

Technology adversely affects personal relationships

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Although technology can bring us closer to friends and family around the world, provide an easy and efficient way to research and be a source of entertainment, it is also a plague on humanity. Instead of hanging out with friends, or simply calling them, we text or instant message. Personal relationships have been reduced to impersonal typed communications that could be sent from a stranger.

Technology was invented to make life easier. How could anyone have known that it would rob us of healthy relationships? It has become nearly impossible to keep anything private, unless said verbally (and even then, things get out). Texting has become the only method of communication for many people. Calling requires too much time or effort, and only a few years after implementation, emailing is almost obsolete. People without cell phones are essentially cut off from social circles. Cell phones and mobile devices are ubiquitous.

Teenagers are often too "pressed for time" and don't even call anymore. "I think that it depends on the urgency. If you need to get hold of someone right then, calling is more efficient, but if there is no urgency then texting is better," Emily Borne, freshman, said.

According to a USA Today survey, on average, teenagers in the United States send out 440 text



Photo by Libby Kara

Vesla Lee, Mark Ehman and Marissa Ness, seniors, text during break. Students admitted that texting has become more common in their daily lives than calling leading to some loss of personal connection.

messages a week, and 110 of them every day. It is predicted by a Cleveland University School District Plan that by the year 2012, all middle and high school students will learn in a wireless environment on laptops.

People often do cruel or thoughtless things that normally they would never think of doing in person, for instance, cyber-bullying. In the last few years cyber-bullying has been on the rise, with cases such as that of Megan Meier. Meier committed suicide

after being cyberbullied by a woman who was masquerading as a teenage boy.

Personal relationships that were once important enough for people to talk face-to-face or to spend hours talking on the phone at night, have been diminished by the more impersonal forms of communication. It used to be, if you were thinking of someone, you called them and talked with them, having a conversation that included give and take. I will admit, I am among the

teenagers that text more often than call, but I still reminisce about the good old days when calling was the only way to be in touch with friends and family.

These problems are easily fixed. When using networking devices for social purposes, we should use discretion and think about what we are posting or sending.

Judgement is a key part of being allowed to use such devices, and without employing proper judgement, this privilege should be revoked.

Another way to approach using technology is the thoughtful way Amish societies look carefully at how they will use it before introducing it into their lives. We could learn from this—before we damage our ability to have real personal relationships.

STUDENTS speak out

What do you think about the idea of having a gender neutral bathroom?



"I think that it would be okay but there could be problems with having more than one person go in at a time."

—Kaelyn Rushforth, freshman

"I think it is pretty cool as long as it's made for one person at a time it's fine, and also if the seats are clean."

—Morgan Winnick, sophomore

"I don't think it's that big of a deal."

—Kris Kolitz, junior

"I think that some scandalous things could end up happening in them."

—Marissa Provensen, senior