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Development through the life span

Greetings viewers and welcome to this blog also known as the cloud of Child development knowledge. Here we will explore the fascinating journey of the development of an individual whilst encountering the obstacles that might have an affect or delay on the personal growth of a person or child . Delving into the various elements that shape an individuals growth , join me as we enhance our knowledge and uncover the different elements of development that contribute to the foundation of the individuals personality .

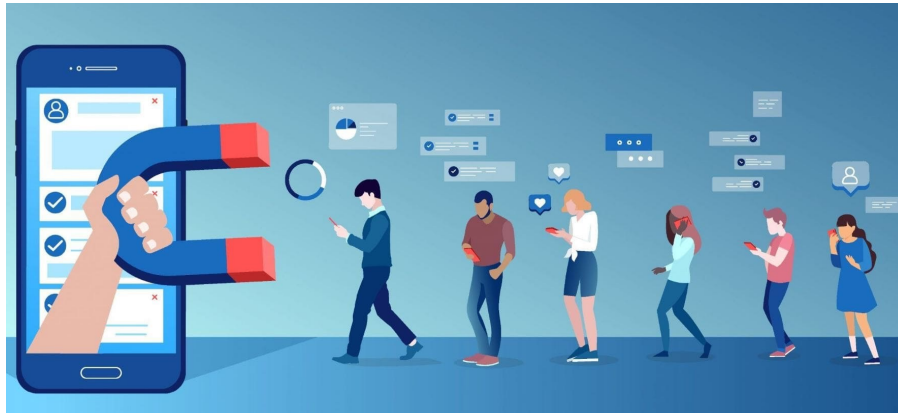
The Power technology and Social media has had on the emotional wellbeing of girls from a young age to their teenage years



Imagine a world where every 'like' , 'share' and 'comment' shaped the emotional wellbeing of girls through the time period of childhood to adolescence , look no further as your imagination is becoming the reality as we speak . Statistics stated by Laura Ceci (2024) highlights that in 2021 it was calculated that 30% of children aged between 5 and 7 had their own electronic device with access to the online world , alongside statistics from OFCOM (2024) displaying that a third of children are using these devices unsupervised. Excessive screen time alongside lack of supervision can significantly impact the emotional well-being of children , potentially exposing them to inappropriate content or online interactions . Emotionally this can impact children through increasing their sense of anger , frustration and limiting their social interaction which could lead to gaining an addiction to the screen and having an exposure to disturbances . As well as emotions the preferred use of

technology can also have an impact on the Child's imagination as a video uploaded by NBC News and created by Julianne Pepitone (2018) uses the example of how children will lack imagination whilst watching a story via technology in comparison to having a story read out, this is due to the children not gaining the opportunity to focus and picture the content of what is being described.

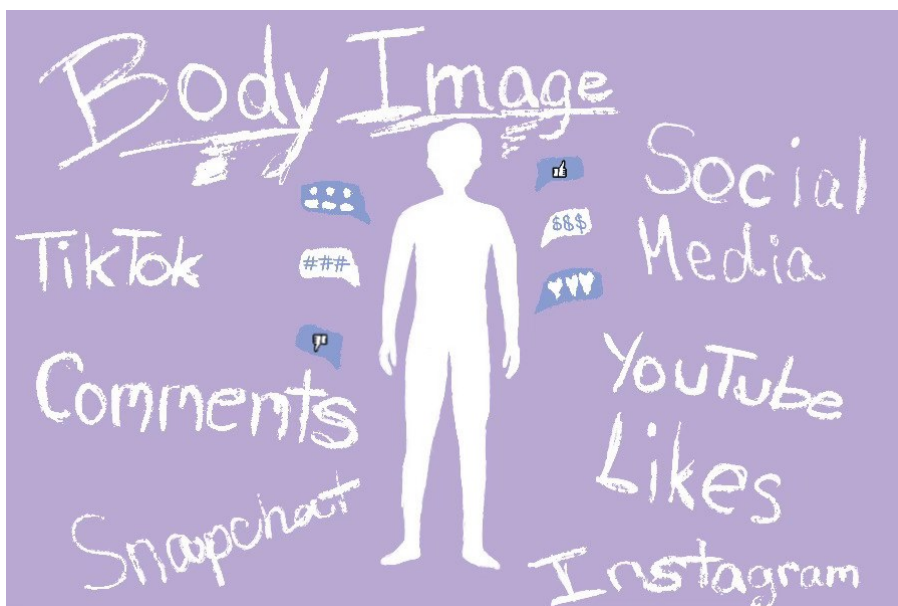
. Screen's may affect your child's Brain development NBC News (2018)



