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## Blue-screen Myopia

### Too much screen time can cause Myopia in children

The health of our children should be of major concern to all parents and carers. Education is also a part of their growing up that needs careful monitoring. Needless to say, this management, if you can call it that, takes time out from other things like daily chores and work. Fortunately, it might seem, there is a handy solution – technology. Armed with a tablet or smart phone, kids can be occupied and entertained without pestering mum and dad; and where's the harm in that? Well, actually there are some associated risks that may not have been considered and definitely should be.

I dealt with one problem in an earlier article: HL34 Blue Light – Sleepless Night. Research had uncovered a link between people, in particular children who spent too long staring at the small screen, often at bedtime; and the effect of the blue light, which is similar to sunlight, kept them awake and deprived them of a normal, restful sleep. The consequences were varied depending on the individual; but in many cases education suffered. Children addicted to these electronic devices would often fall asleep during class; and even those who didn't found concentration hard. The result was a lower standard of education.

If this wasn't bad enough, researchers have come up with a side-effect of over-exposure to the small screens which is more worrying, particularly because it results in a permanent disability – Myopia. This is short-sightedness, a condition when seeing clearly is limited to objects close-up; so anything further away becomes blurred. Once the eyes have deteriorated to this point, glasses will need to be prescribed and worn; and that means forever. It stands to reason that, left untreated, a condition like Myopia will impact the child with respect to education, and statistics gathered prove this. Children who spend too long staring at their smart phones, tablets, and even computer screens are not only damaging their eyesight, but also tend to experience learning difficulties.

I won't go on. Surely, the facts speak for themselves; and the remedy is obvious. So, parents and carers, please don't wait to do something. Now is the time for action, before it's too late.

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