

Mündliche Realschulprüfung 1 2009

Internet helps families stay more in touch

Much has been said about how anti-social the Internet and mobile phones are. The truth is however, according to new research, communication technology is bringing people closer together. A study in American found family members were keeping in regular contact today more than ever before. And this is all down to e-mail, chat, our mobile phones and SMS messaging. It makes sense. Years ago, it took a long time to write a letter, then find an envelope and go to the post office to buy a stamp and post it. Today we write mails while we wait for our change in a shop and they're sent in *an instant*. Having free Internet telephone calls also helps us to stay in touch more often and for longer. Everyone's at it, from five-year-olds to *tech-savvy* grandparents.

According to the survey, technology has a very positive effect on communication within families. Researchers asked 2252 adults whether new technologies had increased the quality of communication with their family. Fifty-three percent said it *increased* communication with family members they did not live with, two percent said technology *decreased* this. Numbers were similar for those living in the same house as their family. The project director Lee Rainey said: "There's a new kind of connectedness being built inside of families with these technologies". Survey co-author Barry Wellman agreed: "It used to be [that] husbands went off to work, wives went off to a different job or stayed home...and the kids went off to school...and not until 5:30, 6 o'clock did they ever connect," he said.

Vocabulary

an instant - ein Moment, *tech-savvy* - technisch versiert, *to increase* - erhöhen
to decrease - vermindern

Questions

1. Do you have the Internet at home? How do you use it?
How do the other family members use it?
2. What did a new American survey tell us about the Internet and mobile phones?
(Give details)
3. What are the advantages of the new ways of communication?
4. Do you still write letters, why (not)?
5. Describe the extent (*Ausmaß*) with which technology improves communication in families in the USA.
6. What is meant by "*There's a new kind of connectedness being built inside of families with these technologies*"?
7. What is your opinion on family members in the same house communicating via the internet or mobile phones?
What are the advantages and disadvantages?
8. Do you think older less tech-savvy people will have problems in society by not being able to use the new technologies. Why (not)?
9. Do you know of people who do not use the new communication technologies?
Can you understand why?
10. What do you think our future will be like with regard to (*in Bezug auf*) technology?

The use of bilingual dictionaries is permitted

- a What did you think when you read the headline?
 -)
 - b What springs to mind when you hear the word 'technology'?
 -)
 - c Do you think communication technology is making us more anti-social?
 -)
 - d How does the Internet bring you closer to people?
 -)
 - e How would your life change without the Internet and mobile phones?
 -)
 - f Do you like the idea of writing letters with a pen and then mailing them?
 -)
 - g How many mails or SMS messages do you write a day?
 -)
 - h The article says "Everyone's at it". Do you know anyone who doesn't use the latest technology to communicate?
 -)
 - i) Are your grandparents tech-savvy?
 - j) Are you good at keeping in touch?
-
- a Did you like reading this article?
 -)
 - b Who is the biggest user of technology in your family?
 -)
 - c Do you think technology has increased the quality of communication in your family?
 -)
 - d How might technology decrease the quality of communication?
 -)
 - e How could families become even more connected?
 -)
 - f Do you sometimes wish you weren't so connected?
 -)
 - g What will be the next big thing that will connect us all?
 -)
 - h Would you like a permanent, open connection to anyone you choose?

)

- i) Is your family good at staying in touch?
- j) What questions would you like to ask project director Lee Rainey?

Mündliche Realschulprüfung 2 2009

Bullying in British schools

Bullying in British schools has reached epidemic levels. Last week, England's Commissioner for Children said nearly every child was *affected* by the problem. Education ministers are keen *to reverse* the worrying trend, especially as today is the start of Anti-Bullying Week. Politicians are thinking about *fining* the parents of bullies up to GBP 1000. Schools minister Jacqui Smith said: "This will send a strong message to parents that schools will not tolerate *a failure* to take responsibility for bullying." Other *proposals* give teachers the right *to restrain* students "*through reasonable force*" where necessary.

Ms. Smith said: "Bullying should never be tolerated in our schools, *no matter* what its motivation." She added that: "Children must know what is right and what is wrong." She said children must know what will happen if they *cross* the line. She spoke after many recent cases of violence in schools. Twelve-year-old bullies have *harmed* their victims with knives and used *iron bars* to beat students unconscious. One child was told she would be "dead meat" if she returned to school. Other examples of bullying include: being *harassed*, pushed, *choked*, grabbed, *teased* and having your head banged against the wall or having your nose broken. It seems many of Britain's schoolchildren are more interested in *tormenting* and injuring other students than learning.

Vocabulary

affected - betroffen, *to reverse* - umkehren, *to fine* - eine Geldbuße auferlegen, *failure* - Versäumnis, *proposal* - Vorschlag, *to restrain* - zur Raison bringen, *through reasonable force* - durch angemessenen Einsatz von Gewalt / Zwang, *to harm* - verletzen, *iron bars* - Eisenstangen, *to harass* - ständig belästigen, *to choke* - die Luft abdrücken

Questions

1. Have you seen bullying? What happened?
2. How bad is the problem in Britain?
3. What is the attitude (*Haltung*) of the British government towards bullying?
4. How does the government want to stop bullying?
5. Do you think their ideas will work, why (not)?