1 - Image Source - WRITER (2023)

Furthermore stated by Cecil (2024) it was found that children living in the UK would spend 2.12 hours on the online app Tick Tock, which is concerning as that time could have been spent playing out in the fresh air and making memories. Having the awareness of this information implies how the younger generation are beginning to have more and more of an influence from the world online due to being introduced to these apps from a young age. Already the younger generation is evolving a relationship with the virtual environment and are gaining influence from popular trends and trending influencers, allowing the internet to shape their identities and how they perceive themselves as individuals alongside the world around them. As the current technology advances, the nature of children is evolving alongside it, as research from Jhansi Rani (2024) states how the addiction of technology and social media is obstructing children's ability to empathise and communicate in a face to face environment meaning it is not only affecting children emotionally but additionally socially affecting them. It is shockingly discovered that children are now relying on digital devices and social media as a form of keeping occupied instead of playing with toys, meeting with friends, reading or playing in the open outdoors.

How Social Media fuels Mental health regarding Body dysmorphia

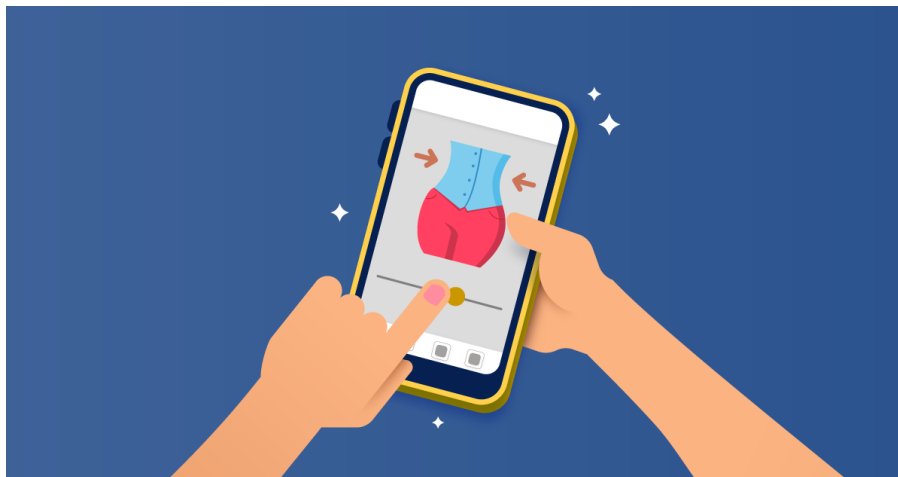


2 - Image Source - hhsmedia.com (2021)

The engagement on Social media within teenage girls is fuelling a future generation with appearance neglect.

Social media has developed a toxic relationship with unrealistic media and the emotional wellbeing of teenage girls! It is evident from Mellisa.R.Laughter (2023) that since the outbreak of COVID 19 the exposure of Social media platforms has increased, following with the significance of virtual appearances and exposure to edited images. The perception of beauty has been poorly portrayed by Social media platforms with an emphasis on heavily editing and filtering photographs and videos , portraying an unnatural environment to the public eye . This has driven teenage girls into being convinced to have physical flaws , gaining body dissatisfaction including shaping perceptions about body and facial image , and idolising edited and unrealistic images of public figures. As my findings deepen I have witnessed that young women are seen to be adjusting their appearance with skin smoothing , teeth whitening and slimming editing tools . A study shown by Professor Rosalind Gil (2021) displays that 90% of young females have been reported to using these filtering tools before posting on social media , reinforcing the negative influence and stereotypical view that is exposed by social media . The factors mentioned above lay the groundwork for the development of body dysmorphia with young girls being educated on "what they should look like " instead of appreciating their natural beauty and accepting that no one is perfect. The pressure to appear flawless online can result in anxiety and shame which may evolve to the individual becoming overly fixated on perceived flaws that others don't notice.

As children mature and increasingly turn to digital devices and social media for entertainment and social interaction, their emotional development faces unique challenges. The constant exposure to online personas and the pressure to maintain a digital presence can lead to heightened stress, anxiety, and feelings of low self esteem in which levels have increased to nearly 3 in 5 young girls feeling unhappy within themselves according to Hagan (2023) . Additionally, the reduced face to face interaction may impact their ability to develop deep, meaningful relationships and essential social skills. It's important for parents and educators to guide older children in balancing their digital lives with offline activities that promote emotional resilience, self-esteem, and meaningful connections. Encouraging hobbies, sports, and in-person socialising can help eliminate the negative impacts of excessive screen time and support their overall emotional well-being.



