

How much brain-rot content are your children exposed to?



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Brain-rot is not quite what I thought it was. If you spend any amount of time around children, you have probably heard them utter bizarre terms like 'Trallalero Trallalla,' followed by a long string of nonsense.

You have also seen that three-legged shark with the sneakers on their screens. You are not wrong in assuming that everything they say sounds Italian. Those ridiculous characters are actually called 'Italian Brain-rot,' and the first among them is mere months old, having debuted early in 2025 when a content creator combined 'Trallallero Trallala' (a nursery rhyme) with an image of a shark wearing sneakers.

Since then, that genre of children's entertainment has gone viral. None of it makes sense.

This is not *Teletubbies*, which shows young viewers the importance of sharing, or *Sesame Street*, which can teach them to read and write. It is not even *Thomas the train engine*, which attempts to tell cogent stories with character arcs and a developing narrative.

Italian brain-rot is just noise and flashing lights, which is why experts have warned against it. They think brain-rot is a danger to children, linked with a reduction in attention span, decreased memory retention, and mental fatigue.

Brain-rot overloads the brain with shallow content, leaving no room for anything else. It can also increase stress and anxiety levels.

I thought the term 'Brain-rot' referred exclusively to those Italian cartoons children watch online. Why? Because children themselves call that content 'Brain-rot.'

Then I did some research and found that, not only is the definition of brain-rot broader than I realize, but the concept has been around for decades.

Brain-rot, as it turns out, refers to anything that exposes users to low-quality content. Chief amongst those prominent sources of low-quality content is social media. If you spend hours of your day scrolling through your feed on social media, you are more than likely consuming brain-rot.

Not all social media content counts as brain-rot. That

term specifically applies to unchallenging online content.

In other words, many parents have spent the last few months raising the alarm about the amount of brain-rot their children consume. And yet, they are just as susceptible to the same content.

In fact, many parents were consuming brain-rot before their children were born. The negative side effects of brain rot in adults are no different from what you see in children. They tend to manifest the same cognitive decline.

Admittedly, this field is relatively young, and you will be hard-pressed to find any scientific studies that can provide tangible data showing the negative impact of brain-rot in children and adults. But scholars are fairly certain that time will justify their assumptions.

The coming decades will show us the fruits of this brain-rot populations are consuming today.

Then again, part of me wonders whether we are blowing this phenomenon out of proportion. I came across a BBC article which blew my mind. Apparently, the term 'Brain-rot' originates from a 1854 book called *Walden*. It is not even remotely as recent as I assumed.

Henry David Thoreau (the author) said: 'While England endeavors to cure the potato rot, will not any endeavor to cure the brain-rot?'

Thoreau felt like society was moving backwards by prioritizing simple ideas over their more complex and intellectual counterparts. I doubt the masses paid any attention to Thoreau. And yet, society advanced all the same, producing the sort of art and culture that Thoreau could not have predicted.

What does that mean? Obviously, you should limit the amount of brain-rot your child consumes. That said, I don't think brain-rot is nearly as dangerous as people assume. I would describe it as a speed bump on the road of life.

Society will adjust to the phenomenon.