



# Banning Cell Phones in the Classrooms

## Rohan Jain, Grade 8 student

Will banning mobile phones have an impact on student bodies in schools? This question is a controversial issue among students and teachers. France, the United Kingdom, and even some schools in the United States have already acted on banning these “academic distractors.” In 2007, the Toronto District School Board was quick to ban devices but reversed the policy four years later. However, electronic devices are such a nuisance that the Ontario government once again banned their use in schools. Although technology advanced tools aid student learning by providing instant access to information, students are unable to control themselves from using these resources for exclusive school-related purposes; they inherently become a negative influence in the classroom. Ontario schools are justified to implement a cell phone ban to ensure that students pay attention in class, prevent other students from becoming affected, and eliminate student addiction. Such preventions will undoubtedly lead to a better, more productive class environment.

The most obvious argument relating to implementing a cell phone ban is the assurance that students pay attention, leading to a more focused class environment. First, students would concentrate better when not tempted to pick up their phones. When they do not have a phone on their desk, notifications will not distract them from the task at hand. A study conducted by the London School of Economics concluded that “banning mobile phones produced an improvement in student performance of 6.41 percent”. Also, students who take written notes in class did better on assessments than ones who took notes on their laptops. A University of Chicago study concluded that “even the presence of these devices was enough to have an impact on students.” Overall, banning phones from classrooms would allow students to focus on their essential work, and a more focused atmosphere would occur.

In addition to being a distraction for the user, cell phone usage also serves to be a distraction for others in the same area who potentially are trying to learn. Essentially, students who are always on their devices are an obstacle in any classroom. In an article from *CBC* “cell phone proliferation has affected student behaviour and compounded the very real challenges of class management.” Students who use their devices excessively in the classroom make it hard for their peers to concentrate on their schoolwork. Moreover, students use their cellphones in inappropriate ways. For example, the spread of mobile phones is “intimately connected with cyberbullying in and around schools.” In the classroom, students can use their devices to make fun of students for receiving a bad grade, and the post would spread throughout the school like wildfire. Thus, by eliminating the usage of cell phones in schools, students who are not first handedly using them will not be affected, and the class environment will remain as one where students can reach their full potential.

Furthermore, imposing a cell phone ban will prevent students from becoming addicted to their devices, eliminating the possibility of students alienating their responsibilities like doing well in school and contributing to a productive class environment. Students are becoming increasingly stubborn by the day about getting off their phones. An unsupervised six-hour period throughout the day is the perfect escape for many. In today’s world, a phone ban during class time is one of the hardest to implement because students do not listen. Similarly, the “addiction” is having significant impacts on most student’s overall character. An article written by the *Calgary Herald* states that, “student’s obsessions with mobile devices are adversely affecting their performance, cognitive capacities, concentration, and well being”. Many students are talking back to their teachers, failing classes, and not on top of their work because they fear missing out on “texting the group chat” during class time. Overall, if cell phones were banned from schools altogether, students would become less addicted and realize the importance of their work.



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After considering these crucial points, it is evident to see that students would reach their full potential if schools created a device ban. Students would pay attention in class, and they would excel in all areas. Other students would not be affected, and they would reach their full potential without any distractions. Students would not become addicted and prioritize what is essential. Although some students may put up a fuss, and argue that it helps them, academically schools are doing the right thing by eliminating cell phone usage in classrooms as they would become better environments for learning.

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