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Short Communication

Effect of Screening Time on Children's Eyes

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DESCRIPTION

The amount of time spent using a device with a screen, such as a smartphone, computer, television, or video game console, is referred to as screen time. The topic is now being studied in conjunction with related issues in digital media consumption and mental health. Screen time has been shown in studies to have a direct influence on child development, as well as mental and physical health. Exposure levels and content have an impact on the beneficial or negative health impacts of screen usage. Some countries have imposed restrictions on screen time to prevent hazardous exposure.

Set restrictions on your child's screen time for a variety of reasons, including encouraging outdoor play and healthful activity, fostering good sleep patterns, and promoting in-person social ties. Children are spending more time than ever before gazing at digital screens, including computers, tablets, televisions, cellphones, and other gadgets. All that screen time can have a negative impact on a child's health, particularly how their eyes feel. Children as young as 6 months old begin zooming in on digital media devices, such as their parents' tablets or smartphones, youngsters spend over 7 hours a day using screened-based media, such as watching TV, playing video games, and accessing social media by the time they reach their teens. Children, especially if they're having a good time, stay playing and watching until they're exhausted.

The outbreak, several students have turned to learning to keep up with their schoolwork during the lockdown, resulting in a significant increase in their screen use. Children aged 5 to 16 in the United Kingdom now spend an average of 6.3 hours a day in front of a screen. Understandable that concerned about your child's eyesight and eye health given all of the extra time spent focused on screens (whether for virtual learning or enjoyment).

Effects of increased screen time for children

It's reasonable that students have had to rely on screens for their education throughout the pandemic. Unfortunately, this implies that your child's eyes might be harmed if they spend too much time looking at digital devices without taking breaks or making adjustments. Eye strain, pain, and even the development of short-sightedness might result as (myopia). Increased screen usage can have the following negative consequences on children's eyes [1-4].

Digital eye strain: Digital eye strain is a contemporary eye ailment that is becoming increasingly widespread as a result of the extended usage of digital devices such as phones, computers, and televisions. If adolescent spends a lot of time gazing at a screen (like a phone), their eyes may grow tired, and staring at a screen too closely (like a phone) can strain the muscles in their eyes. Eye strain can also be caused by light glare reflected off digital devices. Headaches, dry eyes, blurred or double vision, and light sensitivity are among signs of eye strain.

Myopia: Myopia (also known as short-sightedness) is conditions that makes focusing on distant things difficult, even while items close by are visible. Short-sightedness has been related to "focused on nearby things, such as books and computers, for lengthy periods during infancy," according to the NHS. Myopia is now twice as common in youngsters as it was 50 years ago, according to research. This might be connected to an increase in digital screen use among children, not just during the epidemic but throughout the last several decades in general, as well as a decrease in outside time. This indicates that if youngsters spend less time outside and do not take enough breaks away from devices, they may develop short-sightedness.

Blue light: Another issue that many parents are concerned about as a result of increasing screen usage is the influence of blue light on their children's eyes. Digital eye strain and myopia have been related to the blue light generated by digital gadgets. Children's eyes absorb more blue light from digital screens than adults' eyes, according to one research. As a result, if your kid begins to spend more time outside, their eyes will be exposed to less blue light, which will help halt the onset of short-sightedness.

Children should take regular visual breaks to safeguard their eyes and eyesight. Use the 20-20-20 rule: every twenty minutes, take a twenty-second break and stare at something 20 feet away. There

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is no guideline for how many hours a day every child should be allowed to use a digital gadget, according to McCarty. The greatest method to safeguard their eyes is to take pauses. Children between the ages of 5 and 13 should undergo annual eye exams since their eyes are still growing. "Make sure teenagers have a yearly thorough eye checkup to see if their digital gadgets are creating any eye problems.

CONCLUSION

Myopia in children is a public health issue that needs both individual and community-level healthy lifestyle initiatives. With current findings, it is premature to infer that early screen usage causes myopia due to the inadequate evaluation of myopia in our study. More longitudinal studies using cyclopedia would be required to show a causal relationship between early screen exposure and myopia; a more pressing concern is whether early screen exposure contributes to the school-age myopia pandemic, using cycloplegia would be necessary.

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