

# How Technology Is Having A Serious Impact On Your Child's Development

In 2014 it's not usual to see a child with a mobile phone or tablet, but it may be time for kids in the UK to go on a [digital detox](#).

A recent study has revealed that children are losing touch with vital life skills due to digital device overuse.

More than half of children aged between two and ten feel more confident using a tablet than learning to swim, telling the time and tying their shoe laces.

According to the new research which surveyed 2,000 UK [parents](#) of children aged 2-16 years, the average UK child is more likely to confidently use a mobile phone before being able to read or ride a bike.



In an age where tablets, smartphones and laptops are an integral part of our daily lives and aid our children's ongoing learning and development, the research reveals that our tech-savvy children are actually growing up lacking key life skills.

With the average child spending almost eight hours a day on technology, our children's digital diets are further fuelling the debate in the rise of childhood [obesity](#).

Worryingly, the majority of parents identified 'online gaming' as the main function of their child's digital habits with the even more shocking confession that over half of the parents surveyed never actually monitor their child's online activity.

When comparing children's digital overuse across regions in the UK, children in London were found to spend on average over 10 hours a day on digital devices - the highest in the country.

During the study, carried out on behalf of optical specialists [Lenstore](#), it was found that one in three children aged two to four own a tablet and spend on average more than five hours using digital devices per day.

Dr Rob Hogan, a registered optometrist and council member of the general optical council (GOC) explains that "at the age of two, although a child's eyesight is in fact developed enough to use the devices, sessions must be short and supervised to avoid long term damage."

He also states the importance of "limiting access just before bedtime, as research has found that the 'blue-ish' light emitted from these devices may disrupt normal sleep patterns and can be damaging to eyesight, potentially causing vision to deteriorate over time."

*Key facts:*

- More children can manoeuvre around a tablet (59%) than swim (53%), tie their shoe laces or tell the time (50%)
- 30% of 2-4 year olds own a tablet
- 66% of parents are concerned about overuse of digital devices
- The majority of parents believed that 11 years old was the most appropriate age for their child to be on social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter even though 13 is the official age limit
- The majority of parents believe their children are addicted to digital devices 68% said 1-2 hours is acceptable, however stated that their children spend more time than that on digital devices every day
- The majority of parents said that television programmes were the worst for encouraging their children to overuse digital devices
- Tablets are the most used digital device by children 65% of parents agreed with the statement “digital devices keep my child occupied while I do work/jobs around the house”
- 55% of parents agreed that children using digital devices allows them peace and quiet