

Student Name

Mrs. Gosselin/Mr. Palin

Introduction to Computers

November 10, 2010

Cell Phones:

Do Concerns Outweigh the Benefits?

As cell phone usage rates continue to sky-rocket higher and higher each year, more concerns are being raised about potential health risks. A growing number of American teenagers text each other every day and the number of adult texters are increasing as well. As the number of cell phone users increase, so do the number of studies that examine the social, emotional, and physical health concerns tied to cell phone use. Most people are more than satisfied with their phones and focus on the benefits of cell phones. Yet, health concerns are real. **Users of cell phones should balance any benefits against potential health problems.**



The intro paragraph shapes the paper and the thesis is clear and takes a position.

There are numerous concerns being raised, physically or mentally, about overall cell phone use. Scientists from all over the globe have been testing people and filing reports, and the press has devoured every piece of it. Most reports have focused on the distractions of phones while driving. **When people talk on the phone while driving, people say that it causes distractions, but when people text and drive, some specialists say it should be more accurately called drunk driving (Hanes). One report points out that a large 28% of accidents are caused by talking on the phone or texting (Halsey III).** One teen, who was able to text under the table while conversing with her family, died while texting and driving. She simply would not let her driving stop her from communicating with her friends (Copeland). There is no predicting what you can or will do when you are texting while driving, just the same as when you have drunk too much. Many car crashes have been caused by stupid, unnecessary text messages. They are not worth the taking someone's life.



The paper is based on research findings and the writing has an academic tone.

Psychiatrists and councilors may be facing a different problem: an emotional one. Emotional concerns involving people and their cell phones occur when people get very attached to their cell phones. **They could quite possibly develop a "virtual life," says author Laura Reynolds.** They cannot individualize themselves and they cannot always live that way virtually. Experts and researchers are saying that people, but teens especially, need to find a sense of who they really are and you cannot do that through text messages. You cannot say and phrase things like you would in real life. There is no way to control your voice through the phone (Reynolds). In order to maintain a healthy lifestyle, teens need to put down the phone for a while and find some confidence within themselves to talk directly to their peers.



Sometimes authors or sources are mentioned in sentences, rather than in parenthetical citations.

**People can also get physical and mental injuries from too much texting.** How skilled, exactly, have we become at this form of communication? How fast can we go? Can we do it without looking? Some teens are able to text underneath the table while conversing with their parents during dinner (Copeland). Some are able to text while their cell phone is in their pocket. Two hundred texts a day is considered excessive texting. And a growing number of cell phone users are reaching these levels. These people are called "heavy texters" by some reports (Reisinger). When texting so much, teens do not realize or understand that they can be hurt by doing something so innocent as messaging their friends. It can be quite serious.



Paragraphs start with topic sentences and writing within paragraphs supports the topic sentence.

**Many of the numerous side effects of too much texting concern the arm and hand.** The already "popular" BlackBerry thumb, which has been on the map for some time now, is being joined by carpal and cubital tunnel syndrome on a list of health concerns of texting. Too much texting can cause the thumbs to be irritated because of too much repetitive motion, and therefore BlackBerry thumb is not necessarily rare (DeNoon). Similarly, carpal tunnel syndrome concerns fingers and thumbs as well. It is triggered by too much weight and strain on a major nerve in your wrist. It will send numb feelings

through your thumbs and fingers. Its brother, cubital tunnel syndrome, is also called cell phone elbow. It will send numbness to your hands.

Radiation has also shown some potential of being dangerous according to news broadcasts and reports. When walking through the halls of school or the aisles of a store, looking around you can see the numerous shapes of cell phones in people's pockets. Scientists are concerned about the amounts of RF radiation coming off the cell phones. These waves, if strong enough, may cause brain cancer. "As cell phones make and take calls," says *Time* magazine reporter Bryan Walsh, "they emit low-level radio-frequency (RF) radiation. Stronger than FM radio signals, these RF waves are still a billionth of the intensity of known carcinogenic radiation like x-rays." Although these waves are not very strong, brain cancer can take many decades to develop and start to show up, and cell phones' radiation could hurt cells. It is not entirely proven that it can cause brain cancer yet. Currently, the effects are not that extreme. The most damage they could do, for now, is to configure the cells' way of repairing some DNA, at most (Walsh). Although not a current concern, it does not mean that it will not evolve into one in the future.

