WEST ISLIP UFSD

Health & Wellness Alliance: Mental Health Subcommittee

SCREEN TIME AND MENTAL HEALTH

OCTOBER 2024 | *ISSUE #1*

IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

According to a study from the Yale School of Medicine, youth that spend the most time on digital technology were statistically more likely to exhibit higher levels of internalizing problems. Internalizing problems include depression, anxiety, social anxiety, somatic complaints and other concerns. According to the study, the association between frequent screen time and mental health problems was mediated by specific changes in brain development.

DID YOU KNOW...

- 87 percent of children had screen time exceeding recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- The AAP's guidelines allow for some screen time for children younger than 2. For this age group, parental involvement is essential. They recommend the following for parents and caregivers:
  - Ages 18–24 months: Find high-quality programming (if you choose to introduce screen time), and watch or play together.
  - Ages 2–5: Limit screen use to one hour per day of high-quality programs.
  - Ages 5 & Up: Fill out a family tech planner with consistent rules, and enforce them for older kids.

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

ACCORDING TO AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

- COMMON SENSE MEDIA PUBLISHED THE ARTICLE TITLED "HOW MUCH SCREEN TIME IS OK FOR MY KIDS?" WHICH EMPHASIZES HOW QUALITY OF MEDIA USE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SETTING A SCREEN TIME LIMIT
- COMMON SENSE MEDIA ALSO PROVIDES GUIDANCE ON ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF A CHILD'S DIGITAL MEDIA USE IN "ARE SOME TYPES OF SCREEN TIME BETTER THAN OTHERS?"
- HEALTHYCHILDREN.ORG PROVIDES GUIDANCE ON HOW CAREGIVERS CAN SUPPORT HEALTHY MEDIA HABITS IN THE ARTICLE "BEYOND SCREEN TIME: HELP YOUR KIDS BUILD HEALTHY MEDIA USE HABITS"
- HEALTHYCHILDREN.ORG RECOMMENDS CREATING A FAMILY MEDIA PLAN TO FACILITATE DISCUSSION AROUND SAFE AND PRACTICAL MEDIA USE THAT WORKS FOR A FAMILY'S SPECIFIC NEEDS
- COMMON SENSE EDUCATION PROVIDES TIPS, DISCUSSION PROMPTS, AND ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES TO LEARN ABOUT DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP TOGETHER
- THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION RECENTLY RELEASED A HEALTH ADVISORY ON ADOLESCENT SOCIAL MEDIA USE. THE ADVISORY EXPLAINS THAT SOCIAL MEDIA USE IS NOT INHERENTLY HARMFUL OR BENEFICIAL, AND OFFERS A LIST OF TEN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADOLESCENT ENGAGEMENT WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

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NOT ALL SCREEN TIME IS CREATED EQUAL

Passive Screen Time: includes watching TV, video or games and may include scrolling through social media or news. According to Dr. Jason Lewis, Ph.D (psychologist at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia), this is often a solitary pursuit and recommends setting limits for children and teens.

Interactive Screen Time: includes online gaming and social media and often includes interactions with others. This type of screen time is recommended in moderation.

Educational Screen Time: includes learning activities such as attending a class, having a group discussion, conducting research or seeking out new information. Dr. Lewis says, "More is better for educational screen time. This type of digital interaction is generally more structured, with a common goal-like research for a class-and includes collegiality between the participants."

ADVICE FOR FAMILIES...

- Set limits on how much passive or interactive screen time (i.e. TV or gaming) is allowed for the day
- Allow/encourage educational screen time
- Consider "earning" screen time after school after homework or studying is complete
- Have screen-free nights or weekends and join your children in the practice!
- Establish screen-free zones (for example, no phones at the dinner table)
- Keep electronic devices out of the bedroom when it is time for sleep. This may be more challenging for teens, but encourage devices be placed across the room from the bed

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HOW IS THE DISTRICT SUPPORTING?

NEW CELL PHONE POLICY

Elementary Cell Phone Policy:

Electronic devices (including smart watches and other electronic devices that can record, take pictures, transmit communication, etc.) are not permitted at the K-5 level.

Middle School Cell Phone Policy:

Electronic devices (including smart watches and other electronic devices that can record, take pictures, transmit communication, etc.) are not permitted at the middle school level.

High School Cell Phone Policy:

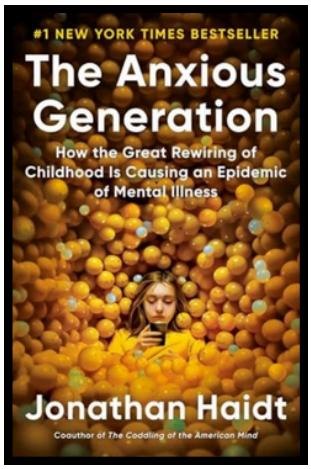
Zones have been provided for electronic device usage.

WIHS CELL PHONE POLICY

Green Zones • Cell phone may be used freely, in an appropriate manner that respects WIHS Code of Conduct	LUNCH
Yellow Zones • Cell phone may be used if permitted by staff member • Cell phones MUST be stored in docking stations	CLASSROOMS STUDY HALLS LIBRARY
Red Zones • Cell phones are prohibited and their use is a violation of school policy • Disciplinary action will occur if cellular devices are used in these areas	BATHROOMS LOCKER ROOMS

COMMUNITY BOOK TALK: THE ANXIOUS GENERATION BY JONATHAN HAIDT

THE DISTRICT IS EXCITED TO INVITE PARENTS, STUDENTS AND STAFF TO A COMMUNITY BOOK TALK ON THE TIMELY AND INSIGHTFUL BOOK THE ANXIOUS GENERATION. THIS EVENT WILL BRING OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY TOGETHER TO EXPLORE THE CHALLENGES YOUNG PEOPLE FACE IN TODAY'S FAST-PACED, HIGH-PRESSURE WORLD; AND HOW WE AS EDUCATORS, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAN BETTER SUPPORT THEM. THE ANXIOUS GENERATION DELVES INTO THE GROWING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AMONG TODAY'S YOUTH AND OFFERS RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGIES TO FOSTER EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE AND WELL-BEING.



ALL SESSIONS WILL BE HELD AT WIHS-LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER AT 7:00PM

OCTOBER 23, 2024 PART 1&2

JANUARY 2. 2024 PART 3

FEBRUARY 26, 2025 PART 4

THE ANXIOUS GENERATION CAN BE PURCHASED AT A LOCAL BOOKSTORE OR ONLINE. IN ADDITION, COPIES MAY BE AVAILABLE AT THE WEST ISLIP PUBLIC LIBRARY.

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR THE EVENT.