



TECHNOLOGY

END THE PHONE-BASED CHILDHOOD NOW

The environment in which kids grow up today is hostile to human development.

By Jonathan Haidt
Photographs by Maggie Shannon

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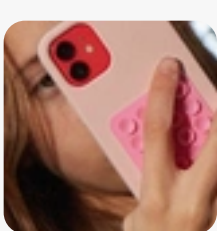
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SOMETHING WENT suddenly and horribly wrong for adolescents in the early 2010s. By now you've likely seen the statistics: Rates of depression and anxiety in the United States—fairly stable in the 2000s—rose by more than 50 percent in many studies from 2010 to 2019. The suicide rate rose 48 percent for adolescents ages 10 to 19. For girls ages 10 to 14, it rose 131 percent.

The problem was not limited to the U.S.: Similar patterns emerged around the same time in Canada, the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, the Nordic countries, and beyond. By a variety of measures and in a variety of countries, the members of Generation Z (born in and after 1996) are suffering from anxiety, depression, self-harm, and related disorders at levels higher than any other generation for which we have data.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jonathan Haidt is a social psychologist at NYU Stern School of Business and writes at the [After Babel Substack](#). He is a co-author of *The Coddling of the American Mind*, and the author of *The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*.

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