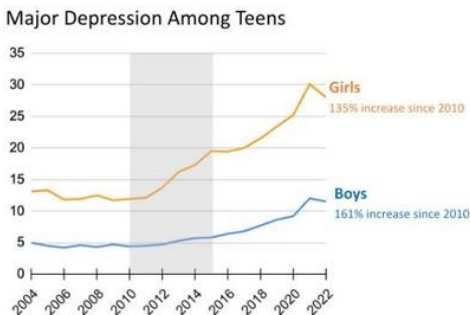


Vol. 3 Principal's Acorn Ally- Together Nurturing Acorns Into Mighty Oaks

Chapter 1: The Anxious Generation, Jonathan Haidt

The Surge of Suffering

In Chapter 1, Haidt examines the transition from play-based childhoods to phone-based childhoods. He investigates the emergence of a mental health crisis among adolescents in the 2010s, with a guiding question: "Why did rates of mental illness go up in so many countries between 2010 and 2015 for Gen Z (and some late millennials), while older generations were much less affected?"



SOURCE: U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Figure S1.1.1 Percent of U.S. teens (ages 12-17) who had at least one major depressive episode in the past year (by self-report based on a symptom checklist). Data from U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health. This was Figure 7.1 in *The Coddling of the American Mind*, now updated with data beyond 2016. [Zach's Spreadsheet]. See more on U.S. mental health trends in [Adolescent Mood Disorders Since 2010: A Collaborative Review](#).

According to Haidt's research the rise of video games, social media, and smartphones are key factors contributing to this trend. He notes that girls tend to be more impacted by social media, while boys are more affected by video game addiction. He provides examples of families observing changes in their children's behavior, such as anger, depression, and laziness. For one family of a preteen boy, this was evident after increased engagement with games like Fortnite. Similarly, the parents of a female teen struggled to curb their daughter's reliance on social media, leading to major family conflicts and feelings of losing their child.

There is evidence to support that the shift from basic phones with no internet in the 1990s to the prevalence of smartphones with 24/7 access to the internet by 2016 correlates to the increase in our youths' decline in mental wellness. In 2016, 79% of teens and 28% of children aged 8-12 owned a smartphone. This transition has profoundly impacted social

patterns, role models, emotions, physical activity, and even sleep patterns. One example why the smartphone is being associated with this is its ability to take selfies coupled with instant access to social media. This has led to an increase in girls' self-monitoring and constant comparison to others, impacting their self-worth. Conversely, boys have been affected by addictions to multiplayer video games, YouTube, Reddit, and readily available pornography, which occupies their time rather than physical world interactions.



This chapter is loaded with information on childhood anxiety and depression, and summarizing it has been quite a task. In a nutshell, if you have a child who is showing signs of anxiety, withdrawal, lack of connectedness to others, inability to maintain friendships, struggles to see other's perspectives and they are very attached to their technology, this book is for you. I have added a few more resources below.

In the words of Maya Angelou,

“Do the best you can until you know better. Then, when you know better, do better.”

Resources:

Here you can find multiple strategies for parenting and great information on the topic

<https://www.anxiousgeneration.com/>

Here you will find information and ideas

<https://www.waituntil8th.org/>

Let Grow

<https://letgrow.org/program/parents-and-families/>

If you would like to join me in studying this topic, you can purchase the book on Amazon and Audible (I have both)

Warm Regards,
Mrs. Christierson