

# Principally Speaking

We're All in This Together

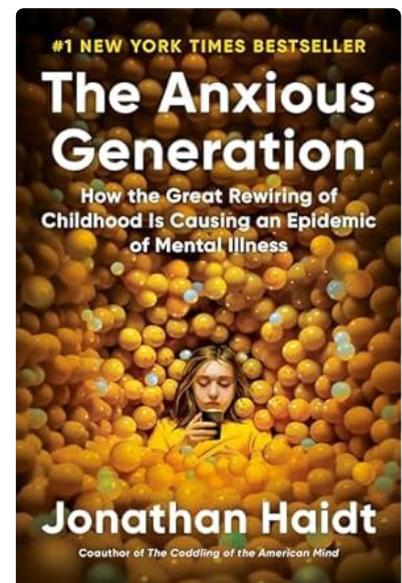
## The Anxious Generation

When I was a kid, I would have rather done anything than read a book. I guess that's not a great advertisement for being a principal:!) I preferred to be outside playing with my Army Men, playing street hockey with my friends, or if I wasn't outside, I did enjoy some Saturday Morning Looney Toons Cartoons. I bet the coyote will never catch the roadrunner!!

Somewhere along the way, I caught the reading bug, and now I really enjoy reading. I know our Librarian, Mrs. Kehan, would be proud of me. This summer I read a number of books, one of which is called "**The Anxious Generation**" by Jonathan Haidt. Haidt is a professor at New York University, and he argues that the invention of cell phones, and more specifically, social media, has significantly increased mental illness among our kids.

Of all the arguments he presents, one of the most interesting to me is that between 2010 and 2015, our society switched from a play-based childhood to a phone-based childhood. Due to the invention/introduction of the cell phone (as well as other technology), children now spend more time on screens than they do playing, and as you can imagine, this presents many challenges for us as parents and educators. One of those challenges is that since children spend less time playing with others, their social interactions suffer. We see this on the playground as children struggle with personal space (keeping hands and feet to themselves) and conflict resolution (solving problems).

This month at Warwick, we will focus on our second theme of **Responsibility**, specifically instructing children in the areas of personal space and conflict resolution on the playground. How do I play appropriately without always touching others? How do I solve a problem without using inappropriate language or getting physical? We know that kids learn best when they have explicit



instruction, and when we provide clear models for them, and that's what we will attempt to do with regards to the playground in October.

If you can find some spare time amongst all the other responsibilities of raising kids, I'd encourage you to read "**The Anxious Generation.**"

Sincerely,

Mr. Finger, Principal

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## Important Dates

October 1st - Fifth Grade Peace Valley Trip

October 3rd - No School

October 11th - Security Drill Practice

October 17th - Picture Day



**Mr. Finger**  
Principal