



Raising children in the age of screens: Facing the challenge together

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THE SHEFA CENTER

THE WEXNER FOUNDATION

THE SHEFA SCHOOL

The Shefa School is a Jewish community day school that offers students with **language-based learning disabilities** a place to grow, thrive, and reach their full potential.



THE SHEFA SCHOOL

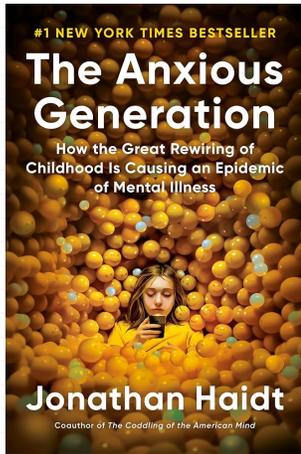
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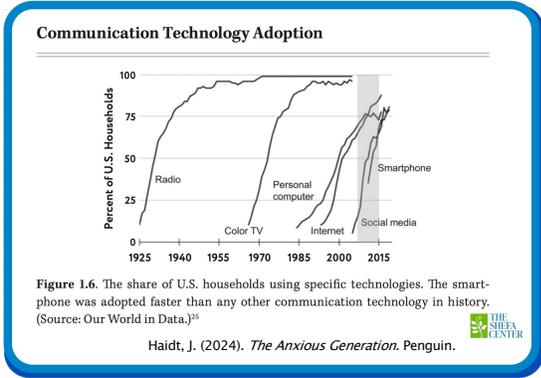
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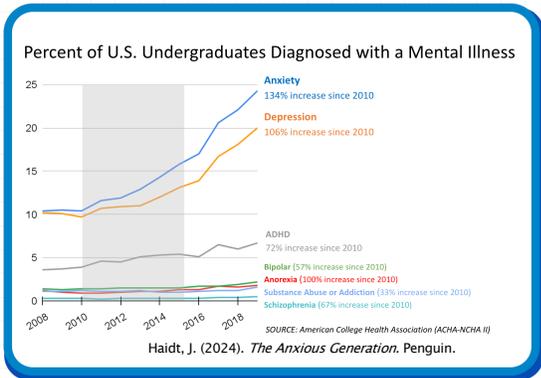
The Shefa Center strengthens and elevates the field of Jewish education by partnering with educators, leaders and parents to expand their capacity to educate diverse learners.

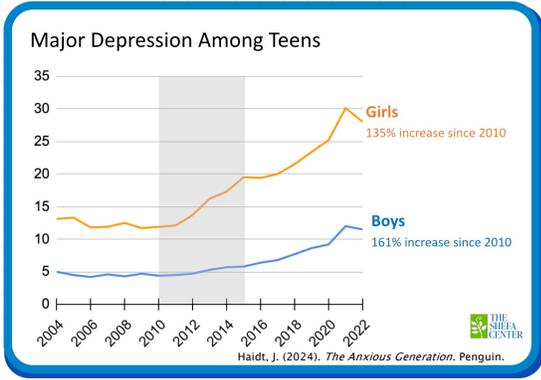


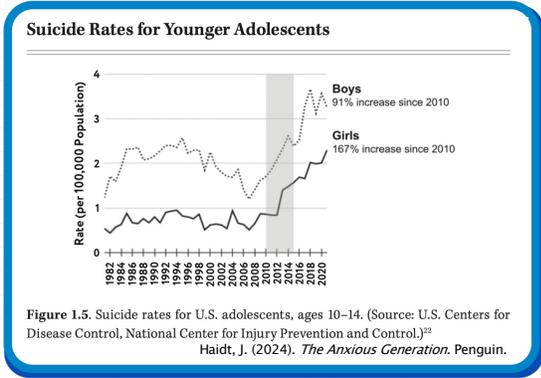
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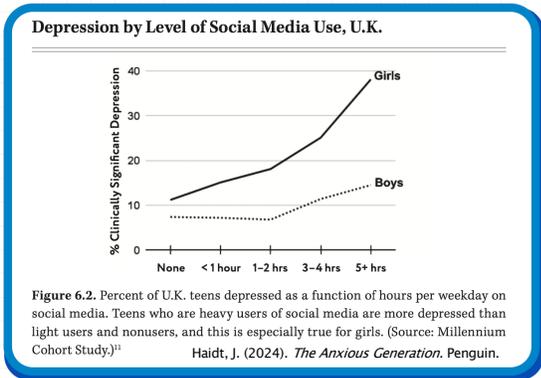












SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media use increases:

- Social comparison
- FOMO
- Low self-esteem
- Body dissatisfaction
- Disordered eating
- Suicidal thoughts & actions

Satisfied with Oneself

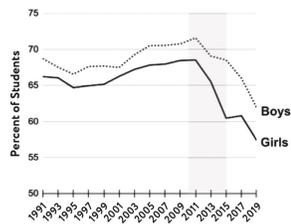


Figure 6.5. The sociometer plunge of 2012. Percent of U.S. students (8th, 10th, and 12th grade) who said they were satisfied with themselves. (Source: Monitoring the Future.)

