

Tuesday 01 April 2025 – Anonymous 13

To: States Greffe <StatesGreffe@gov.je>

Smartphones School

I'm 16, and my dad invited me to listen to states members talking about mobile phones in schools today. He has asked me to write in, but this is my own feelings.

Minister Rob Ward said that Jersey schools are nothing like what was seen in the Adolescence programme - I'm sorry but he's wrong. I have been at 2 states secondary schools, and kids my age are on their phones at break times and before and after school. I'm pretty sure we would talk and have fun a lot more if there was a real proper phone ban - right now, there is a pretend phone ban, and it doesn't work.

They were talking about our "right to be on phones" like that is some kind of freedom. I think it's mental adults think like that, it made me laugh actually, seriously? - we're on our phones cause our mates are, and cause we feel pressure to know what's going on, and because they are ADDICTIVE and we get stuck into doom scrolling. They might be fun, but it's really hard to put it down, and especially when everyone else is addicted to.

I only wanted Whatsapp, not the other apps, when I was 15. I've never liked seeing everyone staring at phones, but my mates pressured me to get Snap and Insta. When I told a friend that I didn't want insta because looking at everyones pictures gave me FOMO and made me anxious, he said those feelings are totally normal and all kids feel that like that. It is true that we do. Do adults think that is ok?

My mates made a pact to ignore me on WhatsApp so that I had to join one of the more addictive apps if I wanted to get replies. I think the idea that people are in the room but aren't really because they're thinking about their phones and constantly checking them is pretty depressing - and it's an impossible cycle to break without intervention because the kids don't want to put their phones down because everyone else is on their phones so they'd just be sat there in silence while everyone is mindlessly entertained by Instagram brainrotting shite.

Online safety training, and handing out pamphlets, is a joke. We know the rules but that doesn't stop anything. We know phones are designed by silicon valley millionaires who know how to mess with our brains - and even though we know this, we still don't really put them down, but isn't this the point?

It would be amazing to go through school and know that when I get on the bus, kids will be talking to each other, messing about, having fun. Right now, my school bus is silent,

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because I'm on my phone, and everyone else is too. At school, we can get our phones out at break time.

We're not being given a choice, we didn't ask to be part of this and I was surprised to hear the Minister acting like everything was under control. Haha ! I've just done 5 years of secondary school and I can tell you, the adults don't have a clue!

I think you should give childhood back to kids- many kids will complain, for a bit - but isn't that the point of you being an adult? You're supposed to choose what is best for kids. I bet if you asked kids anonymously, they would choose to have a life with less phones - but everyone would need to have the same, it's rubbish being the only one. Don't ask them in front of their mates though - it's hard to speak up.

I'm sending this anonymously through a local charity because they have told me how to speak up and also because I don't want my name to be printed because that would be embarrassing.

16 year old, *[Parish redacted]*, Jersey

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