



February 19, 2025

Welcome!



Agenda

- The Impact of Screen Time in Childhood
- Accessing Inappropriate Sites
- Unstructured Play
- Make a Plan

The Impact of Screen Time

“There is emerging evidence that there may be some structural brain changes associated with greater exposure to screen time as a young child,” says [Dr. Jennifer F. Cross](#).

A landmark National Institutes of Health (NIH) [study](#) that began in 2018, for example, **found that children who spent more than two hours a day on screen-time activities scored lower on language and thinking tests**, and **some children with more than seven hours a day of screen time experienced thinning of the brain’s cortex, the area of the brain related to critical thinking and reasoning.**

The Impact of Screen Time



“Children and adolescents spend a lot of time watching screens, including smartphones, tablets, gaming consoles, TVs, and computers. On average, children ages 8–12 in the United States spend 4–6 hours a day watching or using screens, and teens spend up to 9 hours. While screens can entertain, teach, and keep children occupied, too much use may lead to problems.”

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
May 2024

Screen Time: Ground-breaking look at the impact of screen time on kids' brains



Researchers in Ohio led a study looking at hundreds of children's brains since birth to examine the impact of screen time. NBC's Vicky Nguyen shares an inside look at the study and how parents can help reduce screen time for their kids.

The Impact of Screen Time



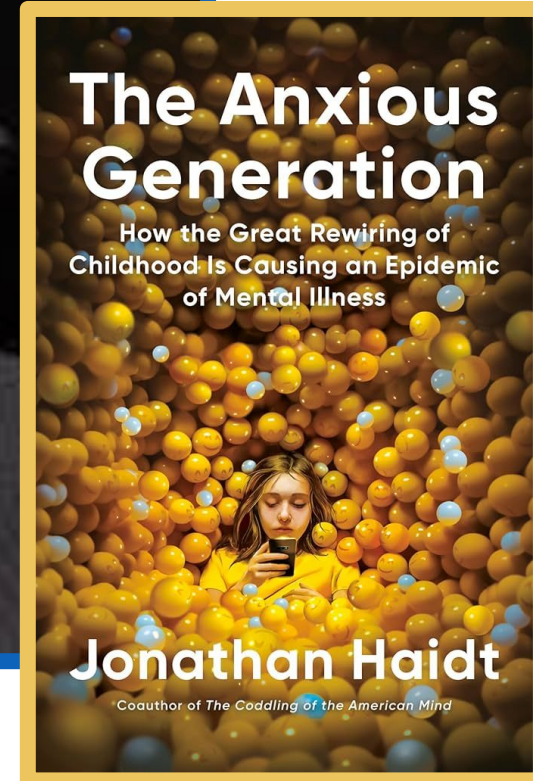
Source:

https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Watching-TV-054.aspx

Too much screen time may lead to:

- Sleep problems
- Anxiety
- Lower grades in school
- Reading fewer books
- Less time with family and friends
- Not enough outdoor or physical activity
- Weight problems
- Mood problems
- Poor self-image and body image issues
- Fear of missing out
- Less time learning other ways to relax and have fun

Creating a Collaborative Phone Policy for your kids.



Screen Time

It hits younger people more than older people, Gen Z harder than any other generation...

