



Teaching our Students **Resiliency**

Helping Our Children
Thrive in a Digital World



Charlene Gerbig
Josephine Hunt



"Resilient Rules: Norms for Nurturing"

Engage Fully: listen with attention; respond with intention

Monitor technology: please stay muted and use the chat

Pause and breathe

What is said here stays here;

What is learned here leaves here

Our professional learning journey



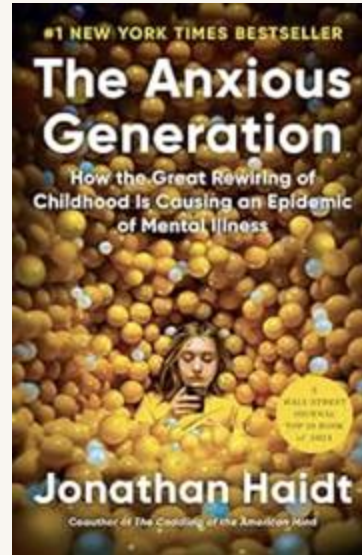
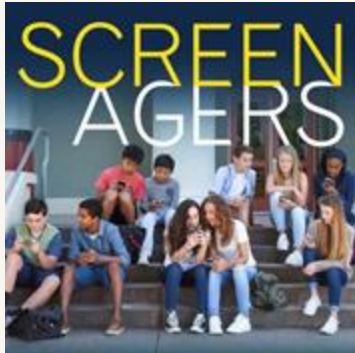
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Staying in the Know:

Latest Trends/Research in Education

Kathleen O'Flynn
Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Danielle DuGau
Superintendent, Old Tappan School District

October 7, 2024



Trending topics (fall 2024)

Behaviors

Cell Phones in
Schools

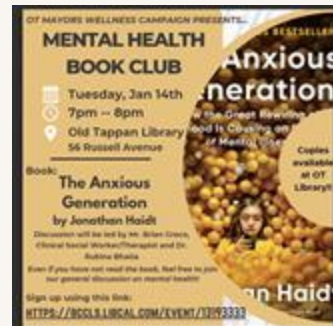
Generations



The Impact of Electronics on
Kids' Brains

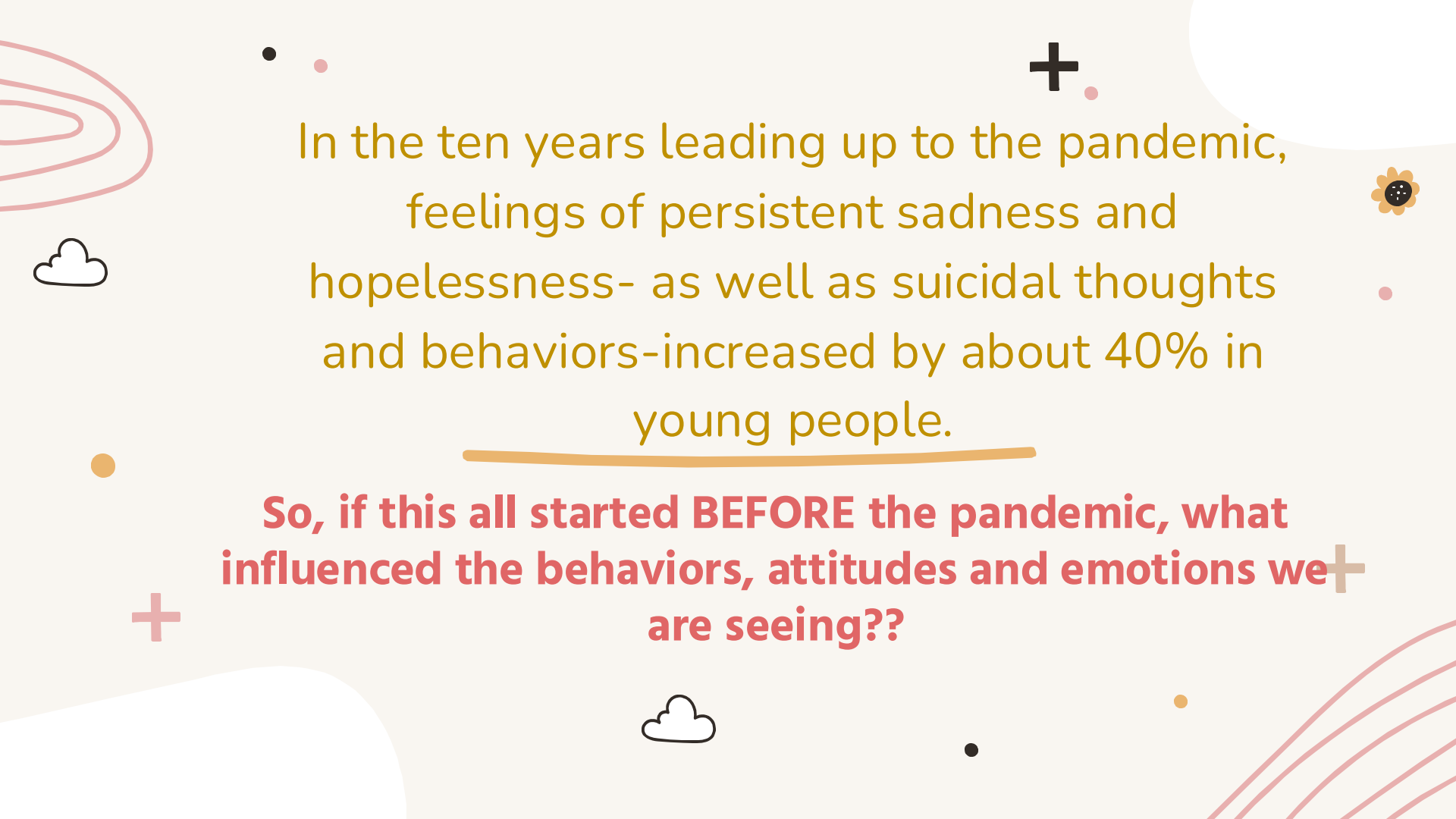
Technology's effect:
Social Emotional Family

