Downtime; The Consequences of Excessive Screen Use

Wisner, Liam (School: Bartlesville High School)

In a society that is become increasingly dependent on technology, the negative implications of this increasing dependence can often be overshadowed by the benefits technology provides us. "Downtime; The Consequences of Excessive Screen Use" aims to cast light on this subject by examining the correlation between higher rates of screentime and lower adolescent mental acuity. Participants who were aged 14 to 18 were required to enter a 7-day rolling average of their screentime which was recorded by software preinstalled by their primary cellular device and then completed a timed test that would be able to quantify the mental acuity of each participant. Only cellular devices were used because other types of screentime like television, smartwatches, or personal computers cannot be monitored for their screentime; if these devices were taken into account, estimation would be required by participants which would decrease the accuracy of the data. After entering and analyzing the data, it was found that there was a statistically significant correlation between adolescents who use their screentime more and a worse mental acuity. However, due to the correlative nature of the study, a causal link cannot be established due to the possible influence via an unknown variable. For instance, participants who scored worse might have already had a worse mental acuity and lack of impulse control which led to the higher screentime. In conclusion, this study supports the existence of a correlation between high screen time and low mental acuity.

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