

**ECHO IDAHO**

**K12 Behavioral Health  
in the Classroom**

# Social Media and Mental Health

**May 27, 2025**

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None of the planners or presenters for this educational activity have relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.



Tuesday, May 27th

# SOCIAL MEDIA AND MENTAL HEALTH

## Session Presenters



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Free ECHO for Education Series:  
K12 Behavioral Health in the Classroom

**I** University of Idaho  
WWAMI + College of Education,  
Health and Human Sciences



# K12 Behavioral Health in the Classroom

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● **Schoolwide Behavioral Strategies**

● **Preventative Approaches**

● **Clarifying Roles & Responsibilities**

● **Competing Behavior Pathway**

● **Social Media & Mental Health**

● **FBA: Educator's Role**

● **Common Mental Health Diagnosis**

● **Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)**

● **Caregiver Involvement and Collaboration**

● **Crisis Plan Development**

● **Law & Safety**

● **Accommodations: IEP or 504 Plan**

● **Medication Side Effects**



# Learning Objectives

Participants will

- Define elements of mental health
- Explore the pressure to stay connected
- Explore social media's impact on the wellbeing of today's youth
- Identify strategies to support the wellbeing of youth in this digital age

# *Mental Health is...*

The social, emotional, and behavioral well-being of students.

(National Center for School Mental Health.  
University of Maryland School of Medicine, 2019)



# *Mental Illness is...*

A condition that impacts a young person's thinking, emotions, and mood, such that it interferes with his or her daily functioning at home and school.

(SAMHSA)



# *Mental Health Services are...*

Broadly defined as any activities, services, and supports that address social, emotional, and behavioral well-being of students, including substance use.



(National Center for School Mental Health.  
University of Maryland School of Medicine, 2019)

# Mental Health Facts

Committed relationships with supportive adults can act as a protective factor for children.  
(NSCDC, 2015)

Students with good emotional regulation skills perform better in school and are at less risk of mental health symptoms.  
(Project CoVitality, 2020)

50% of mental disorders begin before age 14, 70% before age 18.  
(WHO, 2019)

Average delay between onset of mental illness symptoms and treatment is 11 years.  
(NAMI, 2019)

Early identification and intervention of mental health concerns can vastly improve school and life outcomes for students.  
(Mental Health America, 2016)

Students who participate in social and emotional learning programs improve academic performance by 11-17 percentile points.  
(Durlak et al., 2011)

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# What factors shape the mental health of young people?

