Xia Her

Corrupting Youth

Have you ever wondered how often teens are on social networking sites? According to Pew Internet & American Life Project more than half (55%) of American youths of the ages of 12-17, uses online social network sites. You ever wonder if there been any changes in the way you behave based on the way you use and spent your time on the internet. You probably wouldn’t know. But, social networking sites do have an effect on your behavior. Do you know that your communication and interaction has changed? Social media changed it, but it’s all because of your addiction to it. Social networking has changed the way we communicate and interacts; it also addicts us to it.

Social network is intentionally created by website designers to allow families, friends, relatives and other individuals to be in contact with each other, and to give people opportunities to make themselves available and reachable to others as fast as they can. Various group ages uses social network, but the most common group age that uses social networks are teenagers and young adults. These types of media have changed the way people communicate with each other. This idea of media changing our communication is presented in Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* by Mildred. Mildred was so into her Seashell radio ear plugs that she became an expert at lip reading, “She was an expert at lip reading from ten years of apprenticeship at Seashell ear thimbles” (18). This quote demonstrates the way communication has changed due to the fact of media use. Mildred had her Seashell for ten years and she’s been listening to them for the ten years. The Seashell changed the way she communicates with her husband. She doesn’t even listen to what her husband’s saying and she just read his lips. Today, our communication way has changed due to the same fact as in Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451*. Media changed the way that we use to talk. Back in the days, we would had to write letters or go to the person’s house, but now we all use media to communicate. We use media such as texting on phone and messaging on social networks to communicate others. Media has become a big part of our daily lives, especially with teens and young adults. Base on the article of “My Finding” by Shelby Snider teens would rather communicate through the internet than in person. “Rather than speaking with someone face-to-face, picking up a telephone, or writing a letter, teens use the Internet for communication.” Base on a survey conducted by the Pew Internet & American Life Project about more than half of American youths of the ages of 12-17, uses online social network sites. The article specifically stated that: “teens use the Internet for communication.” This should what teens use to communicate with others. Teens uses internet to communicate rather than talking in real life. Teens often feel more comfortable using internet as a way to communicate with others because they feel more safe and confident. Communicating through the internet allows teens to hide their feelings and real attitudes. Shy teens often talk more and feel more confident on the internet than in real live. They feel more confident talking on the internet because they don’t see the people and the person can’t hear them stumbling about what to say. The internet is like a protective shield for them.

Social networking did not just change the way that people communicate. It also changed the way we interact with other people in real life. We interact with others on social networks rather than in person face-to-face. In society today, media has changed the way we interact with others. As technology advanced, our interaction began to change especially with teens these days. Teens today are so use to using social media that it changed the way they interact. They would interact with people that they don’t even know or see. Back in the old days, we would have to see the person for us to be able to meet them or talk to them and even interact with them. In society today, instead of talking and smiling in person they use colons with brackets as smile and laughs are typed as ha ha’s or LOLs. “O.K.” was just “K” and “See you” was rendered as “c ya.” According to Hilary Stout article “Antisocial” he stated that “For today’s teenagers and preteens, the give and take of friendship seems to be conducted increasingly in the abbreviated snatches of cellphone texts and instant messages, or through the very public forum of Facebook walls and MySpace bulletins.” He says specifically about interaction it occurs, “increasingly in the abbreviated snatches of cellphone texts and instant messages.” This shows how teens don’t talk anymore, instead they use text, and even the words they do use are shortened. There are many reasons to why teens preferred texting and instant messages over in real life’s interactions. Teens sometime feel more comfortable with texting and social media messaging because it stops the awkwardness of social interaction, like blushing and stammering, that can prevent shy teenagers from engaging in conversations, and when you can't think of something to say it gives you time to think about things before you say. They also feel that it gives you more privacy because others can’t see or hear what the conversation is about. Media has become a big part of teen’s lives.

Besides social networking changing our communication and interaction way, it could cause addictions. Teens are on social networking sites all time is because there an addiction to it. This addiction of media is shown in Fahrenheit 451: “Will you turn the parlor off? That’s my family. Will you turn it off for a sick man? I’ll turn it down. She went out the room and I did nothing to it and came back” (48-49). This demonstrates how addictive Mildred is to the parlor. It shows that she is very addictive to the parlor that why she couldn’t turn it off, not even for her sick husband Montag, who just want some peace and quiet to rest. The parlor was important to her more than her husband. Fahrenheit 451’s societies are obsessed with TV. But, in our society we are obsess to internet. Internet is most popular with teens. Report has shown that teens devote about more than 50 hours a week to daily media uses. A college student stated on CBS news; “There were nights where I, like spent the entire night just, like customizing my page.” This statement demonstrated how teens could become addictive to social networking sites. Their addiction could lead them giving up their sleep time or their times to do something else. The college student specially stated, “I like spent the entire night.” If this become a habit, he’s sure will become social addictive. The addiction of something comes from habits that you’re really used to it.

Lastly, I want to give all you readers a challenge. I want all of you to be aware of the time you spend on social network sites and of what you do on there. The time you spent on it and the action that you make on there could affect the way you act in person. You probably wouldn’t even notice that you have change but your peers around you, definitely will notice your behavior changes. All these changes came from your action online. The way you communicate and interact with others on social networking sites could affect the way you do it in person. For instance, on social network sites you’ll be chatting with your friends using slang word and abbreviation. The time you spend on it could cause you to have an addiction. Your addiction to social media could change your communication and interaction way. Due to the fact, that your so use to the way you talk and act online you’ll start talking and acting the same way you do online in person. Social media brings many good things to us but it could cause us to lose things in our life.