Haidt, J. (2024). *The Anxious Generation*. Penguin.

Life Often Feels Meaningless

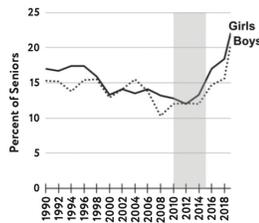


Figure 7.6. Percent of U.S. high school seniors who agreed or mostly agreed with the statement "Life often feels meaningless." (Source: Monitoring the Future.)

Haidt, J. (2024). *The Anxious Generation*. Penguin.

HOW DOES SCREEN USE AFFECT KIDS?

- 1. Emotion Regulation
- 2. Attention & Executive Functioning
- 3. Language Development
- 4. Social Development
- 5. Addictive/Unhealthy Content



1. EMOTION REGULATION

Anxiety → Exposure
 Depression → Behavioral Activation

With screens, we can...

- Escape from our emotions
- Avoid things that are hard
- Keep our bodies still
- Socially isolate



1. EMOTION REGULATION

- “Comfort Addiction”
- “Affluenza”
- Kids need practice to:
 - Tolerate discomfort rather than escaping
 - Practice independence rather than demanding accommodation
- SPACE: Stop accommodating
 - “I see that you’re really anxious about _____ AND I know you can get through it.”





2. ATTENTION & EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING



WHAT DOES ADHD LOOK LIKE?

HARD TO SUSTAIN
ATTENTION

AND

HYPERFOCUSED



WHAT DOES ADHD LOOK LIKE?

EXECUTIVE DYSFUNCTION



Study Guide for the Exam in Hebrew
On January 22 we will have an exam in Hebrew to summarize all we learned in the first book.

The Book "Shema 2" - Vocabulary Words pages 17, 21, 24, 36, 38, 37
Back to Review pages 39, 43, 54

Additionally, the test we took last week is attached, along with a QR for Quizer for students to practice vocabulary.

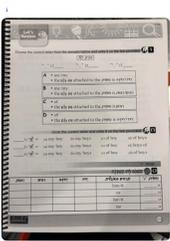
Quizer 1
Quizer 2

For any questions, we are here for you.

Does anyone know what they are supposed to study? Some pages listed don't have vocabulary words and what do they have to know about the stories?

7:43 AM

Does anyone have the Chumash homework sheet?
5:26 PM



Yair says don't need to do the top part, just Chet and tet
5:45 PM

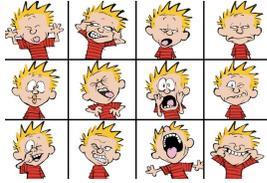
WHAT DOES ADHD LOOK LIKE?

HARD TO DELAY GRATIFICATION

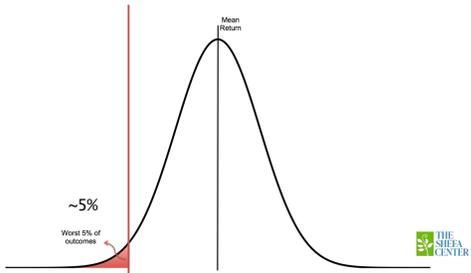


WHAT DOES ADHD LOOK LIKE?

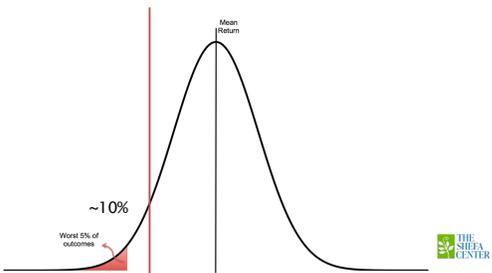
DIFFICULTY
REGULATING
EMOTIONS,
MOTIVATION &
AROUSAL



WHY DOES ADHD SEEM SO PERVASIVE?



WHY DOES ADHD SEEM SO PERVASIVE?



HOW DOES SCREEN USE AFFECT KIDS?