6. What would you do if you saw bullying in this school?
7. Have you got any ideas how to stop bullying?
8. How do you think the victims of bullying feel?

9. What could be the reasons why someone becomes a bully?
10. What do you think should be the role of the teachers when bullying happens?

The use of bilingual dictionaries is permitted

Violence in British schools

Violence in British schools has increased dramatically. Bullying has become an everyday experience for many youngsters. Examples of bullying include:

- Being harassed
- Being pushed and shoved
- Being beaten
- Having your nose broken
- Being harmed with a knife
- Having your head banged against the wall
- Being grabbed
- Being choked
- Being teased and called names
- Being told you'll be "dead meat"

1. Have you been a victim of any of the above mentioned types of bullying or to have you seen any of it?
2. Read the comments below about bullies. Agree or disagree with them with your partner(s).
3. Rewrite the sentences so they match your own opinions. Add an extra sentence to each opinion.
4. Change partners / groups and read and talk about what you wrote.

Bullies never win in life.

If you fight back, the bully will stop bullying you.

Bullying is a part of school life. It does no real harm.

Bullies have mental problems.

Teachers too often ignore bullying in classrooms.

Bullying leaves permanent mental scars.

Boys are worse bullies than girls.

Bullying stops after people are eighteen years old.

Bullies should be arrested.

Being bullied builds a stronger character.

Discuss the following questions

What is your image of British schoolchildren?

Is bullying a big problem in your country?

Did you see or experience bullying at school?
What would you do if your child was being bullied?
What would you do if you knew who the bullies were?
Do you think bullies become good members of society?
What should the British government do if nearly every child is affected by bullying?
Do you think a nationwide Anti-Bullying Week will be effective?
Do you think the parents of bullies are bad parents?

Do you think fining the parents of bullies is a good idea?
Bullies often destroy the confidence and lives of their victims, who have mental scars for life. Should bullies be punished?
Do you think teachers should have more powers to discipline bullies?
Whose fault is it that there are so many bullies in schools?
Do you think children have problems understanding the difference between right and wrong?
Do you think video games and movies give bullies ideas?
Do you think teachers care if someone is being bullied?

Discuss the following strategies to stop bullying

All classrooms should have web cameras so parents can monitor their children.
Children who often misbehave should be told to leave the school forever.
Parents of bullied children can sue the bully's parents.
Teachers should receive better training to understand bullies and stop them.
Parents of bullies should be named and shamed in local newspapers.
Parents must pay a fine for all incidents of their child's bullying.
Well-behaved children can suggest punishments for badly behaved children.
Teachers who cannot control their classrooms should be fired.
Bullies should be put in special children's prisons.

Binge drinking deaths double in 15 years

Britain's Office for National Statistics has reported a sharp and alarming rise in the number of people dying from alcohol abuse. Binge drinking has become part of British culture and is now a serious social issue - people are literally drinking themselves to death. The figures are of near epidemic proportions. Alcohol-related fatalities among British adults doubled from 4,144 in 1991 to 8,758 in 2006. The steepest increase was the 132 percent rise in deaths among men in the 35 to 54 age bracket. They are suffering from liver failure and stomach cancers at a younger age than ever before. The figures for women in the same age group also show a dramatic rise of over 100 percent. These disturbing figures seem to be a legacy of people partying and drinking heavily in their twenties and early thirties.

Professor Ian Gilmore, a leading British doctor, said: "Liver disease is often symptom-less until it becomes very serious, and so people often have no warning that they are destroying their liver until it is almost too late." Frank Soodeen from the group Alcohol Concern called for immediate action: "It is vital that the government finally starts investing more in alcohol treatment to help problem drinkers address these issues before the situation becomes irretrievable," he said. Britain's public health minister Dawn Primarolo said the government was launching a \$20m campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of too much alcohol, and was reviewing alcohol pricing and advertising. However, she warned: "We know we're not going to change people's attitudes to alcohol overnight - it's going to take time."

- a What did you think when you read the headline?
-)
- b What springs to mind when you hear the word 'alcohol'?

-)
- c Do you think alcohol is dangerous?
-)
- d What part does alcohol play in the culture of your country?
-)
- e Does alcohol cause any social problems in your country?
-)
- f Why do you think British people binge drink?
-)
- g What's the most you've ever drunk in one night?
-)
- h Do you think people should stop partying heavily in the twenties?
-)
- i) What do you think of this story?

- a Did you like reading this article?
-)
- b Do you worry about the effects on your body of drugs like alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, etc?
-)
- c Do you do anything in life that might be / is destroying or harming your body?
-)
- d What immediate action do you think the government should carry out?
-)
- e Do you think alcohol abuse in countries like Britain is an irretrievable problem?
-)
- f Do you think societies would be better if alcohol was banned?
-)
- g Do you think the health minister's campaign will change attitudes in Britain?
-)
- h What questions would you like to ask the health minister in this article?
-)
- i) Did you like this discussion?