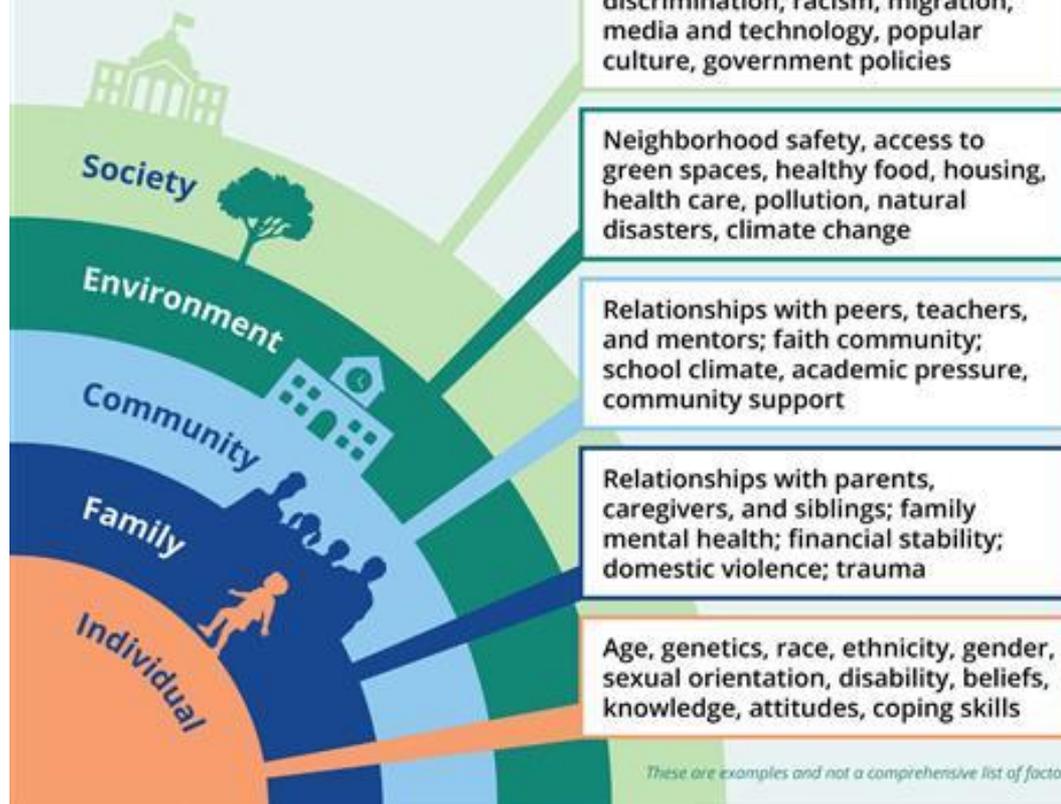
*Add your thoughts  
to the chat box*



# FACTORS THAT CAN SHAPE THE MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE



Source: Adapted from WHO's *Determinants of Adolescent Health Development: An Ecological Model*, 2014 and Bronfenbrenner & Ceci (1994)



Protecting Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory, 2021

# Mental Health Issues are Intensifying

- **From 2009 to 2019...**

**the proportion of high school students reporting persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness increased by 40%**

**those seriously considering attempting suicide increased by 36%**

# Mental Health Issues are Intensifying

- **Between 2011 and 2015...**

**youth psychiatric visits  
to emergency  
departments for  
depression, anxiety, and  
behavioral challenges  
increased by 28%**

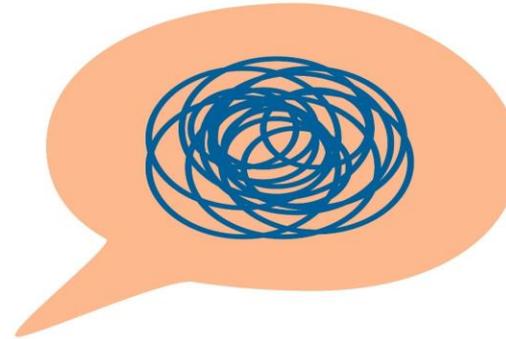
# Mental Health Issues are Intensifying

- **Between 2007 and 2018...**

**Suicide rates among youth ages 10-24 in the US increased by 57%**

**Early estimates from the National Center for Health Services suggest there were tragically more than 6,600 deaths by suicide among the 10-24 age group in 2020.**

*Add your thoughts  
to the chat box*



Why are we  
seeing an  
increase?

# Why are we seeing an increase?

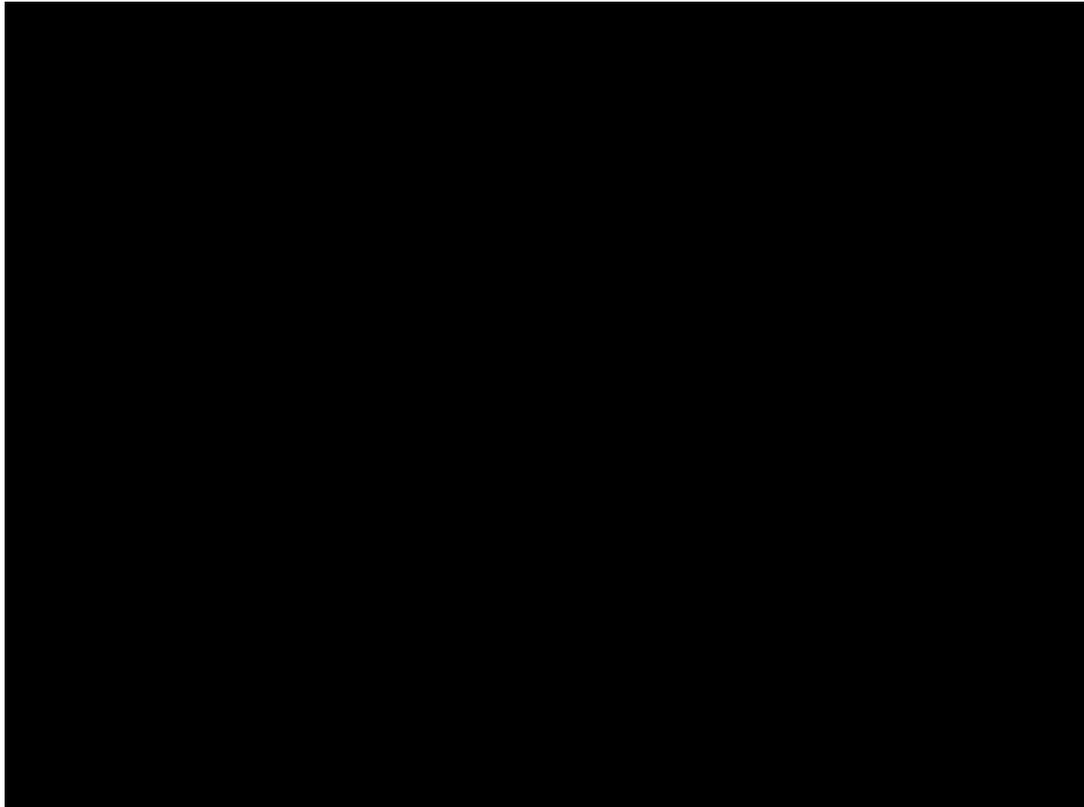
- Partly due to young people becoming more willing to openly discuss mental health concerns
- Growing use of digital media
- Increasing academic pressure
- Limited access to mental health care
- Health risk behaviors such as alcohol and drug use
- Rising income inequality, racism, gun violence, and climate change



