

Harmful Technology: Leave Them Kids Alone!

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As a Generation X (Gen X) born in the 1970s, this was a time when technology was moving fast but synchronised with the general disillusionment of the establishment following the Cold War tensions and aftermath of other political events. As is often the case, the music scene is the first to respond to socio-political unrest, and one of the most iconic pop songs of that era was the infamous Pink Floyd hit from their 1979 album "[Another Brick in the Wall](#)". No one can forget the standout line: "Hey! Teachers! Leave them kids alone!" The song of course is a scathing critique of the authoritarian educational system with its powerful message of the resistance children must take or else face imprisonment in an 'thought control' indoctrination system. The video with its visually unforgettable character, Pink – who builds a metaphorical wall around himself to shut out the pain of life – has etched itself into the collective consciousness of that generation. I would never have thought that 45 years later, I would be writing about 'leaving kids alone', but this time relating to a much more alarming and sinister issue than chronicled in the Pink Floyd pop song. Now is the time for rebellious action!

On the [Councils, Planning & ACHES letters](#) section of the website, which was highlighted in the [Welcome](#) blog, there are multiple letters that ACHES have created for concerned citizens to use to write to their local councils to raise objections to 5G cell masts. It cannot have escaped people's notice that across the country massive 5G towers have been erected just metres away from school grounds. ACHES has drafted a [template letter](#) that has been sent to 240 individuals across councils and schools about these concerns to notify teachers throughout the UK about the harms of smartphones and wireless technology in order to help safeguard children's health and wellbeing. As many know, several schools are now banning smartphones and wireless devices in order to improve the mental health and focus of young people.

"Several schools are now banning smartphones"

An important harm caused by smartphones and wireless iPad tablets is radiofrequency radiation (RFR), with multiple peer-reviewed preclinical studies showing direct links between high RFR exposure and biological damage, such as brain cancers and heart schwannomas. There are numerous well-documented data showing harms caused by the non-thermal effects from wireless radiation on reproduction, development, and chronic illnesses. It should be emphasised that children and young people are particularly [susceptible](#) to radiation damage because of their growing bodies and thinner developing skulls. Even the media has started to draw attention to the negative effects of smartphones, wireless tablets and radiation on learning abilities and cognition. A [study](#) has shown excessive screen time can "damage the brains of children to levels comparable to drug addiction". In humans,

the biological effects of RFR are caused predominantly by non-thermal effects of radiation, which occur at levels significantly below those deemed safe by the telecommunications industry based on studies of thermal (rather than non-thermal) effects of RFR emissions.

Excessive screen time can “damage the brains of children to levels comparable to drug addiction”

Alarming, not only have symptoms of anxiety, loneliness, circadian rhythm and sleep disruption as well as impaired social development increased in children since the introduction of wireless technologies, but behaviours including emergency room visits, self harm, and suicide attempts have [risen sharply](#). What steps can be taken to limit the harms caused by smartphones and other modern technological devices? To clarify, we are not against the use of technology, rather, we are committed to raising awareness of the ways in which it can be used [wisely and safely](#), particularly around children. Using wired connections for landline phones and communication platforms and switching off devices when they are not in use is a helpful start. Similarly, limiting the use of phones during school hours, and keeping devices away from the immediate surrounding areas of the body are recommended. Remember that electronic devices send information through the air on a constant basis, and so the combination of signals from Wi-Fi, cell phones and other networks result in people being bombarded with a continuous ‘cloud’ of wireless radiation signals. We encourage concerned parents and individuals to contact schools using our [template letter](#).

We uphold the fundamental principles and the legal rights of children regarding the deployment and use of technology: this includes **their right to be free from intentionally addictive devices, platforms and apps and their right to be free from excessive exposure to wireless radiation**. Perhaps the lesser known words of another Pink Floyd song capture the essence of why we must fight for our children and not allow them to be casualties of our modern world as posited in the lyrics: “Goodbye, cruel world I'm leaving you today”. Let us ensure that there is no cruel world and that we can support the wellbeing of our children, adults, and each other.

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