

WEB 'MAKES US MORE SOCIAL'

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THE received wisdom may be that it makes you reclusive and isolated, but the internet can actually make us more social, research suggests.

We are brought closer together as it is easier to 'maintain contact' online and make plans to meet in the real world, according to a paper by three influential economists.

They found that once adults had access to broadband, their attendance at theatres, cinemas, bars or restaurants increased. Broadband access at home also increased children's out-of-school activities.

They write: 'At least in some areas of social engagement, the main function of the internet seems one of active information and communication.'

The study by Stefan Bauernschuster, Oliver Falck and Ludger Woessmann will be presented at a gathering of Nobel prize-winners this month.

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