AI and Tomorrow's Jobs

Junior Achievement™

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming the way we live and work, and American teens are no exception to this trend. The impact of AI on American teens is both positive and negative, with both opportunities and challenges arising from this technology.

One of the most significant positive impacts of AI on American teens is the increasing availability of educational resources. AI-powered learning tools and virtual assistants can provide personalized learning experiences, making education more engaging and effective. Additionally, AI can help identify students who may be struggling and provide targeted support to help them succeed.

On the other hand, AI can also pose challenges for American teens. One major concern is the potential for job displacement as AI automation replaces many routine jobs. This can lead to economic inequality and social unrest, particularly for those without the skills needed to work with or develop AI technology.

Another potential impact of AI on American teens is the growing concern over privacy and security. AI algorithms are becoming increasingly adept at collecting, analyzing, and using vast amounts of personal data, which can be used for targeted advertising or even surveillance. This raises concerns about the safety of personal information, particularly for teens who are more likely to share personal information online.

Furthermore, AI can also have an impact on mental health. For example, social media platforms that use AI algorithms to curate content can create filter bubbles, reinforcing existing biases and creating echo chambers. This can lead to feelings of isolation and can exacerbate mental health issues such as anxiety and depression.
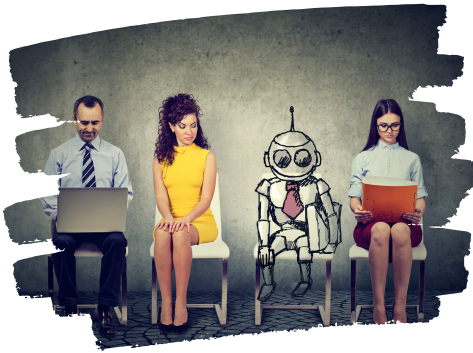
In conclusion, AI is transforming the world around us, including the lives of American teens. While there are opportunities for AI to improve education and provide new career paths, there are also concerns about job displacement, privacy, and mental health. It is essential for policymakers, educators, and parents to work together to ensure that the benefits of AI are maximized while minimizing its negative impacts on the next generation.

- Introduction Authored by ChatGPT AI

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The AI Revolution

As noted by the introduction, which was composed by an AI application, jobs featuring mid-level cognitive skills, such as composition, design, and even conceptualization, will soon be able to be done by Artificial Intelligence. The remarkable advancements in AI, represented by recent developments in platforms like ChatGPT, show that many jobs thought to be exclusively for people may be done in the near future predominantly by AI technology.

This possibility has not been missed by today's young people. A recent survey of 1,005 U.S. teens by Junior Achievement USA and Big Village shows that 66 percent of teens are concerned they will not be able to get a good job as adults due to competition from AI. Nearly a third, or 32 percent, were "Very" or "Extremely" concerned.

As the ChatGPT introduction noted, AI will invariably end up doing many jobs currently conducted by people. There may be a day when occupations such as editor, reporter, graphic designer, financial analyst, accountant, and even some medical and legal professions, are done primarily by AI with human oversight. The question is, what happens to those countless people whose jobs are displaced by this change?

Change as the Only Constant

This wouldn't be the first time technology has created a seachange in the way we work. In the late 1960s, advances in business technology, such as mainframe computers and photocopiers, eliminated typing pools. In the 1980s, personal computers resulted in productivity increases that reduced office headcounts. In the mid-1990s, the arrival of the Internet as a user-friendly tool and resource impacted the number of people employed by entire industries, such as travel and tourism agencies and brick-and-mortar retail. And in recent years, smart devices and social media have had a seismic effect on those working in the entertainment, news, and financial services industries, to name a few.

But while each one of these watershed moments in technological innovation resulted in numerous jobs going away, they also created entirely new career fields. In the 1960s, we saw the emergence of data entry professionals and administrative assistants. In the 1980s, IT helpdesks and computer programmers became commonplace. In the 1990s, web developers and cybersecurity experts grew emerged as well-compensated career fields. And since the introduction of smart devices and social media, we have seen an explosion in content developers, data scientists, cloud computing managers, and many similar well-paying professions.

What Comes Next?

The World Economic Forum (WEF), among other organizations, predicts AI will result in the elimination of millions of jobs in the coming years. However, WEF, and other thought leaders predict even more jobs will be created by advances in AI. Historically, this has been the trend with other technological advancements and one would assume this would be the case this time.

This is certainly how today's teenagers see it, according to the Junior Achievement USA/Big Village Survey. Despite their concerns about the impact of AI on future employment, 79 percent of teens believe they will find a good-paying and rewarding job as adults. Additionally, 71 percent think recent technological innovations are "a good thing," and 91 percent would be interested in courses in school that promote skills related to AI. Preparation through education will undoubtedly be one of the ways to respond to the growth in AI in the years to come.

Our Response

Junior Achievement (JA) delivers learning experiences to young people focused on three key areas; financial literacy, work and career readiness, and entrepreneurship. Under our work and career readiness pillar, JA is dedicated to helping students understand the connection between what they learn in school and life outside the classroom.

Given teens' interest in learning how to work with AI, Junior Achievement is seeking partners and collaborators to help develop learning experiences to benefit America's middle and high school students. According to research by Ipsos, JA alumni report having higher levels of career satisfaction and credit JA for helping them make informed decisions around education and careers. Organizations or individuals interested in working with JA can reach out to newmedia@ja.org.

Finally, in terms of JA's impact, ChatGPT states it best: "Junior Achievement is an effective program in teaching students about entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and work readiness. The program has been shown to have a positive impact on students' skills, confidence, and future success."

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