**Is Technology Making Kids Less “Social”?- from an Online article written by Tejas Shah**

I came across this post on my Facebook newsfeed, and I thought it was very interesting and true, at least for me:

"My curfew was the street lights. My Mom called my name, not my mobile. I played outside with friends, not online. If I didn’t eat what Mom cooked, then I didn’t eat. Sanitizer didn’t exist, but you could get your MOUTH washed out with soap. I rode a bike without a helmet, getting dirty was OK, and neighbors gave a damn as much as your parents did. Re-post if you drank water from a garden hose & survived!!”

This was certainly the case when growing up in India, not sure if it still is. While I was in middle school in India, the first thing I did after coming back from school was eat something real quick and run outside to play with my friends. Nothing could keep me indoors.

We had games for all kinds of weather. I thought I was the Sachin Tendulkar of my apartment complex. Kids from apartments across the street were our enemies and we spent many nights strategizing as to how to beat them to it Of course it never happened. While playing cricket, we got into an argument with elders whose daily routine was ruined by our high flying (Tendulkar like) sixers.

During Uttrayan, there were competitions about who captured the most kites. In summer, there were board games and marbles. This one time, we even opened a bank where kids could borrow marbles from us – it was imagination at work. All this was back then.

Today, kids don’t need anyone. They have their Nintendo DS, Xbox, Internet, a 200 channel cable, mobile phones and of course who can forget Facebook. I’m not saying if it’s for better or worse. Today’s kids have access to technology which is something that was unimaginable just a decade ago. Times have changed for sure. These kids are digital kids, for whom text messaging is same as talking to someone face to face. These are also the kids who have access to the world’s best libraries – any question can be answered within seconds.

However, what about social skills? Undoubtedly, technology has made it easier to stay in touch and connect with new people. But real business cannot be done on Facebook alone, can it? Will these technology savvy kids be able to read someone’s face and determine if they are trustworthy or not?

I’m curious to find out how today’s parents are developing their kids’ social skills in this age of gadgets.

Background: Tendulkar is a famous cricket player- he is considered to be one of the best, and his salary is around $2 million per year.

1. Have you seen or heard someone post the saying that the article is about? Have you ever heard someone say kids are different these days?
2. Do you agree? What ages do you think they are talking about when they say things like that? Are you included?
3. Knowing what you do about social and emotional development in ages 1-3, how do you think social norms have changed their development?
4. Look at the last word in the 4th paragraph. What do you think a sixer is?
5. Is lack of social skills a global problem? Why or why not?
6. The author says that kids have access to “the best libraries”. What does he mean? Do you think this is true?
7. If you could, would you change things back to how they were before (carefree, less technology, more-face-to-face communication), do you prefer the way things are now, or are you looking forward to more technological advances and new gadgets? Explain you answer THOROUGHLY.

Break down the last paragraph and answer his two questions:

1. However, what about social skills? Undoubtedly, technology has made it easier to stay in touch and connect with new people. But real business cannot be done on Facebook alone, can it?
2. Will these technology savvy kids be able to read someone’s face and determine if they are trustworthy or not?