[IMAGE]

Is Screen Time Causing ADHD?

By Editorial Staff

We've been focusing on screen time and health lately because, well, we're all spending way too much time in front of our phones, tablets, laptops and televisions; and a growing body of research suggests it's negatively impacting our health, including a recent study that found teens with high screen time were more likely to develop attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms.

Published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the study assessed digital media habits among more than 2,500 Los Angeles high-school students. Researchers surveyed students on their use of 14 types of digital media in the six months prior (texting, checking social media, etc.), and then every six months during the two-year study; and evaluated the presence of ADHD symptoms using the Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale Symptom Checklist, a standardized ADHD questionnaire on attention and hyperactivity (18 symptoms).

screen time - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark While none of the students had ADHD symptoms at the start of the study, teens who reported frequent use of digital media were significantly more likely to develop symptoms during the study period. Teens who frequently did seven or more of the 14 digital activities were more than twice as likely to develop ADHD symptoms than teens who did not use any of the 14 types of digital media on a frequent basis.

Keep in mind that showing symptoms of ADHD is not the same as being diagnosed with ADHD, and this study doesn't directly link digital media use with ADHD in a cause-effect sense. Nonetheless, it's certainly another reason to monitor your kids' (not to mention your own) screen time. Talk to your doctor to learn more.

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