

Should Phones Be Allowed in School?

Should cell phones be allowed in school? A recent study found that 65 percent of cell-owning teens bring their phones to school despite any bans that may be in place. Most schools now allow students to have cell phones but require them to be turned off during class because they can be disruptive and distracting.

High schools and families seem to have an ongoing struggle with youth cell phone use. In a 2020 Pew Research Center article, it was shared that “a majority of parents in the United States say that parenting is harder today than it was 20 years ago, with many in this group citing technology as a reason why.”

As technology advances, cell phones have become a common presence in the lives of young people, including their school environments. While there are varying perspectives on this trend, it's important to acknowledge the potential benefits of students having access to their devices during school hours.

In general, parents can use the phone to monitor their child's location. The monitoring of children's locations during school hours should also be noted as a con for many families who don't like the idea of tracking their high school children with technology.

Your kids can reach you in the event of an emergency and vice versa. Knowing that you can reach loved ones in a heartbeat thanks to mobile phones during school hours can feel more important than ever.

If in danger, your children can reach the authorities or a medical provider. Students are driving from high school to work, traveling for sports meets and competitions, and visiting friends. Although parents may not love the idea of teens having their phones at school, they may

want them to have access to phones for all that happens immediately following time at school.

Cell phones create a convenience that was previously unavailable. With cell phones, you can easily reach your kids for any reason: to ask them questions, change plans, or simply say hello.

However, this increasing integration of cell phones into school life is not without its challenges. Students often forget to turn off their phones in class, and ringing noises or text message alerts disrupt learning and schoolwork. Even if set to silent, cell phones can still cause distraction for students and educators, since text messaging has become a high-tech method of passing notes in school.

Young people and even adults experience an addictive need to check their cell phones and notifications whenever the phone is available. This would point to the fact that even the mere presence of the cell phone can be distracting, even when the sound is turned off or if the phone is powered off altogether. The increased screen time has also been found to have harmful effects on learning and development.

Student cell phone networks add to the spread of rumors and misinformation, which can be harmful on a daily basis. This is often cited as reasoning for instituting a cell phone ban.

Overall, families have to decide what works best for their own family. Different circumstances dictate different needs. Digital devices are not going away as far as being major influential aspects of our society. Best practices may only be able to be determined through trial and error. It's generally easier to increase usage and relax rules than to dial back extensive use which may be worth considering as you navigate the challenges associated with cell phone use in schools.