacts.

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