

Sección tres: Experiencias, reseñas, debates e informes

Deporte como herramienta igualitaria y de fomento de derechos humanos. Análisis sociológico del deporte

Book review. Silent Voices: The Mental Health of Adolescents in the Decade of Change¹

Aida Fernández López
Secondary English Teacher
78aidafl@yahoo.com

Book review. *Silent Voices: The Mental Health of Adolescents in the Decade of Change*. Spain: Alberdania. Telmo Lazkano and Maitane Ormazabal (2023).

Alberdania publishing house, known for its commitment to literature and thinking, has surprised us by publishing this book based on research, a book which it considers of essential service for our society.

In this book, Telmo Lazkano, Social Networks and Screens educator, and Maitane Ormazabal, Therapeutic Coach, give us an analysis of the reality that adolescents are living today, delving into the different elements of change in our society, highlighting the role that our social environment plays in our individual development and exposing the causes for the many psychological disorders that plague our young today. All of this is done in a style that is easily comprehensible to the public.

The book is available in Basque and in Spanish. It is divided into two sections: in the first section, the authors tell of the devastating realities surrounding our relationships with screens and their effects on us, especially on teenagers. In the second section, they give specific guidelines for dealing with the imbalance created by the surge in technology and our inability to keep up with it.

Lazkano and Ormazabal uncover the reality behind social networks, revealing their darkest interests. They warn that the premature and inappropriate use of mobile phones is taking its toll on society, especially on teenagers, who are most vulnerable to their artifices. Contrary

¹ Recibido: 15/01/2024 Evaluado: 20/01/2024 Aceptado: 13/03/2024

to what we may think, smartphones are not serving us to improve communication. Instead, they are making us more isolated. Many children today are using social networks to fill an emotional gap in their lives. But, the misuse of these networks is having a numbing effect on their emotions, as well as making them very vulnerable to addiction, isolation, cyberbullying and others, at an age when they are developing their identity and personality.

The authors of *Silent Voices* present a detailed examination of how apps and social networks work and how they are designed to create and sustain addiction. Drawing on data from a number of studies, examples and testimonials, this book provides an understanding of the dangers that applications and social networks pose to individuals, especially to adolescents. These dangers include: the acquisition of values that may be different from those that their parents intend to give them, uncivil behaviour and the possibility of finding themselves in extreme situations, putting their bodies (or even their lives) at risk.

Lazkano and Ormazabal also reveal the unquestionable correlation between the inappropriate and premature use of new technologies and the increase in mental health problems. While the companies that design social networks and other applications make business out of our screen addiction, we as a society are left to suffer the consequences, at the same time as we leave our young unprotected and subject to having their emotional needs, academic performance and their health compromised.

Fortunately, there is a silver lining in *Silent Voices*, as the authors give practical advice that we can carry out at home (and at school) as parents, companions or educators of our youngsters. These guidelines will help us to make a wiser use of mobiles and apps and to help our teenagers to also use them more cautiously. As we do this, we will be helping them create good habits on this all-important stage in their lives.