A research study in 2015 found that whenever a British school banned mobile phones from school grounds, its test scores increased by an average of 6% by the next year. For the students who were starting with the lowest grades, their test scores went up even more, by over 14%. However, when schools just asked that students keep phones off or on silent, they did not see any test score improvement at all. (Berland and Murphy, 2015)

In 2012, for the first time more than 50% of Americans owned a smartphone. By 2015, over two-thirds of teens owned a smartphone. (Twenge, 2017).

In 2019, American teens used screens for an average of 7 hours and 22 minutes a day. That does *not* include time for school or homework. On average, teens from lower-income families (making less than $35,000 per year) used screens for about 2 hours more per day than teens from higher-income families (making more than $100,000 per year). (Common Sense Census, 2019)

A research study in 2013 tracked people's Facebook use and sent them text messages throughout the day asking how they were feeling mentally. They found that the more people used Facebook, the worse they felt. They also found that it didn't matter whether you were depressed to start with or not-- either way, Facebook decreased your personal feelings of happiness even more. (Kross et al, 2013)

From 2011 to 2015, the number of teens suffering from major depression suddenly increased by 50% (National Survey on Drug Use and Health).

An ongoing research study asks different teens about how happy they are, about their plans for the future, and how they spend their time now. Teens who spend more time than average on screen activities are more likely to be unhappy, and those who spend more time than average on nonscreen activities are more likely to be happy. (Twenge, 2017).

According to research on teen mental health, poor mental health starts to be more common in teenagers who use screens 2 hours a day or more. Mental health gets worse the more time you spend on screens. (Twenge, 2017).

For the last 20 years, a survey of teenagers in Europe has been asking about how lonely they feel at school. Starting in 2012, rates of loneliness at school began to increase. By 2018, the percentage of teens reporting that they were lonely at school had doubled. (Twenge, 2021).

A college freshman wrote: “Gen Z are an incredibly isolated group of people. Often I’ll arrive early to a lecture to find a room of 30+ students sitting together in complete silence, absorbed in their smartphones, afraid to speak and be heard by their peers. This leads to further isolation and a weakening of self-identity and confidence, something I know because I’ve experienced it.” (Twenge 2021)

Compared to teens of the past, today's teens are much less likely to leave the house without their parents to spend time with friends in person. There has been a dramatic change: eighth graders in 2009 went out of the house without their parents more often than 12th-graders did in 2015. (Twenge 2017).

Several groups of researchers have scanned the brains of people who have been diagnosed with Internet Addiction Disorder. They found that the structure of internet addicted brains looks similar to the brains of drug addicts. Their brains look damaged, and the parts of the brains that help us learn are decreased. (Kardaras, 2016).

In 2011, researchers studied the brains of young men who didn’t play video games very often. They asked them to play video games for a week and then scanned their brains again. They found major changes in the parts of the brain that are in charge of self-control. Those areas of the brain are also damaged when people become addicted to drugs. (Kardaras, 2016).

In 2017, researchers gave 3 groups of students a math test. The only differences between the groups were that one group had their phones silenced and facedown on their desks. One group had their phones silenced in their bags. And the last group had their phones in a different room. The closer the students’ cell phones were, the worse they did on the math problems. The group with their phones in a different room did much better than the other two groups, even though the phones were all silent the whole time. (Ward 2017)