Percent U.S. Anxiety Prevalence

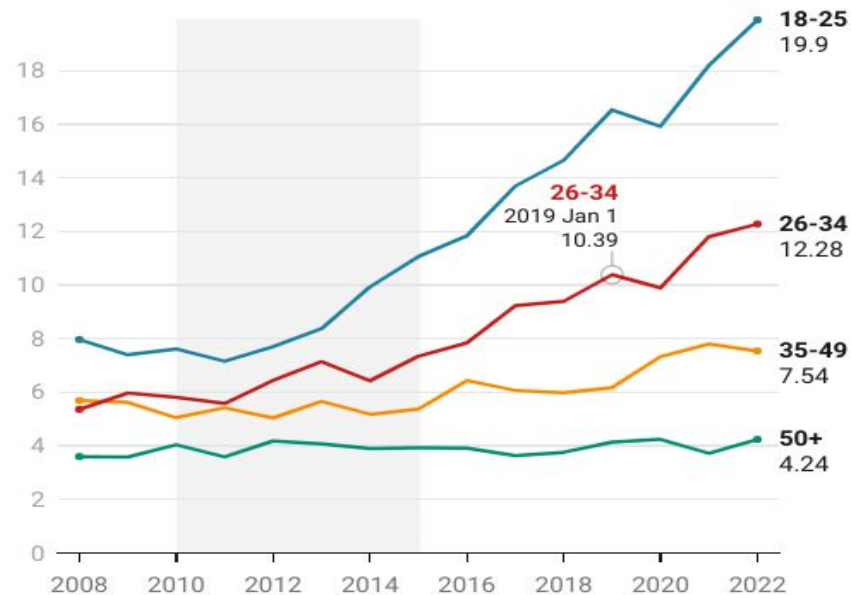


Chart: Zach Rausch • Source: [National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#) • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#) • [Download image](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)



The Anxious Generation

How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness

Jonathan Haidt

Coauthor of *The Coddling of the American Mind*

Screen Time

- **Establish clear guidelines:** Create a set of rules and expectations regarding screen time and communicate them to your child. This can include limits on the amount of time spent on devices and specific times when screen time is allowed.
- **Lead by example:** Children often mimic their parents' behavior, so it's important for parents to model healthy screen time habits. Limit your own screen time and engage in alternative activities to show your child the benefits of balance.

Screen Time

“We have **overprotected** children in the real world and **under-protected** them in the virtual world.”

—
JONATHAN HAIDT
THE ANXIOUS GENERATION

Turn and Talk

- Discuss with your table groups of how the latest research on screen time resonates with you.
- Do you notice any differences in your child's behavior when they are exposed to technology for longer periods of time?

Accessing Inappropriate Sites

Parents may not always know what their children are viewing, or how much time they are spending with screens. Children may be exposed to:

- Violence and risk-taking behaviors
- Videos of stunts or challenges that may inspire unsafe behavior
- Sexual content
- Negative stereotypes
- Substance use
- Cyberbullies and predators
- Advertising aimed at your child
- Misleading or inaccurate information

Accessing Inappropriate Sites

- <https://www.common sense media.org/>: rates movies, TV shows, podcasts, books, and more so families can feel good about the entertainment choices they make for their kids

Accessing Inappropriate Sites

- **Use parental control features:** Many devices and apps offer parental control features that allow parents to set limits on screen time, restrict access to certain content, and monitor usage. Take advantage of these tools to manage your child's screen time effectively.
- Set up a common space for device use.
- Keep devices out of the bedroom.

Accessing Inappropriate Sites

- **Put limits on access:**
 - PBS KIDS
 - DISNEY
 - Make YouTube and YouTube Kids OFF LIMITS
- **Be Accessible to Your Child for Questions:** Practice your Poker Face when they come to you with questions or tell you they accidentally visited an inappropriate site.
- **Use parental control features:** Many devices and apps offer parental control features that allow parents to set limits on screen time, restrict access to certain content, and monitor usage. Take advantage of these tools to manage your child's screen time effectively.

Accessing Inappropriate Sites

RIDE, PRACTICE, DRIVE,

- **RIDE:** Start with simple device with limited capability and sit with your child while the use it. With each new device, “ride along”.
- **PRACTICE:** Text with loved ones who will help you model appropriate texting
- **DRIVE:** Be prepared when your child “hits a curb”. Stay calm and let them know you appreciate them coming to you.

Turn and Talk

Scenarios: What Would You Do?

- Read your scenario aloud to your table group.
- Take turns discussing how you would respond to the situation.
 - Think about: has this happened to you, how did you respond, or if this were to happen, how would you react.