During the pandemic, the time teenagers spent in front of screens for activities not related to school more than doubled, from 3.8 to 7.7 hours per day. In 2020, 81% of 14-22-year-olds said they used social media either “daily” or “almost constantly.”

Protecting Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General’s Advisory, 2021

# Teen Voices: *The Pressure to Stay Connected*



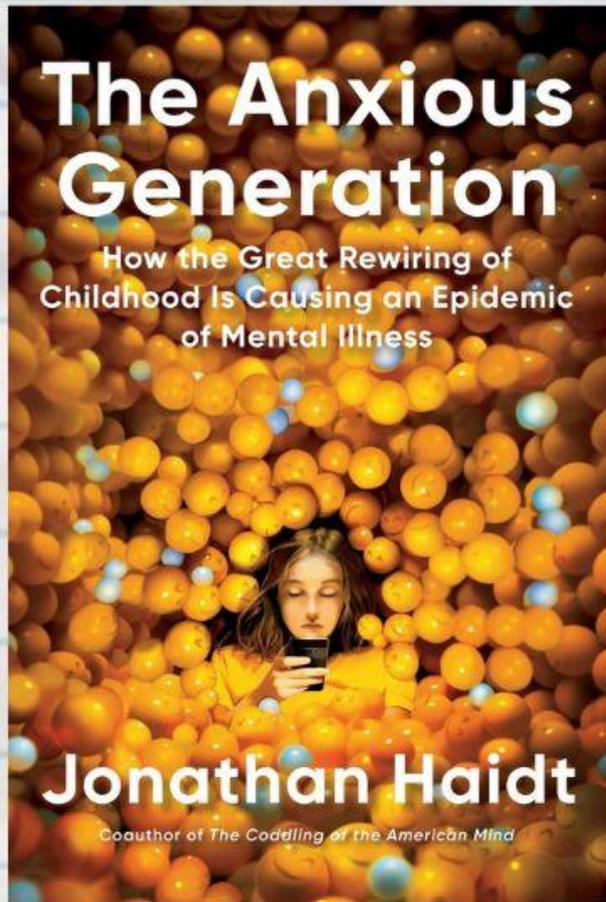
<https://www.common sense.org>

Have you witnessed  
the pressure for your  
students to stay  
connected?

Have you experienced  
the pressure to stay  
connected?



***Add your thoughts  
to the chat box***



## Play-Based Childhood



## Phone-Based Childhood



**Although age 13 is commonly the required minimum age used by social media platforms in the U.S., nearly 40% of children ages 8-12 use social media.**

Social Media and Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory, 2023

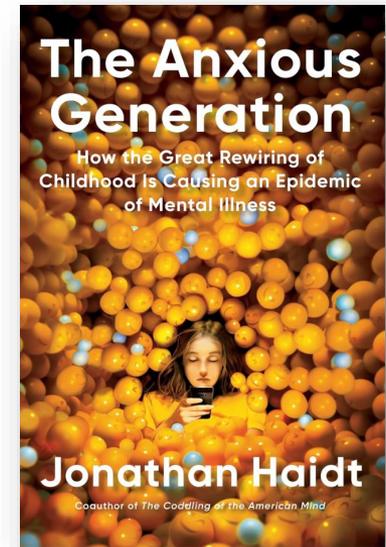


# WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

*Add your thoughts  
to the chat box*

# Four Defining Features of Social Media

1. **User Profiles:** Users can create individual profiles where they can share personal information and interests
2. **User-Generated Content:** Users create and share of variety of content to a broad audience, including text posts, photos, videos, and links
3. **Networking:** Users can connect with other users by following their profiles, becoming friends, or joining the same groups
4. **Interactivity:** Users interact with each other and with the content they share; interactions may include liking, commenting, sharing, or direct messaging