Although there are many physical, social, and emotional concerns about cell phone use, people see many benefits to this form of technology. All people love their cell phones. Who would not? The pure convenience of it is considerable. One can talk to friends without being face-to-face at the press of a button. People across the country can call for the "one flat rate." With smart phones, people can get their email anywhere and update their calendars whenever they want. Parents can carry their shopping lists with them everywhere and they can never get lost on the way to the store. Everything seems easier with a cell phone.

Also, when looking at safety, having a cell phone is a load off your shoulders for some people. After the disaster of 9-11, many parents wanted their kids to be able to call for help, to know where they were at all times. With their cell phone, those children can now always rely on it to make that call



The paper looks at both sides of the issue.

and to always be there (What Are the Benefits of Cell Phones for Young Teens?). Parents can also track their children's cell phone from their own. All of the cell phones in the United States are capable of coming with a tracking micro-chip and many phone plans give the ability to track a phone (Reynolds). Safety and GPS tracking are allowing people to feel more secure when they have their phones with them. Some senior citizens will not leave the house without their cell phones, just in case something were to happen.

The effect of the cell phone on the business world is great. There are many ways that business men and women can now do things that they could not do before. In a cab, for example, they can: check their stocks, close deals, call clients, make appointments and update their schedules. Things can move so much more quickly and efficiently now that you have access for virtually anything at your fingertips.

When the concerns and benefits of overall cell phone use are considered, the usefulness and convenience cannot be ignored. Cell phones offer many hands to people balancing personal and professional lives. But, it must be remembered that there are risks. Social, physical, and emotional risks and harm can all arise from excessive cell phone use. As long as they are used in moderation, they can be a great tool. However, when not used in moderation, cell phone risks could outweigh benefits.



The paper considers all research findings and reaches a balanced conclusion.

SMS SAMPLE MLA PAPER

## Works Cited

- Copeland, Larry. "Word to Youth: Texting, Driving Don't Mix." *USA Today* (N.d.). *MAS Ultra - School Edition*. Web. 14 Oct. 2010. <<http://web.ebscohost.com>>.
- DeNoon, Daniel J. "BlackBerry Thumb: Real Illness or Just Dumb?" *WebMD Arthritis and Joint Pain Center: Symptoms, Causes, Tests, and Treatments*. 26 Jan. 2005. Web. 22 Oct. 2010. <[arthritis.webmd.com](http://arthritis.webmd.com)>.
- Halsey III, Ashley. "28 Percent of Accidents Involve Talking, Texting on Cellphones." *Washington Post - Politics, National, World & D.C. Area News and Headlines - Washingtonpost.com*. 13 Jan. 2010. Web. 07 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com>>.
- Hanes, Stephanie, and Julie Masis. "Texting While Driving: the New Drunk Driving." *Christian Science Monitor*. Web. 14 Oct. 2010. <<http://web.ebscohost.com>>.
- Reisinger, Don. "Pew: Adults Text, but Teens Do It Five times as Much | The Digital Home - CNET News." *Technology News - CNET News*. 3 Sept. 2010. Web. 06 Oct. 2010. <<http://news.cnet.com>>.
- Reynolds, Laura. "The Effects of Cell Phones on Teenagers | EHow.com." *EHow | How To Do Just About Everything! | How To Videos & Articles*. Web. 21 Oct. 2010. <<http://www.ehow.com>>.
- Walsh, Bryan. "Cell-Phone Safety." *Time* 175.10 (2010): 47. *MAS Ultra - School Edition*. Web. 14 Oct. 2010. <<http://web.ebscohost.com>>.
- "What Are the Benefits of Cell Phones for Young Teens? | EHow.com." *EHow | How To Do Just About Everything! | How To Videos & Articles*. Web. 21 Oct. 2010. <[www.ehow.com](http://www.ehow.com)>.