Solutions



"SUPER TEACHERS;"
8 PRACTICES TO
IMPROVE WELLNESS.

John Comegno, Esq.
January, 2025



In the ten years leading up to the pandemic,
feelings of persistent sadness and
hopelessness- as well as suicidal thoughts
and behaviors-increased by about 40% in
young people.

**So, if this all started BEFORE the pandemic, what
influenced the behaviors, attitudes and emotions we
are seeing??**

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The decline of play based childhood +
the rise of phone based childhood =



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<https://youtu.be/EzzzeCny6oU?si=GrThCtMURFmZZMwX>

Understanding the Digital Impact

DIGITALLY DISTRACTED



- Average child spends 9 hours daily on screens
- "Heavy" users spend 13+ hours daily
- Social media use correlates with decreased life satisfaction
- Students spending 3+ hours daily on social media face double the risk of poor mental health
- 57% of middle school students get insufficient sleep

DIGITALLY DISTRACTED



The Social Media Effect

- Up to 95% of youth ages 13-17 use social media platforms
- Over 1/3 use social media "almost constantly"
- 64% are exposed to hate-based content
- Platforms use engagement maximizing features:
- Push notifications
- Autoplay
- Infinite scroll
- "Likes" and popularity metrics



Real World vs. Virtual World

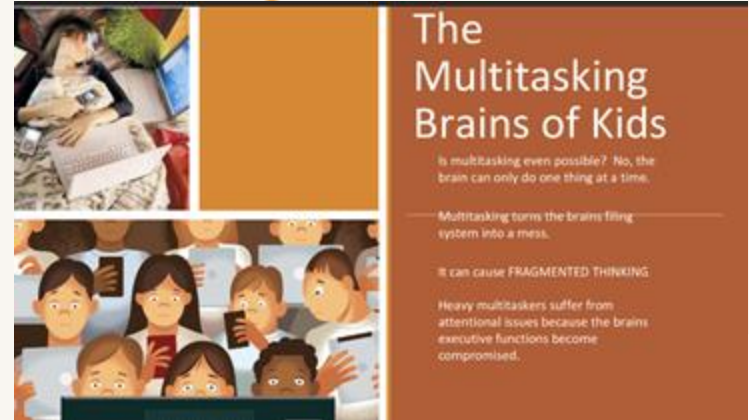
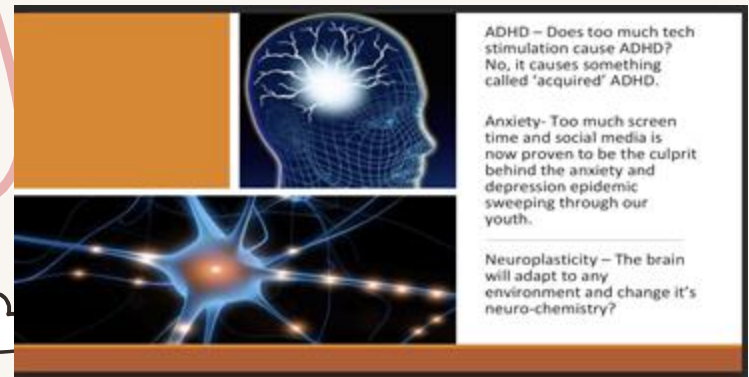
- Overprotection in real world
- Underprotection in virtual world
- Decreased face-to-face interaction
- Reduced physical activity
- Limited unstructured play time
- Diminished social skill development



https://youtu.be/cVbU__WyVGk?si=u8Aa9_rLZkjeMm9H

The Impact on learning

- Attention fragmentation
- Decreased reading comprehension
- Multitasking myths The Monkey Business Illusion
- Reduced academic performance
- Classroom disruption
- Decreased engagement
- Decrease in resiliency
- Decreased engagement



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGQmdoK_ZfY

The Signs of Struggle

- Changes in sleep patterns
- Withdrawal from activities
- Declining grades
- Emotional volatility
- Social isolation
- Loss of interest
- Changes in eating habits



What is resilience?