# Teen Voices: *Friendships and Social Media*



<https://www.commonsense.org>

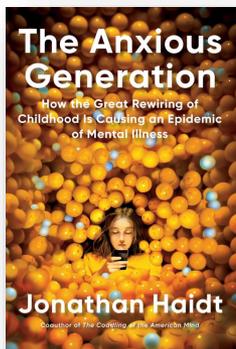
# Foundational Harm of Social Media

#1) Social Deprivation

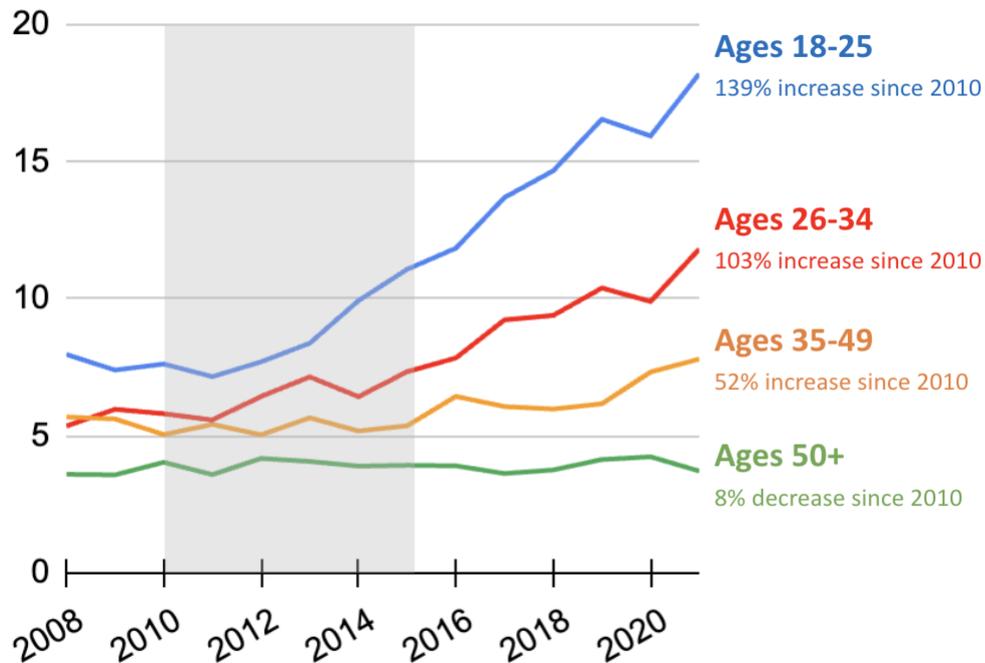
#3) Attention Fragmentation

#2) Sleep Deprivation

#4) Addiction



## Percent U.S. Anxiety Prevalence



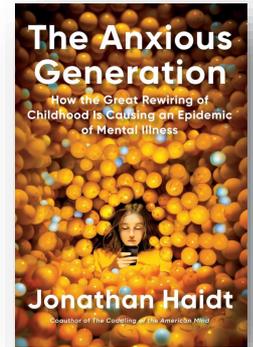
SOURCE: U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health

# Foundational Harm of Social Media

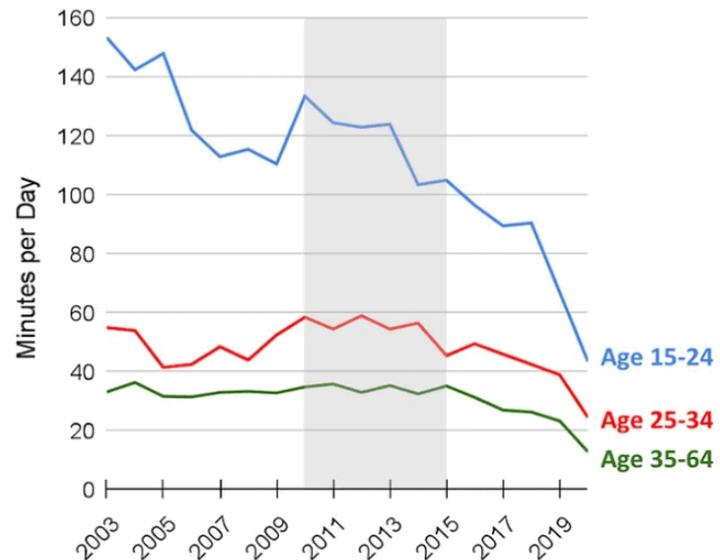
## #1) Social Deprivation

“Teens who spend more time using social media are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, and other disorders, while teens who spend more time with groups of young people (such as playing team sports or participating in religious communities) have better mental health.”

