

Panicking About Your Kids' Phones? New Research Says Don't

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It has become common wisdom that too much time spent on smartphones and social media is responsible for a recent spike in anxiety, depression and other mental health problems, especially among teenagers.

But a growing number of academic researchers have produced studies that suggest the common wisdom is wrong.

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“There doesn't seem to be an evidence base that would explain the level of panic and consternation around these issues,” said Candice L. Odgers, a professor at the University of California, Irvine, and the lead author of the paper, which was published in the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry.

The debate over the harm we — and especially our children — are doing to ourselves by staring into phones is generally predicated on the assumption that the machines we carry in our pockets pose a significant risk to our mental health.

Worries about smartphones have led Congress to [pass legislation](#) to examine the impact of heavy smartphone use and pushed [investors to pressure big tech companies](#) to change the way they approach young customers.