What's Feeding Your Mind?

Mack, Shantel (School: Waverly-South Shore Public School)

Studies show there is a rise in depression and anxiety in teenagers in recent years. The Anxiety and Depression Association of America say the most common mental illness in the US today is anxiety. Thomas Kersting, psychotherapist and school counselor, states he has seen more cases of anxiety disorders in the past two years than in the last 16 years combined. Professor Jean Twenge of San Diego State University did two National surveys of U.S adolescents ages 13 to 18. She found that adolescents who reported more “screen time” reported more mental health issues than adolescents who spent more time on non-screen activities. With this experiment I want to see if the more reported hours teens spend on electronic devices per day correlates with more symptoms of anxiety and depression. I used Survey Monkey for confidentiality. I sent separate surveys for anxiety and depression to students in grades 6 -12. The participants were asked questions about how many hours per day they spent on electronic devices and how much anxiety and depression they felt. I calculated, according to how the questions were answered, the score for each survey. The scoring methods used were from the writers of the surveys. The final points accumulated are then put into a range that recommends the degree of anxiety and depression. On the depression survey, it shows that 60% of students reported more significant levels of depression even though the amount of time reported was equal. My results show that increasing hours per day on electronic devices leads to more anxiety and depression feelings in adolescents.

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