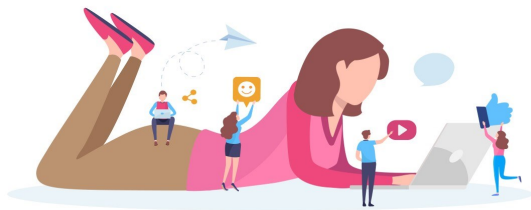
3 - Image Source King University (2024)

The increase of Mental health within young girls in relation to the use of Social media

Social media can have a profound impression on individuals , with the endless opportunities to connect with like minded individuals , learning new skills and gain motivation for self improvement . Nevertheless , social media's impact can take a toll with its addictive nature that contributes to unhealthy habits including lack of sleep , compulsive notification checking and an increase of strain and stress. It is proven by Very Well Mind (2023) that being sleep deprived can result in behavioural changes such as mood swings , lack of concentration and anxiety being intensified, overall having a negative impact on the individual's ability to function and delaying their positive emotional wellbeing.

*DeAngelis (2024) provides statistics stating that **41%** of teens who regularly use social media have labeled their mental health as poor.*

Social media has become a platform for cyberbullying , providing a place behind a screen for bullies to target individuals and implement emotional distress , anxiety and depression. Alongside the unrealistic visions of popular influencers there are also anonymous individuals who take pride in negatively commenting , threatening and belittling others . With the current hype of appearance ,young girls are counting on social media post interactions to depend on their sense of self worth , implying that if they are regularly receiving trolling comments they are likely to develop a negative mindset and low moods . It is important that the negative traits of social media are considered to ensure a happier and healthier online society.



4 - Image Source - How to keep your kids safe on social media (2020)

How can practitioners support and educate children on how to use social media in a suitable way?

Educators are able to provide adequate information on social media safety by incorporating social media safeguarding lessons into the current school curriculum . It would be beneficial for teachers to emphasise the importance of protecting personal information and using privacy and age restrictor settings online , this will limit the inappropriate content that is being exposed alongside reinforcing the safety of children. A crucial aspect that should be addressed by schools is the advanced ability of filtering and editing photographs , this will provide children and especially young girls the awareness that not everything online is realistic and would decrease the percentage of Body dysmorphia disorder and other negative emotional impacts .

The ultimate key takeaway from this blog is to nurture and protect the emotional wellbeing of our future generation.

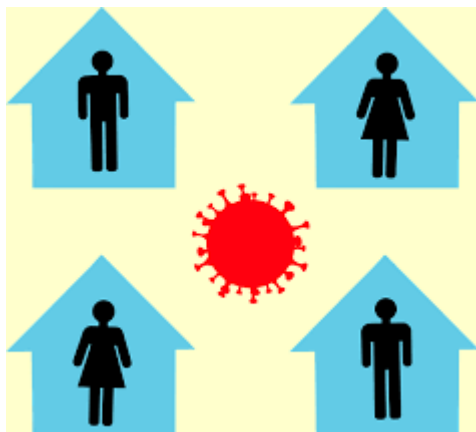
How the COVID 19 lockdown delayed the social development of children



Social development is the process in which individuals learn to interact effectively with one another , build relationships and absorb how to perceive and assess the emotions of others ,all of which contributes to the overall social well being and development.

The COVID-19 lockdown significantly altered the foundation of children's holistic development , driving children into a world of remote learning and limited face to face interactions whilst interrupting their daily routines . As playgrounds and classrooms emptied , children were isolated into a period of reduced opportunities and developed a delay in the progress of social development.This blog will explore the effects of the lockdown on children's social growth and discover strategies to help children reconnect and thrive in a post-pandemic world .

