

## Writing 1

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According to Twenge, the rise of smartphones has created a new generation, called the “iGen”, addicted to technology that has supposedly taken a toll on their mental health. Based on Twenge’s observations, I would be considered a part of this generation of kids “alone and often distressed” because of our addiction to smartphones; but to say that we are on the “brink of a mental-health crisis” seems a bit overboard. Therefore, we should place some sort of limitations under certain conditions.

The transition from radio to television and how it has affected the generation of youths growing up glued to their TV screens can reveal insight into Twenge’s concerns with the transition to smartphones. In 2003, the National Center for Biotechnology Information detailed the positive and negative aspects of kids who spent time playing video games or consuming media through TVs. The effect ranges from toddlers learning earlier by watching *Sesame Street* to young kids and teens being exposed to violence and sex. Similar to the mainstream use of television, smartphones also have their slew of pros and cons; however, I have noticed that the restrictions placed on daytime TV seems to have failed on kids like me, who grew up exposed to graphic images and obscenities anyway.

The increase of suicides among teens could be due to the ease of exposure and bullying online. As a “post-Millennial”, though, social platforms have catapulted information around the world and made me more politically and socially aware. Gone are the days where most television news outlets usually only revealed the perspectives of major news corporations, and in comes first-hand reports and media clips. One could say that smartphones have made us less connected with those physically around us, but it has connected us closer to those further away. For

example, people can now discover others with similar interests much quicker and easier than email. By restraining our access to smartphones, we would restrict our freedom to access different information, people, etc. I do believe that limitations should be established, but not through ways that limit our access, options and, ultimately, freedom of speech.

One route that could help prevent Twenge's supposed observations amongst the "iGen" would be parental restrictions. Parents/guardians, schools, social media campaigns, and the government could take on a role to educate students about the overuse of smartphones, but to forcefully restrict the entire use might be a bit overdone. Constraining technology is already being implemented in some American schools, where internet is allowed on campus but certain websites are blocked, which I believe is a viable option in preventing kids from seeing inappropriate things; In some nations, such as China, certain websites are blocked in the entire country and have been deemed as an infringement of freedom of speech. Whose choice is it to ultimately decide what people can and can't see on their phones? Restricting smartphone use is a complicated issue, but the least we could do is to educate the new generation of smartphone users and adapt as time passes by before taking extreme measures.