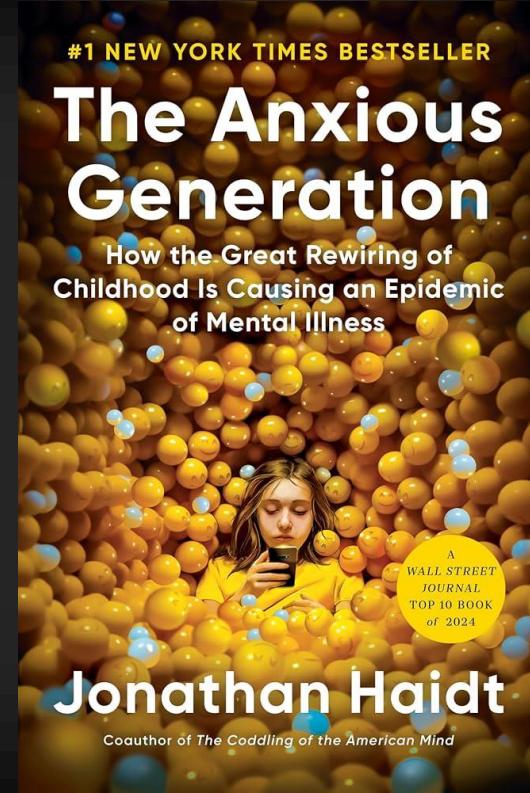


# *The Anxious Generation:* What Every Educator/ Parent Needs to Know



*Student Instructional Services  
Director:*  
Shelley Ruh



# What if..

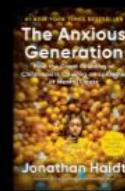
We could work together to support a healthier childhood in the digital age?

## Ingham ISD *Anxious Generation* Book Study

### Resources

- Anxious Generation Website
- CBS News Segment
- Author Talk
- Locally Published Book Review
- WSJ "10 Best Books of 2024"

**CLICK HERE  
TO REGISTER**



You'll want a copy of the book. It's available for purchase on Amazon and at your local bookstore. You could also check out your local library, Monona, or Library for a free copy.

what

October 28th 4pm-5pm	Part 1-Tidal Wave Part 2-The Backstory
January 13th 4pm-5pm	Part 3-The Great Rewiring
February 24th 4pm-5pm	Part 4-Collective Action for Healthier Childhood

why

Gain a deeper understanding of how the "Great Rewiring of Childhood" (the shift from play-based to phone-based childhood) may be contributing to the mental health crisis among young people and to explore strategies for creating healthier learning environments and fostering student well-being.

how

1. Register for the session and obtain a copy of the book.
2. Review the schedule and start reading.
3. As you read, make note of:
  - ! Anything that surprises you
  - ? Ideas you'd like to know more about
  - Passages that affirm prior knowledge
4. Meet **virtually** with Ingham area educators to discuss the text, consider implications for school communities, and plan next steps.

### Consider this...

- Between 2010 and 2015, in the wake of the smart phone's debut, depression became roughly two and a half times more prevalent for U.S. teens. (US National Survey on Drug Use and Health)
- Ingham County's rates of chronically absent students is higher than the state and national rates.
- Ingham County's rates of students reporting mental health problems, anxiety, and depression declined between grades 7 and 8. (Research Commission on Engagement and School Transformation, UK)

There is hope. At least 31 states and the District of Columbia require school districts to ban or restrict students' use of cellphones in schools. (Education Week)

**Let's work together to support a healthier childhood in the digital age.**

*While you  
watch...*

What do you  
**notice** and  
**wonder**?

How does this  
video **connect**  
with your  
**experience** as  
an educator  
and/ or parent?



# *Part 1 & 2*

Haidt explains:

- Between 2010-2015, the social lives of American teens moved online, triggering a tidal wave of adolescent mental illness.
- The mental health of both girls and boys have been affected, but somewhat differently.
- Roughly the same pattern is seen across the Western world, and there **does not** seem to be another theory to explain why.



# ***The Backstory: The Decline of the Play-Based Childhood***

- The human, slow-growth childhood is an apprenticeship for learning skills needed for success in our culture. Social media seems to be **hijacking adolescents' opportunities** to learn the cultures of their families and communities.
- **Free play** is essential for building essential skills.
- The human brain can go into discover mode or defend mode. Young people born after 1995 are more likely to be stuck in **defend mode**.
- Children are antifragile, and need **exposure to setbacks** to grow, which means they need some level of risk.
- Early puberty is a period of rapid brain rewiring, guided by the adolescent's experiences. We should be concerned about those experiences and not let **strangers and algorithms** choose them.
- Safetyism and smartphones are **experience blockers**.



# Video Reflection & Discussion



## Brain Dump (3 minutes)

Independent Written Reflection



## Group Discussion (10 minutes)

- ✓ Share your thoughts with a partner
- ✓ What problems do smartphones and social media **create**? What problems do they **solve**?

