

Writing 1

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Smartphones have revolutionized the way that people of all ages communicate with each other. The ones impacted most by this are teenagers today, who are unlike any others in all of history, for better or for worse. Many of these concerns are highlighted in the article "Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?" by Jean Twenge. Twenge asserts that teens today are lonelier, sadder, and take longer to grow up due to the rise of smartphones and social media. But despite the risks associated with excessive smartphone use, they should remain unrestricted for today's youth. What families should do instead is become aware of its dangers. A good metaphor for the relationship people have with smartphones is the one between people and coffee. Coffee has become a taboo in most American families since people are aware of the negative effects of caffeine on children. Accordingly, the majority discourage their children from drinking it until they have become adults. Yet many teenagers drink coffee anyways for a number of reasons. But there is nothing the government does to restrict children from getting their daily intake of caffeine. This is how it currently is with smartphones, and it should be up to the parents to enforce these rules on their children. The metaphor can further be extended since coffee has both benefits and drawbacks, much like smartphones. As Twenge points out, "Rates of teen depression and suicide have skyrocketed since 2011". This is just one of the many side effects of increased screen time she mentions. Yet in a response to this article by Sarah Rose Cavangh, it is made clear that Twenge is cherry-picking many studies to support her claims and will only quickly focus on the positive aspects of these devices. Smartphones allow people to interact that could normally never meet. Most importantly, they allow children

to go do things with an added measure of safety in case they get lost or need to go home.

Preventing teenagers from accessing the benefits that these devices give altogether would be overkill. People would find it silly to create laws to prevent children from drinking coffee, and the same should be said about smartphones. Instead people need to be educated about all aspects of these electronic devices and decide for themselves when their child should begin their lives connected to the Internet.