

# Teens 'not damaged by screen time,' study finds

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There is little evidence of a link between the amount of time teenagers spend on devices and their general wellbeing, [a study has suggested](#).

It counters claims that teenagers' mental and physical health could be damaged by excessive screen time.

Even just before bedtime, being online, gaming or watching TV is not damaging to young people's mental health, study authors said.

They questioned the methodology of previous studies.

"While psychological science can be a powerful tool for understanding the link between screen use and adolescent wellbeing, it still routinely fails to supply stakeholders and the public with high-quality, transparent and objective investigations into growing concerns about digital technologies," said Professor Andrew Przybylski, Director of Research at the Oxford Internet Institute (OII) and co-author of the study.

The Oxford University study used data from three countries – the UK, US and Ireland – and 17,000 adolescents, and used both self-reporting and time-diary techniques (which ask teens to record what they are doing at specific times of day).

This data was not collected by the authors but culled from previous studies, dated between 2011 and 2016.

The authors said that often relying on self-reporting alone, as some previous studies have done, is dangerous because heavy users often under-estimate and infrequent users over-estimate the amount of time they spent online on any given day.

Co-author Amy Orben said it was important that studies were robust and asked the right questions: "Because technologies are embedded in our social and professional lives, research concerning digital screen use and its effects on adolescent wellbeing is under increasing scrutiny,"