**Ingham ISD  
Anxious Generation  
Book Study**

**Resources**

- Anxious Generation Website
- Author's Website
- Author Talk
- Locally Published Book Review
- Book Club Discussion Guide

You'll want a copy of the book. It's available for purchase on Amazon and at your local bookstore. You could also check out your local library, Hoopla, or library for a free copy.

October 26th 4pm-5pm	Part 1-The Tide Wave
January 16th 4pm-5pm	Part 2-The Backstory
February 24th 4pm-5pm	Part 3-The Great Rewiring
March 24th 4pm-5pm	Part 4-Collective Action for Healthier Childhood

**what**

Gain a deeper understanding of how the "Great Rewiring of Childhood" (the shift from play-based to screen-based childhood) may be causing mental health issues among young people and to explore strategies for creating healthier learning environments and fostering student well-being.

**why**

1. Register for the session and obtain a copy of the book.
2. Review the schedule and start reading.
3. As you read... Anything that surprises you?  
? Ideas you'd like to know more about  
? Ideas you'd like to prevent  
? Ideas you'd like to share
4. Meet **virtually** with Ingham area educators to discuss the text, consider implications for school communities, and plan next steps.

**Consider this...**

- Between 2009 and 2015, in the wake of the Great Financial Crisis, depression became roughly two and a half times more prevalent for U.S. teens. (US National Survey on Drug Use and Health)
- A 2015 study identified a 25% drop in engagement during transition to secondary school. Trust, enjoyment, and safety are key to engagement. (National Research Commission on Engagement and Lead Indicators, UK)
- There is a law. At least 31 states and the District of Columbia require school districts to ban or restrict students' use of cellphones in schools. (Education Week)

Let's work together to support a healthier childhood in the digital age.



# *Book Study Connection Activities*

*As a small group, share key ideas you made note of as you read:*

- ! Ideas that surprise you
- ? Ideas you'd like to know more about
- Ideas that affirm prior knowledge

*Breakout  
Groups*

# Learning Opportunities

01

## Ingham ISD August Kick-Off County-Wide Book Study Partnership with districts

02

## County-Wide Book Study *62 participants*

**Ingham ISD  
Anxious Generation  
Book Study**

**CLICK HERE  
TO REGISTER**

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October 28th 4pm-5pm	Part 1-4: Tidal Wave Part 2-The Backstory
January 12th 4pm-5pm	Part 3-The Great Rewiring
February 24th 4pm-5pm	Part 4-Collective Action for Healthier Childhood

**what**

Gain a deeper understanding of how the "Great Rewiring of Childhood" (the shift from play-based to phone-based childhood) may be impacting our students' mental health and well-being, and to explore strategies for creating healthier learning environments and fostering student well-being.

**why**

1. Register for the session and obtain a copy of the book.
2. Review the schedule and start reading.
3. As you read, ask yourself:  
? Anything that surprises you  
? Ideas you'd like to know more about  
? Ideas you'd like to prevent or stop
4. Meet **virtually** with Ingham area educators to discuss the text, consider implications for school communities, and plan next steps.

**how**

**Consider this...**

- Between 2002 and 2017, in the week of the start of school, anxiety, depression, became roughly two and a half times more prevalent for U.S. teens. (US National Survey on Drug Use and Health)
- A 2020 study identified a 25% drop in engagement during transition to secondary school. Trust, enjoyment, and safety are key to engagement. (National Center for Education Statistics, US Department of Education)
- There is a bill in the Michigan House of Representatives that would require school districts to ban or restrict students' use of cellphones in schools. (Education Week)

Let's work together to support a healthier childhood in the digital age.



# State policies on restricting cellphones at-a-glance

Policy Enforcement Requirement	Number	States
Bell to bell	22	Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, District of Columbia, <b>Florida*</b> , Georgia*, Idaho, <b>Louisiana</b> , Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, <b>South Carolina</b> , Texas, Vermont, Virginia
Instructional time	8	Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Tennessee, <b>Utah</b>
Not specified	2	Minnesota, West Virginia
Policy not required	19	Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming

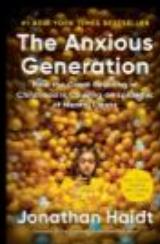
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**what**

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- A 2025 study identified a 25% drop in engagement during transition to secondary school. Trust, enjoyment, and safety declined between grades 7 and 8. (Research Commission on Engagement and Lead Indicators, UK)

There is hope: At least 31 states and the District of Columbia require school districts to ban or restrict students' use of cellphones in schools. (Education Week)

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# *Next Session*

- ✓ January 13, 2026, 4:00-5:00
- ✓ Prepare to discuss  
***Part 3: The Great Rewiring***

# *Thank You!*

*Thank you for your district leadership in  
advocating for our children!*

