

Vol. 5 Principal's Acorn Ally- Together Nurturing Acorns Into Mighty Oaks

Self-Reported Disabilities, College Freshmen

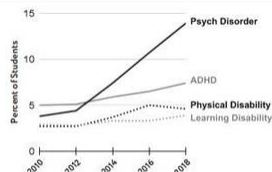


Figure 3.2. Percentage of U.S. college freshmen reporting various kinds of disabilities and disorders. (Source: Annual Freshman Survey, by UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute.)

Chapter 3: The Anxious Generation, Jonathan Haidt

Part 2: The Decline of Play-Based Childhood

Chapter 3: Discover Mode and The Need For Risky Play

Recent cultural and societal changes have contributed to a rise in anxiety among younger generations. Researchers have introduced the concept of *antifragility* to help us understand how children grow stronger and more resilient when they are exposed to manageable challenges and discomfort. Much like how muscles grow stronger after stress or the immune system builds defenses through exposure to pathogens, children develop essential life skills through opportunities to navigate setbacks and solve problems.

In recent decades, however, there has been a cultural shift toward prioritizing safety and avoiding discomfort—a trend sometimes referred to as *safetyism*. This shift is often paired with parenting styles that involve constant oversight or intervention, sometimes called "helicopter parenting." These well-meaning efforts often stem from a desire to protect children but can unintentionally limit opportunities for growth and resilience. For example, the decline of unstructured and unsupervised play has reduced chances for children to engage in problem-solving, navigate social dynamics, and develop independence.

This overprotection may leave children less equipped to manage life's challenges, contributing to the rise in anxiety and other mental health challenges. By shielding children from manageable risks, they may come to view the world as a more threatening place and themselves as less capable of overcoming adversity.

As educators and families, we share a commitment to helping children build resilience. We can work together to create environments that encourage independence, embrace learning from mistakes, and provide appropriate levels

of challenge. These experiences are essential for equipping our children with the confidence and skills they'll need to thrive.

Together, we can nurture a generation that is ready to meet life's challenges with strength and optimism.



Resources:

You can find multiple strategies for parenting and great information on the topic [**https://www.anxiousgeneration.com/**](https://www.anxiousgeneration.com/)

You will find information and ideas [**https://www.waituntil8th.org/**](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