

Teen cell phone use tied to unhappiness

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A South Korean study says heavy cell phone use by teenagers could be a sign of their unhappiness and anxiety.

The study's findings, presented at the American Psychiatric Association's meeting in Toronto, was based on a survey of 575 South Korean high school students, reports The Los Angeles Times.

It found that the students who used their phones more than 90 times a day frequently did so because they were unhappy or bored.

These scored significantly higher on tests measuring depression and anxiety than students who used their phones a more sedate 70 times daily, the report said. The findings come at a time when the cell phone has become a vital part of the lifestyle of the young.

Dr. Jee Hyan Ha, lead author of the latest study, says heavy cell phone users in his report weren't clinically depressed, but were probably suffering from serious cases of teen angst. "They are trying to make themselves feel better by reaching out to others," he said.

Ha said while cell phone use in South Korea may be higher than in the United States, the findings would apply to U.S. teens as well.

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