1. Emotion Regulation
2. Attention & Executive Functioning
3. Language Development
4. Social Development



Daily Time with Friends, by Age Group

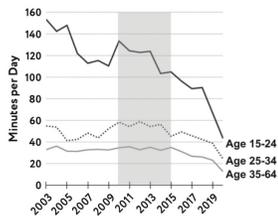


Figure 5.1. Daily average time spent with friends in minutes. Only the youngest age group shows a sharp drop before the 2020 data collection, which was performed after COVID restrictions had begun. (Source: American Time Use Study.)¹⁸
Haidt, J. (2024). *The Anxious Generation*. Penguin.

Often Feel Lonely

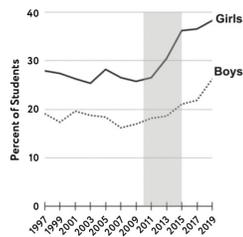


Figure 6.7. Percent of U.S. students (8th, 10th, and 12th grade) who agreed or mostly agreed with the statement "A lot of times I feel lonely." (Source: Monitoring the Future.)
Haidt, J. (2024). *The Anxious Generation*. Penguin.



5. Addictive/Unhealthy Content



Gaming



FANDUEL
SPORTSBOOK

Gambling



Pornography

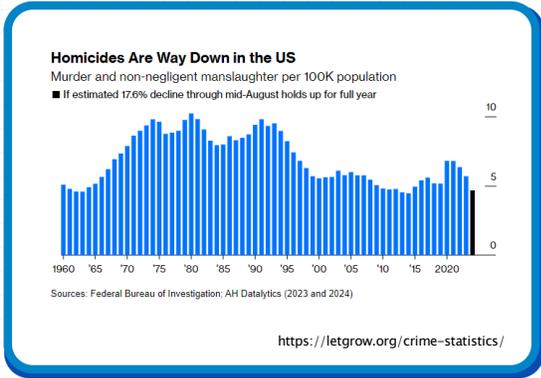


WHAT ABOUT SAFETY?

"We overprotect in the real world and underprotect in the virtual world."

- Jonathan Haidt (2024)





WHAT DO TEENS SAY?

- "My parents tell me phones are bad, but they still use them all the time."
- "My mom is always on Instagram and doesn't pay attention to us. I try to talk to them, and they don't hear me."
- "My dad says he'll drive me to my friend's house, but he's on his phone for 20 minutes."
- "I know it's for work, but they're constantly on their phones."
- "No matter what I do, they're constantly taking pictures of me. It's so annoying."
- "I get scared when my parents text or scroll while they are driving."
- "They put a password on Screen Time, but I know it so I can disable it."

WHAT DO TEENS SAY?

- "I don't like that I never get a break from social pressures."
- "I saw something inappropriate, but I didn't tell anyone."
- "They tell me to get off my phone at 10:00pm, but then I looked at the clock, and it was 1:00am."
- "I hate when I have 500 notification when I wake up in the morning."
- "Stop figuring out the best angle for the selfie and go down the mountain!"
- "When I have lunch with my friends, we're all on our phones."
- "I don't need my phone at camp because everyone I want to talk to is right there."
- "I love Shabbat because my siblings and cousins play with me."

HOW DO WE DO THIS IN REAL LIFE?

- Accept that tech is here to stay
- Acknowledge the good
 - It's fun!
 - Efficient
 - Communication and connections
 - Assistive tech: talk to text, spell check, keyboarding
 - Learning tools
 - Safety
- Be realistic about the pros and cons
- Moderation/balance - not all or nothing



HOW DO WE DO THIS IN REAL LIFE?

Talk to and learn from our kids – keep the lines of communication open!



HOW DO WE DO THIS IN REAL LIFE?

Stay true to your family's values – even if not everyone is doing the same thing.



HOW DO WE DO THIS IN REAL LIFE?

Parents and teachers need to address our own tech addiction – We are the models!



HOW DO WE DO THIS IN REAL LIFE?

Stop using screens as babysitters and pacifiers



HOW DO WE DO THIS IN REAL LIFE?

Boredom is painful – and productive!



HOW DO WE DO THIS IN REAL LIFE?

Consider a *spectrum* of harm



HOW DO WE DO THIS IN REAL LIFE?

o Increase other activities to reduce screen time AND reduce access to screens to make space for other things

- o Social
- o Active
- o Outdoor



- o Organized (structured) AND child-directed (unstructured)
- o Risky (see *Free Range Kids*)
- o Independence & responsibility (see letgrow.org)
- o Boredom
- o Spiritual (awe-inspiring)



HOW DO WE DO THIS IN REAL LIFE?

