



# Why Technology Creates Social Isolation

## by Rishi Yerbandi, Grade 7

Holly Shakya, an assistant professor at the University of California stated that “replacing [people’s] real-world relationship is detrimental to your well-being (2017)”. From this quote, Shakya is examining how technology is harmful to you as a whole and how technology can lead to a bad state of mind. Shakya also published a study that tracked Facebook use and well-being over time. She came to the conclusion that the use of social media was negatively associated with factors including physical health, mental health, and life satisfaction. However, offline interactions had positive effects on the human mind. This essay will further support Shakaya’s findings on how excessive use and absolute reliance on technology has, in actuality, a negative impact on individuals as it leads to an unhealthy lifestyle, an atypical separation from friends and family, and an increased probability of experiencing cyberbullying.

One of the most noticeable detriments resulting from excessive reliance on technology is an unhealthy living. A study conducted by Kevin Allen of entrepreneur.com said that  $\frac{1}{3}$  people who are “addicted” to the internet believe that the internet is as important as food, water, and shelter. That means roughly 110 million people in the United States believe the internet is more important than our own necessities (2012)! Too much technology is also bad for people’s mental health. Teenagers and young adults who use the internet too much might have cases of anxiety and/or depression. This study by the University of Pittsburgh said the mental health cases were due to extended amounts of time on social media. Looking specifically at only personal social media activity, they concluded that heavy use was significantly related to increased depression and highlighted the importance of identifying interventions for heavy social media users before they experience any mental state issues (2016).

In addition to affecting one’s physical and mental health, unrestrained usage and reliance on technology can pull a person away from their family and friends. It makes people so focused on the tech, that they forget about friends and family. This can hurt a relationship and destroy friendships. According to a poll in 2015 of 453 adults across the United States, almost half reported being distracted by the internet in the presence of their romantic partner (GoodTherapy.org Staff, 2016). This is because lots of people can get pretty attached to their own phones. Whether they are using social media or playing games, they get distracted and lose interest in their partner. Kids have started to use modern technology to speak with their friends and family. The preferred way of communicating are apps like FaceTime and Houseparty. A research by California State University and UCLA indicates that the forms of communications used now are less appealing to young people up close and informal contacts. This habit may create a system of non-lasting friendships (Samantha Allen, 2017).



# Why Technology Creates Social Isolation

## by Rishi Yerbandi, Grade 7

While excessive usage of technology can lead to a poor lifestyle and communicative abilities, one can argue that the most devastating aspect is the increased probability of cyberbullying. With the ability to go incognito while on social media or technology, people tend to start cyberbullying. With such anonymity, cyberbullying via social media becomes easier to do. When using social media, people tend to find many ways to cyberbully others. Whether it be creating a new account to message the victim or using their own, bullies will cyberbully. Researchers learned that cyberbullying led to many people getting depression. Researchers wanted to know how common cyberbullying was and they found out that a median of 23% of teens using social media were reported being targeted (Pappas 2015). An article on [kidshealth.org](http://kidshealth.org) about cyberbullying stated that kids have reported being bullied with a fake/new account. These accounts were made for the sole purpose of targeting and harassing kids (Hirsch 2014).

The evidence presented in this essay is not meant to depict technology as entirely useless and evil. Various forms of technology are used to help us communicate, and create new, innovative products. For example, we use computers all the time to help us gain new skills or learn new subject matter. We use phones in our everyday lives to help us communicate. Without technology, our world would still be underdeveloped and many of the items we have today wouldn't have been possible without the internet and technology. Also, with companies like Apple, Samsung, and Huawei always being innovative and making new products, the companies are pushing people into an age of technology.

However, despite how beneficial technology has and continues to be, one should not use it excessively to a point where they are absolutely reliant on it. Tech may be able to help us communicate with others, but it could also result in self-harm. I've presented the facts on why technology creates social isolation as it leads to an unhealthy lifestyle, it affects relationships with family and friends, and it can lead to cyberbullying. With social media, individuals can actually experience the negative aspects I've described more frequently in their lives. Social isolation is bad due to it being able to harm everyone involved in it. These reasons have ultimately led me to believe that too much technology or social media can lead to a life of unhealthiness. That is why I believe technology can cause social isolation.



# Why Technology Creates Social Isolation

## by Rishi Yerbandi, Grade 7

### Work Cited

- Allen, Kevin. "How the Internet Might Be Bad For Your Health (Infographic)" *Entrepreneur.com*, 1 December 2012, <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/225116>. Accessed 30 March 2020.
- Allen, Samantha. "The Effects of Modern Technology on Relationships" *oureverydaylife.com*, 28 September 2017, <https://oureverydaylife.com/the-effects-of-modern-technology-on-relationships-12521218.html>. Accessed 8 April 2020.
- Hirsch, Larissa. "Cyberbullying" *kidshealth.org*, June 2014, <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/cyberbullying.html>. Accessed 16 April 2020.
- Hobson, Katherine. "Feeling Lonely? Too Much Time On Social Media May Be Why" *npr.org*, 6 March 2017, <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2017/03/06/518362255/feeling-lonely-too-much-time-on-social-media-may-be-why>. Accessed 1 April 2020.
- Lickerman, Alex. "The Effect of Technology on Relationships" *Psychologytoday.com*, 8 June 2010, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/happiness-in-world/201006/the-effect-technology-relationships>. Accessed 31 March 2020.
- Pappas, Stephanie. "Cyberbullying on Social Media Linked to Teen Depression" *Livescience.com*, 22 June 2015, <https://www.livescience.com/51294-cyberbullying-social-media-teen-depression.html>. Accessed 1 April 2020.
- Rosenblatt, Kalhan. "Cyberbullying Tragedy: New Jersey Family to Sue After 12-Year-Old Daughter's Suicide" *nbcnews.com*, 1 August 2017, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/new-jersey-family-sue-school-district-after-12-year-old-n788506>. Accessed 30 March 2020.
- Staff, Goodtherapy.org. "3 Ways Technology Can Negatively Impact Your Relationships" *Goodtherapy.org*, 19 September 2016, <https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/3-ways-technology-can-negatively-impact-your-relationships-0919167>. Accessed 30 March 2020.