

TASK 2

Read the text and choose the best option (A, B or C) to answer each question. When you have finished, transfer your answers to the ANSWER BOX. Only one answer is correct. Question 0 has been done as an example.

0. Researchers think parents' worries about their kids spending much time with screens are...

- A.** exaggerated.
- B.** nonexistent.
- C.** probably justified.

1. Scientists have found a relation between excessive smartphone use and ...

- A.** excessive partying.
- B.** sleep disorders.
- C.** street violence.

2. The post-millennial generation ...

- A.** do not have more mental health issues than their parents did.
- B.** has had access to smartphones since their early teens.
- C.** is now reaching middle age.

3. Traditionally, the main problem with screen devices was ...

- A.** accessing inappropriate materials online.
- B.** their excessive use.
- C.** wasting time with videogames.

4. Equally important today is ...

- A.** banning the use of smartphones at school.
- B.** limiting the time teenagers spend on their smartphones.
- C.** having only safe apps installed on teenagers' smartphones.

5. The author was shocked when he discovered that some teenagers ...

- A.** found continuous use of mobiles irritating.
- B.** got annoyed when told to stop using their mobiles.
- C.** had decided to stop using their mobiles at home.

6. Teenagers who never use a smartphone are ...

- A.** as sociable as teenagers whose use is below average.
- B.** less sociable than teenagers whose use is below average.
- C.** more sociable than teenagers whose use is below average.

ANSWER BOX							
QUESTION	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
ANSWER							

ALWAYS REMEMBER TO READ THE SENTENCES
BEFORE THE TEXT

WE SHOULD LIMIT OUR KIDS' TIME ON SMARTPHONES

As children and young people spend an increasing amount of time with screens – more than six hours a day according to one US survey – parents have begun to wonder if spending this much time with screens is safe.

An increasing amount of research suggests it is not. Teenagers who spend five or more hours a day on electronic devices are 71% more likely to have a risk factor for suicide than those who spend less than an hour a day. Young people who use screens this much are also 52% more likely to sleep less than seven hours a night – a significant lack of sleep with potential consequences for both physical and mental health. The more time young adults spend on social media, the more likely they are to be depressed or lonely.

As I document in my book, *iGen* (about the post-millennial generation born after 1995), there are also troubling trends in teenagers' mental health. Between 2011 and 2015, rates of serious depression, self-injury (such as deliberately cutting oneself), and suicide all rose sharply among American teenagers.

By far the largest change in their lives between 2011 and 2016 was growing smartphone ownership; the percentage of Americans owning a smartphone has more than doubled in that time. *iGen* teens, the first to spend their entire adolescence with smartphones, are in the middle of the worst mental health crisis in decades.

Until now, the primary goal of parental controls on devices was content, often focused on limiting children and young people's access to pornography or violence. However, content is only part of the problem – the larger issue is teenagers spending nearly all of their leisure time on their phones.

Given the consequences of overuse, setting time limits is just as important as limiting access to content. For instance, parents could limit the amount of time certain apps are used, the number of hours of total phone use, or shut the phone down after bedtime (or, even better, an hour before bedtime to avoid overstimulation before sleep).

Limiting teenagers' phone use might sound like the beginning of a huge parent-child fight. However, it might not be as bad as you think. When I interviewed young people for *iGen*, I was surprised how many were aware of the negative effects of spending so much time on a phone. Several complained, just as adults do, that they hated it when their friends or parents were looking at their phones when they were talking.

Since then, I've spoken to several teachers who asked teenagers to put their phones away for an hour or two for a project, either in or out of class. All said that their reactions were much more characterised by relief than anger. Teenagers often feel constant pressure to respond instantly to texts and social media posts, and welcome a break.

Should we instead just take teenagers' phones away? The research suggests this is not a good idea. Young people who don't use smartphones or social media at all are less well-adjusted than teens who use them a little – perhaps because teen social life these days requires at least some digital media.

Mental health peaks at an hour a day of device use, with issues becoming more frequent among those using devices two, and especially three or more hours a day. My children (who are 11, eight and five) don't yet have smartphones, but when they do I plan to limit their use to 90 minutes a day and shut the phone down at 9pm. As they get older, these limits can be adjusted.