- o Use parental controls and filters
- o Turn off notifications
- o Limit the number of screens available
- o Choose your child's device carefully
 - o Light Phone
 - o Wise Phone
 - o Bot Talk
- o Plan for when your child is out without a phone



HOW DO WE DO THIS IN REAL LIFE?

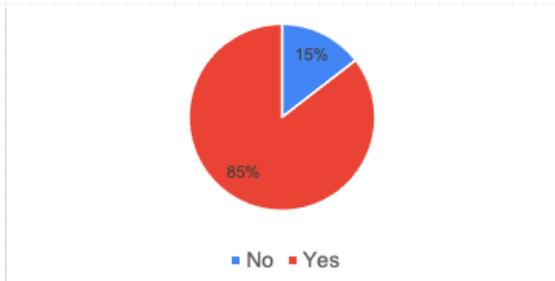
- Family Acceptable Use Policy (AUP):
- Devices owned by parents, not kids
 - Devices stay in public areas
 - No phones at dinner/evening time (phone pile/basket)
 - Limit screen time (up to 30-60 min per day)
 - Exceptions: HW, FaceTime
 - Tech bedtime & charging outside room
 - Use parental controls and monitor (transparently)
 - Do not use it when talking to someone or in public
 - Be kind online (including group chats)
 - Open communication
- Enforce your limits!**



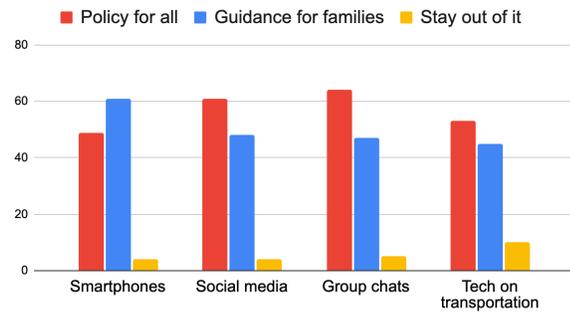
WHAT DO PARENTS SAY?

Shefa Parent Survey

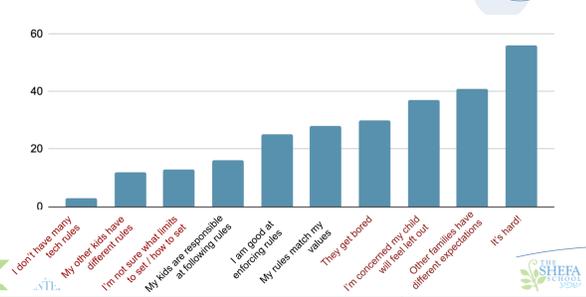
Would you give your child a smartphone later if everyone else did?



How involved would you like Shefa to be?



What's getting in the way of enforcing your tech rules?



HOW DO WE DO THIS TOGETHER?

Collective Action:

- Phone-free schools
 - Use ed tech thoughtfully
- No group chats until (at least) middle school
- Group chats are monitored & end at X time
- No smartphones until 9th grade
- No social media until 16 years old
- Screen-free playdates and sleepovers
- No smartphones at bar/bat mitzvah parties
- Facilitate IRL social time & outside independence



HOW DO WE DO THIS TOGETHER?

Change our emotions about screens



HOW DO WE DO THIS TOGETHER?

Culture change is slow and winding until a tipping point



IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Models of success

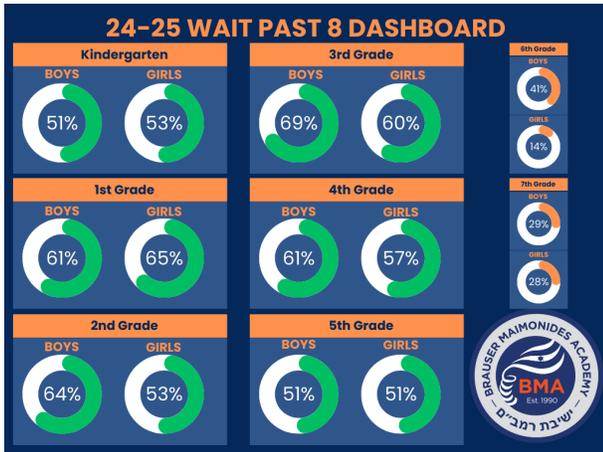


Shabbat



Camp





HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

- o *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt
- o anxiousgeneration.com & afterbabel.com
- o technosapiens.substack.com
- o commonsensemedia.org
- o waituntil8th.org
- o *Free Range Kids* by Lenore Skenazy
- o letgrow.org
- o janellburleyhofmann.com (tech contracts)
- o Center for Humane Technology (humanetech.com)