



Get Phones Out of Schools Now



Adapted Reading Passage

Cell phones in schools have become a major problem, affecting students' ability to learn and damaging relationships. The increase in mental health issues among students, such as depression and anxiety disorders, is closely linked to phone addiction. Even sixth-grade students are arriving at school already anxious, depressed, and addicted to their phones. Teachers and administrators believe that phone addiction is connected to declining mental health and poor academic performance. However, banning phones during school hours is challenging because many parents want to be able to reach their children.

The evidence for why schools should be phone-free is stronger now than ever before. Social media and smartphones have contributed to a worldwide increase in mental illness since 2012. Many parents now recognize the negative effects of these devices on their children's well-being. Schools that have banned phones during the school day have seen positive results. Banning phones can reduce rates of depression, anxiety, and self-harm, as well as improve education. Students often check their phones during class, even though it goes against the rules, leading to distractions and lower grades.

Experiments have shown that the mere presence of a phone or receiving an alert can cause students to perform worse on tests. Using phones a lot or spending excessive time on social media can have lasting negative effects on teenagers' ability to focus and work hard. Heavy phone use can change the brain's reward system, making it harder to feel happy or calm without the phone and difficult to concentrate for long periods of time. Phones not only distract students from their schoolwork but also from each other, leading to increased loneliness and a decrease in social connections.

Phone bans in schools can take different forms, from allowing phones for class-related purposes only to using lockable pouches or phone lockers. Lockable pouches are a simple and inexpensive option, but some students have found ways to open them. Phone lockers may be more challenging to implement but are the most reliable way to keep students separated from their phones throughout the school day. However, schools would still need to address the use of laptops, tablets, and computers in the classroom. While smartphones can be useful teaching tools, the distractions they cause outweigh the benefits.

Some parents worry about their children's safety at school and want to be able to reach them at all times. However, constant contact with parents can contribute to mental health problems faced by Gen Z. It is important for students to have time away from their phones to gain valuable experiences and independence. Equipping every student with a smartphone may not necessarily make schools safer during emergencies. Phones can distract from life-saving instructions and attract attention. Parents, teachers, and school administrators can take action by giving children basic phones until high school, implementing phone-free policies using lockable pouches or phone lockers, and encouraging social connections between students.

In conclusion, the problem of teenagers' mental health is worsening, and phone addiction is a significant contributing factor. Schools should consider becoming phone-free zones to improve students' well-being and academic performance. Banning phones during school hours can reduce distractions, increase focus, and promote social connections. Lockable pouches and phone lockers are effective ways to separate students from their phones throughout the school day. Parents,

teachers, and school administrators can play a crucial role in implementing these changes and creating a school environment that supports learning, friendship, and mental health.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is the main idea of this passage?

- A) Cell phones in schools have become a major problem, affecting students' ability to learn and damaging relationships.
- B) Banning phones during school hours can reduce distractions, increase focus, and promote social connections.
- C) The increase in mental health issues among students is closely linked to phone addiction.
- D) Constant contact with parents can contribute to mental health problems faced by Gen Z.

2. Which of the following excerpts from the passage best supports the authors claim that 'banning phones during school hours can reduce distractions, increase focus, and promote social connections'?

- A) Banning phones can reduce rates of depression, anxiety, and self-harm, as well as improve education.
- B) Even sixth-grade students are arriving at school already anxious, depressed, and addicted to their phones.
- C) Using phones a lot or spending excessive time on social media can have lasting negative effects on teenagers' ability to focus and work hard.
- D) Phones not only distract students from their schoolwork but also from each other, leading to increased loneliness and a decrease in social connections.

3. According to the text, what is one way schools can implement phone bans?

- A) Allowing phones for class-related purposes only
- B) Equipping every student with a smartphone
- C) Implementing phone-free policies using lockable pouches or phone lockers
- D) Using laptops, tablets, and computers in the classroom

4. What is one negative effect of phone addiction on students?

- A) Decreased academic performance
- B) Improved social connections
- C) Enhanced focus and concentration
- D) Reduced rates of depression

5. Which of the following statements is supported by evidence in the passage?

- A) Phone bans have no impact on students' mental health.
- B) Smartphones have no negative effects on teenagers' ability to focus.
- C) Excessive phone use can change the brain's reward system.
- D) Phones do not distract students from their schoolwork.

6. According to the text, why is implementing phone bans challenging for schools?

- A) Parents do not want their children to have phones at school.
- B) Teachers and administrators do not believe in phone addiction.
- C) Students are not affected by phone addiction.

D) Parents want to be able to reach their children.

7. What is one way that heavy phone use can affect teenagers?

- A) Increased ability to concentrate for long periods of time
- B) Improved brain's reward system
- C) Decreased feelings of loneliness
- D) Difficulty feeling happy or calm without the phone

8. How can schools address the use of laptops, tablets, and computers in the classroom?

- A) Allowing unlimited use of these devices
- B) Banning all electronic devices in the classroom
- C) Encouraging students to use smartphones instead
- D) Implementing policies specifically for smartphones