



# Effect of the Internet on the Morals and Values of Children

**For Mains:** Effect of the Internet on the Morals and Values of the Children

## Why in News?

In this era of computer and knowledge, moral and social values have essential effects on people and the education process in society.

## What are the Positive and Negative Impact of the Internet on Children?

### ▪ Positive Impact:

#### ◦ Inspiration to Pursue Education:

- There are countless stories of how kids have been inspired to pursue education and sports through the help of the media.
- Additionally, there are **countless stories of how these young people have achieved important goals in their academic careers** and have subsequently went on to do extraordinary things such as becoming professional athletes.

#### ◦ Help in Promoting Social Skills:

- It has been found that the **use and exposure to media technology has promoted social skills in young people** that they are able to utilise in their future lives.
- For example, **it was found that by playing computer and video games, children were learning the ability to think for themselves, independently and creatively.**

#### ◦ Increased Interactivity:

- Children also **benefit from the Internet's increased interactivity.**
- It can be argued that this is one of the biggest advantages of the internet for youngsters because it allows for the exchange of information, knowledge and ideas which are essential for any healthy learning environment.

#### ◦ Enhance Qualities of Moral Aptitude:

- The circulation, access of positive information, and interactions with the positive personalities on the internet **imbibe the qualities of empathy, compassion, and moral aptitude.**

### ▪ Negative Impact:

#### ◦ Increasing instances of Bullying and Cyberbullying:

- Cyberbullying and security risks are associated with increased internet usage by children, which degrades moral and value-centered development.
- **Cyberbullies are those individuals who target other young children or young adults** via various means such as instant messaging and email.
  - Most cases **involve physical confrontation** and one offender threatening or bullying another using the internet.

#### ◦ Impact on Mental Health:

- One common effect is that it **can negatively affect the mental health of the**

### **individual.**

- In some cases, it can **lead to depression and suicidal thoughts.**
- Also, it can lead to a lack of intimacy in relationships and it can also lead to the withdrawal from social groups and activities.
- **Restricts the Scope of Critical Thinking:**
  - **Using readymade information on the internet limits children's ability to learn critically,** affecting their cognitive development.
- **Detachment from Society:**
  - The internet **detaches the children from societal reality,** which may create societal apathy, indifference, etc. among them, which ultimately results in the diminishing of our moral, and cultural values.
  - Moreover, the **societal detachments negatively impact their decision-making, and leadership skills.**

## **Way Forward**

- **Taking a Balanced Approach:**
  - The positive aspects of the internet are difficult to ignore, but **it is crucial to take appropriate Internet safety measures** to ensure that you reap the benefits of technology without being negatively affected.
  - The **restrictions on internet usage by children should be balanced** with their need to access the internet to keep abreast with the latest developments in various fields.
- **Communication is the Key:**
  - The communication gap between the children, and the parents, teachers, etc. enhances the gravity of the issue.
  - **Raising awareness through communication, and explanation** about all the good and evil characteristics of the internet **will reduce the negative emotional impact of technology on children.**
- **Encourage to engage in Real Life Communication:**
  - **Encourage your children to engage in more real-life communication** with people, rather than online networking.
  - They **need to be taught the importance of spending more time in real-life** friendships and activities.
  - Instead of constantly lecturing them about the bad influence of social media on children, encourage other interests or passions they may have, which could be hobbies, sports, social work or anything that is not virtual.
- **Using the Internet Constructively:**
  - Children should be suggested to social media platforms constructively to enhance their learning, or to collaborate with others who have similar interests.
  - It is also important to teach them to differentiate between what has substance and what is not worth spending time on.

## **UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)**

**Q.** 'The current internet expansion has instilled a different set of cultural values which are often in conflict with traditional values.' Discuss. **(2020)**