

Mini-Research Paper

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SUPPORT • QUOTE • INTEGRATE • PARAPHRASE • CITE

When writing research, *support* explanations and arguments mostly with your own words. Someone else's words need to be *quoted* and *integrated* into your own sentence structures. Also consider *paraphrasing* another's words into your own. Whether quoted or paraphrased, always **cite** sources of information or ideas. Below is a sample APA composition (300 words).

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Communicating with friends on social networking sites, like Facebook and Twitter, is generally a good thing. It is true that there are some potential problems. One neuroscientist for example, Dr. Susan Greenfield, believes that it is "infantilizing the brain" by shortening our attention spans (Mackey, 2009). Even someone who supports social networking thinks that parents are "rightly worried" about how Internet activity affects children (Parack, 2011). Hyperactive students are one of the most serious problems in school classrooms, and Dr. Greenfield believes activities like social networking could partly cause it (Mackey, 2009).

In support of social networking though, David Parack talks about an important research study done over three years by the MacArthur Foundation. It involved about 5,000 hours of observation as young people socially networked online. In explaining the researcher's conclusions from the study, Mizuko Ito reports several benefits. First, they practiced "technological. . . literacy" which is becoming more important in our lives. Second, although online rather than in person, they practiced "get[ting] along with others." Also, they were doing something this many young people had never been required to do before. They were "manag[ing] a public identity." Online personalities

are often public. Since one's quality of life is largely determined by other people's perceptions, a public personality must be controlled. Finally, they learned "how to create a home page" (2011). More and more people have or will want to have their personal web sites, and a home page is a face to the world wide web and therefore a face to the world.

Risks and unintended consequences exist with any new technology, and social networking web sites are no exception. Generally though, because technology is not going away, we will have to learn to use it well and for the right purposes.

Works Cited

- Mackey, R. (2009, February 24). Is social networking killing you? *New York Times*, Retrieved from <thelede.blogs.nytimes.com>
- Parack, D. (2011). New study shows social networking is good for youngsters [Web log message]. Retrieved from <tech.blorge.com>

External Sources Used

QUOTED SOURCE: EVIDENCE SUPPORTING:

Parents are rightly worried about the influence of the Internet on their kids lives, and most offer guidance, advice, and often limits on Web usage. But maybe they should relax those rules, as a new study by the MacArthur Foundation called 'Living and Learning With New Media' suggests the Internet can be a force for good for youngsters.

The study was conducted between 2005 and 2008 with over 800 young people and their parents interviewed in that time. The teenagers were also observed online for over 5,000 hours while they used social networks such as Facebook and MySpace. Mizuko Ito, lead researcher on the study, told *The New York Times*:

It may look as though kids are wasting a lot of time hanging out with new media, whether it's on MySpace or sending instant messages. But their participation is giving them the technological skills and literacy they need to succeed in the contemporary world. They're learning how to get along with others, how to manage a public identity, how to create a home page.

APA Citation:

Parack, D. (2011). New study shows social networking is good for youngsters [Web log message]. Retrieved from <http://tech.blorge.com>

QUOTED SOURCE: EVIDENCE OPPOSING

No less an authority on the brain's workings than Susan Greenfield, a professor of pharmacology at Oxford University and the director of the Royal Institution of Great Britain, told a British newspaper on Tuesday that social networking sites remind her of the way that "small babies need constant reassurance that they exist" and make her worry about the effects that this sort of stimulation is having on the brains of users. Lady Greenfield (she's a neuroscientist and a baroness) told the Daily Mail:

My fear is that these technologies are infantilizing the brain into the state of small children who are attracted by buzzing noises and bright lights, who have a small attention span and who live for the moment.

These remarks echo concerns that Lady Greenfield expressed earlier this month in a debate in the House of Lords, in which she said that social networking, as well as computer games, might be particularly harmful to children, and could be behind the observed rise in cases of attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder....

APA Citation:

Mackey, R. (2009, February 24). Is social networking killing you? *New York Times*, Retrieved from <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com>