(Twenge, J.M., 2017)

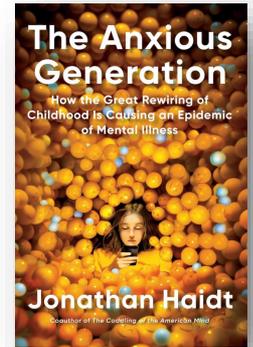


Daily Avg Time with Friends (minutes)



# Foundational Harm of Social Media

## #2) Sleep Deprivation

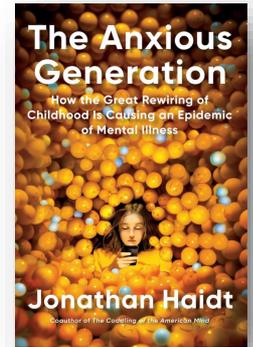


“... heavy use of screen media was associated with shorter sleep duration, longer sleep latency, and more mid-sleep awakenings.”

“The sleep disturbances were greatest for those who were on social media or who were surfing the internet in bed.”

# Foundational Harm of Social Media

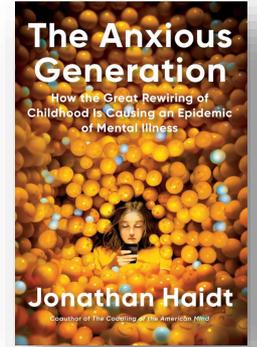
## #3) Attention Fragmentation



“Attention is the ability to stay on one mental road while many off-ramps beckon. Staying on a road, staying on task, is a feature of maturity, and a sign of good executive function. But smartphones are kryptonite for attention. Many adolescents get hundreds of notifications per day, meaning that they rarely have five or 10 minutes to think without interruption.”

# Foundational Harm of Social Media

## #4) Addiction

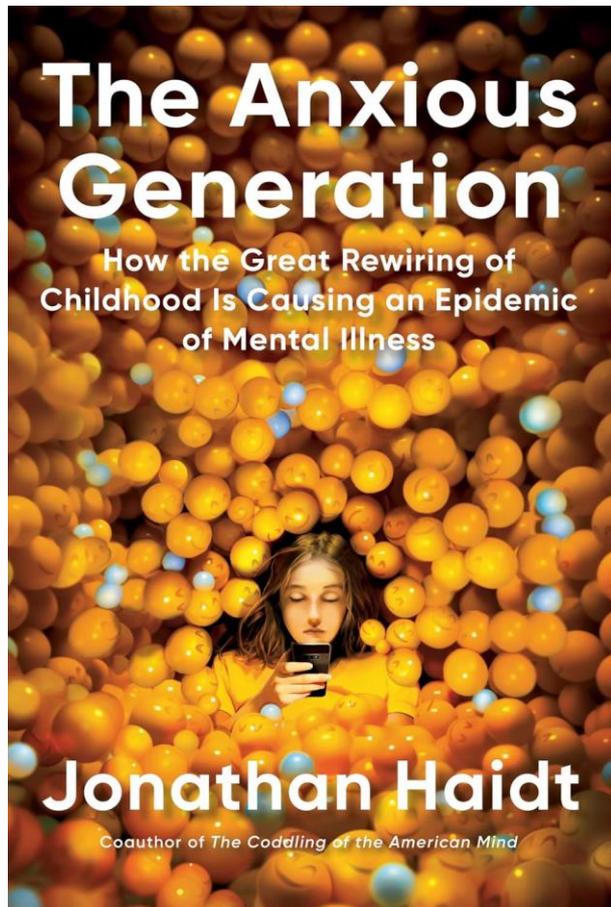


“The behaviorists discovered that learning, for animals, is ‘wearing smooth of a path in the brain.’ The developers of the most successful social media apps used advanced behaviorists techniques to ‘hook’ children into becoming heavy users of their products.”

# Conversation Starters

- How much time are you spending online?
- Is it taking away from healthy offline activities like exercising, seeing friends, reading, and sleeping?
- What content are you consuming, and how does it make you feel?
- Are you online because you want to be, or because you feel like you have to be?

# Four Needed Reforms



Reforms that would provide a foundation for a healthier childhood in the digital age:

1. No smartphones before high school
2. No social media before age 16
3. Phone-free schools
4. Far ore unsupervised play and childhood independence

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