

STUDIES ON THE IMPACT OF CELL PHONES ON MENTAL HEALTH

STUDIES SHOWING THE INCREASE IN ADOLESCENT DEPRESSION SINCE 2012

1. “National Trends in the Prevalence and Treatment of Depression in Adolescents and Young Adults”

MAIN FINDING: 12-month prevalence of major depressive episodes (MDEs) in adolescents monitored between 2005 and 2014 based on yearly surveys about symptoms. The 12-month prevalence of MDEs 2005 to 2011 has gradually increased starting in 2012.

Ref: Ramin et al.(2016) American Academy of Pediatrics <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2016/11/10/peds.2016-1878>.

2. “Increased Social Media Use Linked to Developing Depression”

MAIN FINDING: Young adults ages 18-30 who were using social media for more than 5 hours a day were 2.8 times more likely to become depressed within six months than people using social media for under 2 hours a day.

Ref: Magsam, Shannon. “Increased Social Media Use Linked to Developing Depression, Research Finds.” *University of Arkansas News*, University of Arkansas, 10 Dec. 2020, <https://news.uark.edu/articles/55480/increased-social-media-use-linked-to-developing-depression-research-finds>.

3. “Data and Statistics on Children’s Mental Health”

MAIN FINDING: From 2018 to 2019, 15.1% of adolescents aged 12-17 reported having a major depressive episode and 36.7% reported feelings of sadness or hopelessness.

Ref: “Data and Statistics on Children's Mental Health.” *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 3 June 2022,
<https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/data.html>.

4. [“Increases in Depressive Symptoms, Suicide-Related Outcomes, and Suicide Rates Among U.S. Adolescents After 2010 and Links to Increased New Media Screen Time”](#)

MAIN FINDING: Teenagers in the United States who spend 3 hours or more a day on electronic devices are at a 35% higher risk of suicide than those who spend less than one hour on them. Teenagers who spend five hours or more a day on electronic devices are at a suicide risk factor of 71% higher.

Ref: Twenge et al. *Clinical Psychological Science*, 2017; 216770261772337
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/2167702617723376>.

5. [“Worldwide increases in adolescent loneliness”](#)

MAIN FINDING: In comparison to 2012, twice as many teens were feeling lonely in 2018. This number was higher for girls.

Ref: Jean M. Twenge, Jonathan Haidt, Andrew B. Blake, Cooper McAllister, Hannah Lemon, Astrid Le Roy, “Worldwide increases in adolescent loneliness,” *Journal of Adolescence*, Volume 93, 2021, Pages 257-269, ISSN 0140-1971,
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2021.06.006>.

6. *iGen*

MAIN FINDING: Research shows that eighth graders who are heavy users of social media have a 27% higher risk of depression, while those who exceed the average time spent

playing sports, hanging out with friends in person, or doing homework have a significantly lower risk of depression.

NOTE: Teens who spend 5 or more hours a day (versus less than 1) on electronic devices are 51% more likely to get less than 7 hours of sleep (versus the recommended 9).

Ref: Jean M. Twenge, PhD. *iGen*. New York: Atria Books (an imprint of Simon & Schuster), 2017.

IMPACTS OF CYBERBULLYING

1. “Cyber victimization in middle school and relations to social emotional outcomes”

MAIN FINDINGS: Cyber victimization and social emotional outcomes varied by gender, with girls suffering more than boys. Data collected from 106 middle school students via questionnaires.

Ref: Christina F. Brown, Michelle Kilpatrick Demaray, Stephanie M. Secord, *Computers in Human Behavior* Volume 35, June 2014, Pages 12-21. Psychology Department, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL, USA
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0747563214000740>.

2. “Cyberbullying Matters: Examining the Incremental Impact of Cyberbullying On Outcomes Over and Above Traditional Bullying in North America”

MAIN FINDING: Close to 14.6 million youth may experience traditional bullying and 6.2 million may experience cyberbullying as either a victim or perpetrator.

Ref: Anthony, B.J., Wessler, S.L., & Sebian, J.K. (2010) Commentary: Guiding a public health approach to bullying. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, 35, 1113-1115.

3. “Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization Among Middle School Students”

MAIN FINDING: Among cyberbullies and victims, victims were more likely to report using the internet for at least 3 hours per day.

Ref: Rice et al. October 14, 2014 Published Online: February 09, 2015

[http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2014.302393?journalCode=ajph.](http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2014.302393?journalCode=ajph)

4. “Cyberbullying Prevalence Among U.S. Middle and High School-Aged Adolescents: A Systematic Review and Quality Assessment”

MAIN FINDING: Physical and mental health problems including depression, suicidality, substance use and somatic symptoms are linked to cyberbullying.

Ref: Ellen M. Selkie, et al. (2016), *Journal of Adolescent Health*, V. 58, 125–133

[https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2015.09.026.](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2015.09.026)

SEXTING AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

1. “Sexting and Sexual Behavior Among Middle School Students”

MAIN FINDING: 20% of students with text-capable cell phone access reported receiving a sext and 5% reported sending a sext.

Ref: Eric Rice, et al. (2014) V. 134 *Pediatrics*, *Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics*

[http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2014/06/25/peds.2013-2991.](http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2014/06/25/peds.2013-2991)