

Play for Bodies, Minds, and Souls

Rahaf Almasri

BEFORE YOU READ: What does play do for your body, mind, and soul?

Play is an important part of life. It gives physical relief to our bodies and mental relief to our souls and minds. But these days, play seems more stressful and maybe even unhealthy. Children are disconnected from their parents and other children.

Is It Play? Or Is It a Pacifier?

For example, parents use technology to keep their kids quiet. I have seen kids in their strollers holding their electronic pads or their parents' phones.

Increased time on our devices means increased isolation. We are far away from our families and friends even if we are in the same room with them.

They are watching cartoons or playing games. It seems like this isn't really playing. It's more like the device is a babysitter or a pacifier for the kids because at the same time, the parents are busy

either on social media or playing electronic games on their devices too. Therefore, they need their children to be quiet all the time. This means that children, from an early age, are dependent on electronic devices. It could affect the development of their brains. And maybe they will miss the chance to learn and discover and create new techniques for solving problems.

Toys: Just More Stuff?

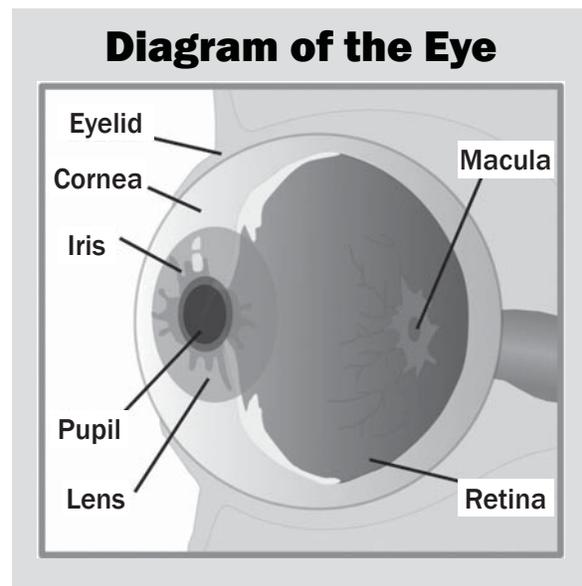
Also, children see advertisements every day about new toys. They feel that they must have the same toys that their friends have. They rush their parents to buy these new toys too. They play with

the toy for a couple of days until a new one is released, more advertisements come out, and they want their parents to buy the new one.

Online Games: Not Good for your Health

Teenagers play online games with their friends for many hours each day. As a result, they are not getting exercise, and they are damaging their eyes. In an article called, "Are Electronic Devices Affecting My Vision?," Dr. Jeff Taylor says, "Prolonged exposure to blue light can actually contribute to photochemical damage, which can potentially harm your retinal cells and make you susceptible to conditions like age-related macular degeneration."

Everywhere you go, people are staring at their phones. There is this new custom of having your phone with you all the time so you can "play" any time and all the time. But you are spending less time with your families and friends. And the



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People on their phones on subway in Seoul, South Korea. Photo by Mark Smith, Wikimedia.

play is not relieving stress. If you pay attention, you will notice that after playing on your devices, you are likely to have red eyes and even suffer from headaches. Increased time on our devices means increased isolation. We are far away from our families and friends even if we are in the same room with them.

What Should We Do?

As a community, we should do more to bring back the old kinds of play. We should provide playgrounds to the kids in the neighborhood. We should encourage them to play sports. All kids should have the same opportunity to play no matter where they live

It's never too late to create quality time with your kids.

We should make sure to spend quality time with our children—not on devices. And we should schedule time for them to be outside exploring, doing physical activities, and learning in groups.

or how much money their parents have. As a parent, I believe that we should understand the consequences of using electronic

It's never too late to create quality time with your kids. Play with them, teach them what your parents taught you, and share your childhood games with them. Make a better connection with their souls and minds, so they can be a good example for their kids in the future. The world is becoming more digital, but you can still help them see all the colors of life.

Source: <yoursightmatters.com/are-electronic-devices-affecting-my-vision/>

AFTER YOU READ:

1. What does the author say (and what can you infer) is the difference between play and a pacifier?
2. Re-read the quote by Dr. Taylor on p. 34. What strategies can you use to make sense of this complex sentence? Use the context clues to figure out what the unfamiliar words mean. Look them up. Try re-phrasing the sentence in your own words.
3. What does the author say we should do in our families and in our communities to increase quality time with our children? What else can we do?



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