The Covid-19 isolation Period



Throughout the isolation of the pandemic , children were restricted from essential opportunities to engage and form relationships with friends and fellow children their age. With school , extracurricular activities and even casual playdate encounters being on hold children were hidden form their social circles , making It extremely difficult for them to expand their social skills and knowledge. The absence of these daily activities and social environments resulted in children lacking the ability to engage with children , particularly within the school setting .Paediatrician Dr Sabah Merchant (2020) addresses the lack of interaction as social malnutrition and reveals how schools and education settings are environments where children gain the understanding of how others interact and perceive different opinions and information . Without the open interaction environments the social development of a child will face various obstacles creating a delay in reaching their milestone . Whilst

in the school setting children are able to interact with others through multiple occasions and social dynamics such as within the classroom using the role play area , speaking and listening to others , story telling and participating in discussions. Aswell as within the classroom children also develop their informal interactions outside of the classroom by having the opportunity to mix with children their age that are at a similar stage of development as they are . The importance of the school settings impact on a Childs social development is uncanny which resulted to having extreme consequences towards the progress of a child during the pandemic lockdown.

It is evident by the [bbcchildreninneed.com](https://www.bbcchildreninneed.com) (2020) that members of the public developed a concern that infants experiencing isolation may only be experiencing interaction from their primary caregivers , arising the issue that children are missing out on essential social interactions and play opportunities within the time frame of a crucial aspect of brain development . Additionally infants who experienced the lockdown would appear to have difficulty with interpreting facial expressions as the individuals surrounding them where required to wear masks meaning young children would struggle to absorb emotions from facial movements.

The COVID-19 lockdown has had a long lasting affect on children's development holistically with recent news reports stating how children at the age of six years old are struggling to write their own name. The news study published by Searle (2025) highlights how 34% of children are having trouble with spelling their own name . Could this be a result of the limited education during the pandemic lockdown?

According to the [bbcchildreninneed.com](https://www.bbcchildreninneed.com) (2020) 45% of parents have observed that the Covid 19 pandemic has negatively impacted their children's social and development wellbeing during the lockdown. The lack of exposure to social interaction has created a society where some children have developed an antisocial behaviour due to not adequately receiving a range of social opportunities within their development from a young age . Dangerously this could have a long term affect on the individual as according to the Cleveland Clinic (2023) having an antisocial behaviour can lead to the individual developing a behaviour pattern of acting reckless alongside angry and disobedient.

The implementation of theories



Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory emphasises the importance of observational learning, imitation, within the development of social behaviours. According to Bandura, children learn social skills by observing and imitating the actions of others, particularly those of their friends and adults around them. When children experience a lack of social interaction, such as during the isolation period of Covid 19 , they miss out on critical opportunities to observe and absorb social behaviours. This can have an impact on the children's ability to develop essential social skills, such as communication, empathy, and cooperation. Consequently, the absence of these interactions can lead to delays in social development, affecting their ability to form relationships and direct social environments effectively.

What can educators do to support children who have lacked social development due to the covid lockdown

In 2025, teachers can support children who have experienced delays in social development due to the covid 19 lockdown by creating a nurturing and inclusive classroom environment. They can implement structured social activities, such as group projects and cooperative learning tasks, to encourage peer interaction and collaboration. Teachers can also incorporate social-emotional learning programs that focus on building skills like empathy, communication, and understanding perspectives from others. Providing opportunities for play and unstructured social time is also crucial, as it allows children to practice social skills in a natural setting.

Additionally, practitioners can work closely with parents and caregivers to ensure consistent support at home and school, and seek the assistance of school councillors or psychologists when needed. By providing a supportive and engaging environment, teachers can support children to regain and enhance their social development.

As we move forward, let us remember the resilience of our children and the importance of supporting their social development, ensuring that the lessons learned during the Covid 19 lockdown encourage a future for a more connected and empathetic generation

Neglect and it's negative reflection on children's Physical development



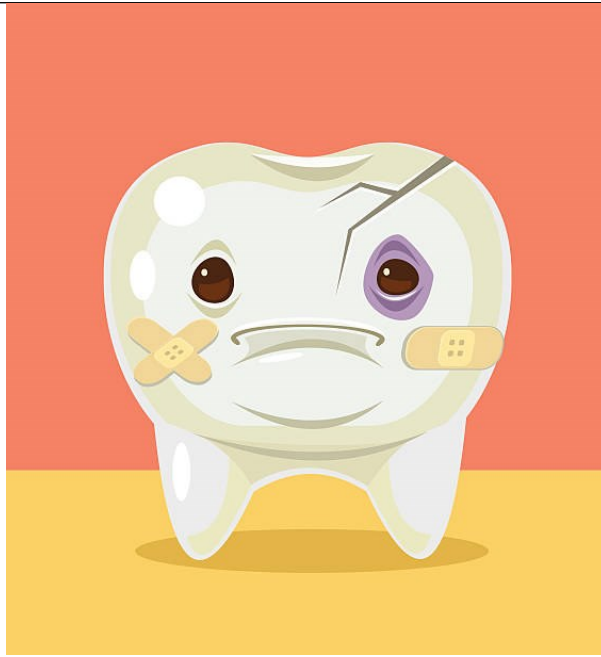
Neglect can severely impact the physical development of a child, leaving lasting scars that extend far beyond the smile of the child. When children are deprived of basic needs such as sufficient nutrition, medical care, and a safe environment, their growth and health are jeopardised. Neglect can lead to developmental delays, weakened immune systems, and a higher vulnerability to illnesses and injuries. Within this blog, we will

