

Mobile Phones- the Research

Australian classrooms should be environments in which children and young people can learn safely and without unnecessary distraction. Students should not be engaging on social media or using digital devices for personal purposes during classroom hours.

Office of the eSafety Commissioner

There is little doubt that time on phone has an impact on learning opportunity. Concentration is necessary to work through complex and challenging problems, and phones can distract from the task at hand.

Australian Council on Children and the Media

Most teachers are acutely aware of the disruption one [unauthorised] mobile phone can cause to a working classroom...The ping of a single text message can cause everyone who was previously focused on the lesson to stop what they are doing, even involuntarily, for a moment and think about their own device...It will take a little while for the class teacher to get the pupils to focus again on their work...This interruption to learning might only last for a few minutes but all of these minutes add up.

National Centre Against Bullying

The consensus across all audiences – educators, parents and students – was that mobile devices are often a distraction in the classroom. For teachers, they were perceived to be a source of frustration, with considerable teaching time lost to enforcing (or attempting to enforce) mobile device rules.

Review into the non-educational use of mobile devices in NSW schools. 'A review by Dr Michael Carr-Gregg with the support of Susan McLean and Associate Professor Amanda Third'.
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/our-reports-and-reviews/mobile-devices-in-schools/review-into-the-non-educational-use-of-mobile-devices-in-nsw-schools>

One study that followed the impact of schools banning mobile phones found that mobile phones can have a negative impact on learning through distraction and that their removal from the classroom can yield an improvement in student performance, especially for the most vulnerable.

Australian Psychological Society <https://psychopaedia.org/learning-and-development/mobile-phones-in-the-classroom-a-helpful-or-harmful-hindrance/>

After schools banned mobile phones, test scores of students aged 16 increased by 6.4% of a standard deviation, which means that it added the equivalent of five days to the school year.

<https://theconversation.com/how-smart-is-it-to-allow-students-to-use-mobile-phones-at-school-40621>

Research investigating the direct impacts that interruptions can have on performance is complemented by research on “resumption errors” – errors that arise in task performance that is resumed following an interruption or task-switch (Monk, 2004; Cades et al., 2007; Brumby et al., 2013). The tendency to commit resumption errors increases steeply when the interruption duration exceeds 15 s (Monk et al., 2008). Smartphone interruptions frequently exceed this 15 s threshold (Leiva et al., 2012), and therefore may be especially deleterious to the resumption of ongoing tasks.

Smartphones and Cognition: A Review of Research Exploring the Links between Mobile Technology Habits and Cognitive Functioning

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5403814/>

Results showed that heavy media multitaskers are more susceptible to interference from irrelevant environmental stimuli and from irrelevant representations in memory.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19706386/>

Taken together, these findings confirmed that the smartphone is a distractor even when not in use. Further, smartphone presence also increases cognitive load, because greater cognitive effort is required to inhibit distractions.

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0219233>

Other links

<https://www.smh.com.au/world/europe/france-school-mobile-phone-ban-takes-effect-20180906-p5023k.html>

<https://www.theeducatoronline.com/au/breaking-news/renowned-educator-calls-for-smartphone-ban/250479>