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CHILDREN AND COMPUTERS USE: SOCIAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ACADEMIC CONSEQUENCES

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Numerous surveys have attempted to measure how frequently children use the computer at home. Few studies and inconsistent findings render uncertain whether using the computer has any influence on children's social outcomes. The only available review of this research concluded that there is no evidence that computer use is directly related to any psychological outcomes. Although benefits of computer use have been observed, they typically depend on a variety of factors (e.g., subject matter). The only cognitive outcome for which benefits have been consistently observed is visual-spatial skills. Computer gaming contributes to visual-spatial skills, at least when these skills are assessed immediately following the computer activity.

Objective: The need for information about the effects of computers on their users also increases. The purpose of this study is to investigate how computers are used by children and adolescents. The second goal is to explore the beneficial and harmful effects of computers use on children's mental and physical health.

Methodology: The studied group of samples comprised 69 subjects, aged between 13 and 18 years, who answered to a questionnaire. The parents of children answered to another questionnaire with the same subject.

Results and conclusions: The results were obtained about computers use and identification of pathological use. Some children spend much time on computers, 4% more than five hours/day. 41% of the parents believe that the usage of computers is favorable to developmental children's mental and physical health and 49% of the parents don't believe that. We find approximately 3.5% of cases with pathological use.