explore the devastating effects of neglect on children's physical well-being, emphasising the urgent need for awareness and intervention.

Police reports documented that 18,706 cases of child cruelty where reported in England and Wales during 2019 .Elkin (2020)

Neglect can have a profound impact on a child's physical development in various aspects, particularly when It comes to nutrition, When children do not receive adequate nutrition , their bodies may struggle to develop adequately , leading to their immune systems to weaken due to the lack of essential nutrition. GOV.UK (2010) shares how an absence of nutrition can lead to the child having a stunt in growth .Malnutrition can obstruct the physical growth of a child , resulting in lower height and weight for their age, as well as impairing brain development, leading to long term cognitive and developmental delays. A stunt growth will occur as a result of lack of nutrients , when a child is not receiving whole foods they aren't receiving the protein , vitamins and minerals that impact muscle strength and bone density, making the child more exposed to injury and illness . Furthermore, a diet lacking in key nutrients can weaken the function of vital organs like the heart and lungs, leading to lifelong health problems. Neglect in this regard can leave children vulnerable to chronic conditions, such as anemia, weakened bones, and developmental disorders, which can have lasting effects on their ability to thrive physically, emotionally, and socially. Overall lack of essential nutrition will lead to children feeling weak and fatigued as the primary source of energy provided form food is not being consumed , leaving close to little energy for the child to use to proceed with their day to day activities. Not only physically will this impact the child a holistic effect will be present as the child will have to battle a lack of concentration and tiredness to complete the day .

<i>Physical signs that a child is being deprived from adequate nutrition-</i>	
•	<i>Severe stunt in growth</i>
•	<i>Pale skin, lips and nail beds</i>
•	<i>Poor muscle and bone structure</i>
•	<i>Frequent illness</i>
•	<i>Brittle hair and nails</i>
•	<i>Dental issues</i>



In addition to lack of nutrition, neglectful caregivers can fail to respond to adequate oral and dental care, leaving children at high risk of developing dental decay, gum disease, and other oral health issues. This neglect can lead to pain, infections, and even tooth loss, significantly impacting their overall well-being and quality of life. GOV.UK (2024) provides statistics highlighting how tooth decay has affected **16.2%** of year 6 children in England during the school year of 2022 and 2023. These statistics highlight the urgent need for schools to offer a wider range of oral care advice and practice to ensure that all children are receiving the care and regular check-ups to ensure a healthy development.



Neglectful parenting leads children to missing important opportunities that influence the milestone and physical development of a child. Experiencing playgroup is an opportunity that children with neglectful parents often miss out on, resulting in them falling behind on the milestones of physical development. The organisation Chatter Splatter play group (2019) displays how children who attend play groups are at a physical advantage due to the emphasis of gross motor skill activities such as jumping, running and climbing, alongside focussing on the child's fine motor skill development with activities such as drawing and painting, enhancing the child's hand-eye coordination and agility.

1 in 10 children have experienced neglect in the UK . NSPCC (2024)

How the UNCRC supports to limit the statistics of neglect

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a key international establishment that supports the rights of children, focusing on their well-being, development, and protection. Under the UNCRC, neglect is addressed as a violation of a child's right to care and protection. Articles such as Article 19 specifically indicate the importance of protecting children from all forms of neglect, abuse, and exploitation, and ensuring that children grow up in an environment that promotes their physical and mental health. The UNCRC highlights the responsibility of governments, caregivers, and society to provide adequate care, nutrition, and a safe environment for children. By setting rights the UNCRC helps guide policies and actions aimed at preventing neglect and addressing its impact, ensuring that children's rights to adequate care, education, and protection are met globally. It is crucial for schools and educators to use the UNCRC's guidance to provide the sufficient support for those children in need, this could be done by providing posters and leaflets around the school for children and parents to read and reach out for support.

Addressing and preventing neglect is crucial to ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive physically, emotionally, and developmentally.

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