Alternative Activities

Setting screen time limits for children is essential for their overall well-being and development. According to the World Health Organization, excessive screen time can lead to a sedentary lifestyle, poor mental health, and decreased physical activity. ***With the increasing use of technology among children, it's crucial for parents to implement strategies to help their kids detach from excessive phone and computer use and engage in healthier activities.***

Alternative Activities



- Encourage outdoor play
- Have a weekly family game night
- Encourage social interactions
- **Have Other Activities on Hand** such as books, magazines, arts and crafts, board games, and puzzles
- **Encourage Hobbies and Interests:** Support your child in exploring and developing hobbies and interests that do not involve screens, such as music, art, gardening, or cooking. This can help them discover new passions.
- **Offer Educational and Enriching Activities** that can replace screen time, such as science experiments, and educational games.
- **Acknowledge and Praise Your Child** when they adhere to screen time limits and engage in alternative activities. Positive reinforcement can motivate them to continue making healthy choices.
- **Offer Rewards for Screen-free Time:** Consider implementing a reward system for your child when they spend a certain amount of time engaging in non-screen activities. This can provide motivation and positive reinforcement for healthy habits.
 - ***Create a Choice Board of these Activities so they have ownership!***

Alternative Activities: Encourage Outdoor Activities



- Enjoy the outdoors by exploring the 48 parks the *City of Cape Coral* has to offer:
https://www.capecoral.gov/departments/parks_and_recreationhome/index.php
 - Many of the parks have playgrounds, hiking trails, bike trails, water park, etc.
- Get involved with the many youth sports available through the city:
 - * [Biddy Basketball \(5-8 yrs\)](#)
 - * [Youth Basketball \(9-14 yrs\)](#)
 - * [High School Basketball \(15-18 yrs\)](#)
 - * [Youth Flag Football \(5-13 yrs\)](#)
 - * [Youth Volleyball \(9-17 yrs\)](#)
 - * [Youth Baseball \(4-13 yrs\)](#)
 - * [Erik Metzler Baseball \(16U\)](#)



Turn and Talk

Think back on your own childhood. What are your most thrilling memories? Could your child have a similar experience today? What did you get from “just playing” as a kid?



Family Expectations The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends:

Younger than 18 months:
Avoid screen use except for video chats with loved ones.

2–5 years: Limit screen time to one hour a day of high-quality, age-appropriate content.

6 and older: Balance screen use with reading, hobbies, and time with friends and family. Make sure it doesn't interfere with sleep, exercise, and other healthy behaviors.

Make a Plan



Create rules for media and technology that are in line with your family's values.

- **Set screen-free zones** (such as the dinner table) to strengthen family face-to-face connections.
- **Set screen-free times** (such as during homework or before bed) so media does not interfere with learning and sleep.
- **Have a "one screen at a time" rule** and turn off devices not in use to minimize distractions.
- Make sure to create a plan for every member of your family, **including yourself.**

Make a Plan



Create
Connect

Consume

Encourage your child to spend most of their time Creating and Connecting.

Make a Plan

's Screen Time Tracker

	TV	Video Games	Computer	Cell Phone	DAILY TOTAL
MONDAY					
TUESDAY					
WEDNESDAY					
THURSDAY					
FRIDAY					
SATURDAY					
SUNDAY					
					WEEKLY TOTAL

How to earn

SCREEN TIME

TASKS	TIME	COMPLETED
MAKE BED	10 MINS	
BRUSH TEETH	5 MINS	
GET DRESSED	10 MINS	
READ FOR 20 MIN	20 MINS	
OUTSIDE FOR 30 MINS		
TOTAL SCREEN TIME		

Turn and Talk

What actions can you take, on your own and with like-minded parents, to lessen your kids' time spent in the virtual world and increase their opportunities for fun and responsibility in the physical world?



Next Parent Workshop

Please join us on February 26, 2025 at 6:00pm in the OES Cafeteria.

A representative from Elite DNA will be here to share about self-regulation in children.