

Project Summary

Our purpose is to create a digital story on technology and human connection finding a balance in a digital world. Our topic is going back to the basics of pencil and paper in the classroom instead of using technology. Students use technology from the moment they wake up in the morning to using it all throughout the day in the classroom to being on their phone all night long. We chose this project because two years ago our school implemented Yondr pouches. These pouches lock our phones up during the school day. We saw many benefits with no cellphones allowed during the day. Our thoughts on removing other technology such as computers from the classroom would result in additional positive benefits for students which will help them find balance in a digital world.

This project connects to purpose number one to provide opportunities for personal development and preparation for adult life, purpose six to provide opportunities for making decisions and assuming responsibilities, and eight to promote Family and Consumer Sciences and related occupations. Careers in Family and Consumer Sciences that are related to this include human services and education and training. This relates to FCS standard 12.1.3 analyze current and emerging research about human growth and development, including but not limited to brain development research. 12.2.2 Analyze the influence of social, economic, and technological forces on individual growth and development. Lastly, 1.2.7 Analyze factors that contribute to maintaining safe and healthy school, work and community environments.

When researching our concern we used scholarly data bases to gather accurate data to support our reflective thinking in our audience and encourage them to take action steps for change. According to Jax (2024), "Studies suggest that writing by hand helps to improve memory". We learned that writing with pencil and paper triggers parts of the students' brain,

which improves recollection and learning. Research supports that students who take notes by hand are more likely to remember what they've written compared to those who type their notes. Another concern when using technology in the classroom is AI. Carolyn Jones (2025) states, "Teachers say that AI can make cheating easier and harder to monitor to the point that some teachers have returned to pencil-and-paper work to improve academic honesty." By having students use pencil and paper for assignments and tests, students are required to use their own knowledge. It encourages students to study and retain information that they have learned during lessons. While cheating is still an option with paper and pencil, it takes way more time and effort to cheat and is more difficult than simply copying and pasting from AI. Finally, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2025) states that, "Teenagers with higher schoolwork or non-schoolwork screen use were more likely to experience a series of adverse health outcomes, including infrequent physical activity, infrequent strength training, having an irregular sleep routine, weight concerns, depression and anxiety symptoms, infrequent social and emotional support, and insufficient peer support." Decreasing screen time in schools and switching to pencil and pencil is an important step towards emotional well-being by improving students focus, lowering stress, and leading to better sleep by lessening their digital light exposure.

Our goal is to educate our school and community on the negative effects of technology and the positive aspects of using paper and pencil in the classroom. Our three action steps include incorporating more hands-on activities that do not rely on screens to engage students, creating assignments that favor handwriting like journaling, writing and problem solving, and educating our viewers on the benefits of writing by hand to encourage them to choose paper and pencil over technology. These three action steps can help create a balanced learning environment in a digital world.

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