- Resilience is the ability to adapt to stress and adversity while maintaining psychological well-being.
- It's not an inborn trait, but a set of behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and developed.
- Resilient people “bounce back” from challenges and continue moving forward despite setbacks.
- Resilience involves flexibility, adaptability, and discovering inner strengths during difficult times.
- Like any skill, resilience improves with practice and experience.
- Some individuals may naturally possess resilience characteristics, but everyone can build it through intentional effort.





Building resilience

- Teach coping strategies
- Normalize failure
- Encourage risk-taking
- Celebrate effort
- Build problem-solving skills
- Support emotional regulation
- Lead with JOY





Creating screen-conscious classrooms

- Establish clear boundaries
- Implement phone-free zones
- Create tech-free times
- Encourage face-to-face interaction
- Model appropriate behavior
- Maintain consistent policies



Classroom strategies



- Create tech-free learning spaces
- Implement movement breaks
- Encourage peer interaction
- Use collaborative activities
- Build in reflection time
- Foster real-world connections





Supporting student independence in the classroom and at home

- Assign age-appropriate responsibilities
- Encourage problem-solving
- Allow natural consequences
- Support decision-making
- Foster leadership opportunities
- Build confidence through capability

“Never do for a child what they can do for themselves.”





Parent partnership

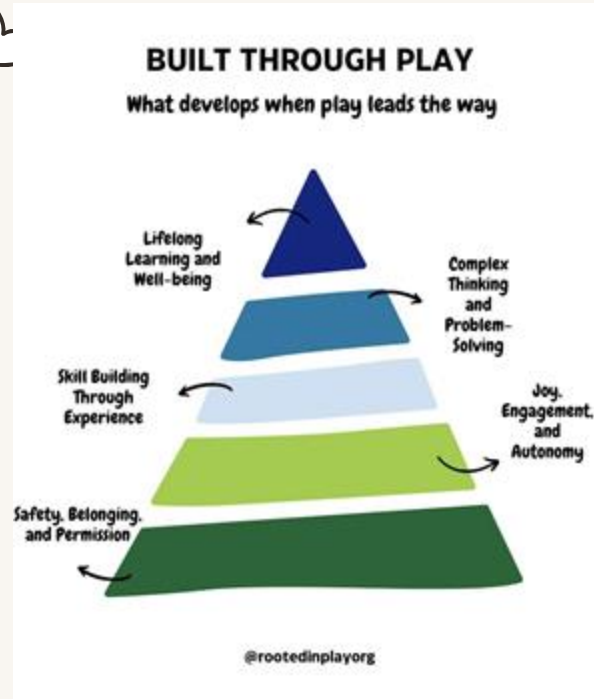
Brain Games Conformity Waiting Room

- Share research and resources
- Establish clear communication
- Create consistent expectations
- Provide support strategies
- Encourage tech-free family time
- Build community support

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X6kWyggROL8>



Play based childhood



What does play based learning look like?

Sensory Play

Imaginative Play

Building and Construction Play

Nature Play

Art and Music

Games and Activities

Cooking and Baking

Outdoor Play



When we embrace joy, we are better able to maintain mental and emotional strength even in the face of societal strife that is outside our sphere of control—and we can model emotional resilience and hope for our children and learners..



Sparking Joy in the Anxious Generation

A Guide for Educators

In a world where students are increasingly anxious, overstimulated, and digitally disconnected, intentionally creating joy in the classroom is essential. Joy is not a bonus—it's a pathway to engagement, resilience, and emotional safety.



Create Safe & Predictable Routines

- Use visual schedules, calm greetings, and consistent transitions
- Establish rituals that build trust and reduce anxiety



Lead with Authentic Joy

- Share what makes you excited
- Smile, laugh, and be present
- When you show joy, students feel safe to express theirs too



Celebrate the Little Things

- Start a compliment jar or kindness chain
- Try "Feel-Good Fridays" or "Shout-Out s'ircles"
- Acknowledge effort, kindness, and growth



Make Space for Joyful Rituals

- Morning greetings or check-ins
- Read-alouds just for fun
- Silly songs, class cheers, or mood meters
- Rituals turn routines into moments of meaning



Lead with Authentic Joy

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Reduce Screens, Increase Human Connection

- Board games, group storytelling, or drawing together
- Face-to-face collaboration time

"Joy doesn't simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day."

—Henri Nouwen

Bonus Challenge for Teachers. Try one Joy Practice a day for the next week.



What can you do NOW



Host a Screenagers screening for your school/town community



Start the Wait until 8th movement

Create a coalition like the Hills Valley Coalition: it takes a village to raise healthy children

Host a The Anxious Generation school/town reading group

Create a list of joy sparking opportunities for your family

Explore the BIG JOY project!

Take a moment to breathe and reflect!! You're doing a GREAT job!





Thanks for joining us!!

Let's keep in touch!



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Josephine Hunt



Thank You!

EnJOY your



Journey!

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