

## Children and Phones: Should You Give In?

My pre-schooler has a cell phone. In fact, he has the latest iPhone that he regularly uses to play games and watch videos on YouTube. Judging from the judgmental stares that I'm getting from other parents, it's safe to say that society is still not ready for kids and cell phones.

I've heard it all. People have told me that it will affect their eyesight. People have told me that it will affect their brain. Oh, and here's my favorite – people have told me that cell phone usage will make them infertile.

I'm not a bad parent. I didn't give my kid his iPhone without doing my own research. First, there's the issue of radiation. Every adult knows that cell phones use radio waves. The question is – does this affect kids? According to a Swiss study conducted last 2011, kids using cell phones are [not exposed to higher risks of getting brain tumors](#). This is even after five years of use. Although the researchers admitted that cell phone usage is higher today, and this is why I limit my kid's cell phone usage in the first place.

Who am I going to believe? Should I believe these researchers or that snotty mom at the supermarket? It's a no-brainer!

There's also the issue of lack of sleep. Now, I'll be the first to admit that this is a valid issue. I used to find my pre-schooler up at 11pm fiddling with his phone! This was easily remedied. I just set a rule that as soon as dinner is served on the table, he has to turn the phone in.

This solves another issue which is lack of interaction at the table. This is something that I'm very strict with. When we're on the dinner table, everyone has to interact with one another. My pre-schooler once decided to demand the use of his phone because his clan has a war (whatever that means), and that led to a two-day suspension in cell phone usage. He never demanded the use of his phone on the kitchen table since then.

What about the issue of cell phone usage affecting the eyesight of kids? Once again, this is a valid concern. If you'll allow your kid to use his cell phone for hours straight at a time, of course his eyesight will suffer. It doesn't have anything to do with cell phone usage. That's just bad parenting.

With these many potential issues, you may wonder why bother allowing kids and cell phones to be together. Well, it's because it provides a lot of benefits as well. My kid can contact me in case of an emergency at his day care center. I can also contact him whenever needed. Like for example if I can't pick him up and someone else is going to pick him up, I can let him know beforehand. [Kidnapping is on the rise](#) in the US and this is a good deterrent.

My kid, modesty aside, is smart as hell as well. Seriously, he surprises me with new things that he's learned. He's been doing it since he was younger. This is thanks in part to the different educational apps that I've downloaded for him (or he's downloaded for himself). Yes, my kid grew up without sniffing a set of flash cards and he's among the top in his class.

I also have another selfish reason. It gives me peace. Instead of my kid throwing tantrums and breaking things around the house, he spends some of his free time playing with the apps on his phone. You may not agree with this reason of mine, but hey, I'm sure I'm more relaxed than you.

At the end of the day, it's about doing what you think is best. It's also about setting boundaries and following them. Just follow tips on safe cell phone usage and your kid should be fine.