

# Train up a Child:

## A Seminar on Christian Parenting

**Proverbs 22:6** "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

### Introduction: The Goal of Christian Parenting

There is a pattern written into our humanity by God: *Reproduce, Raise up, Send Out.*

We labor to prepare our kids for eternity. *While we all want our kids to have a good life, our task is to parent our children towards eternal life. It is our joy that they would know God in Christ and walk in holy obedience and faithfulness all their days, bearing much fruit.*

**3 John 4** - "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth."

### Example of Timothy

**2 Timothy 1:5** - "I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well."

**2 Timothy 3:14-15** - "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."

# Part 1: Family Discipleship & Habits

**Deuteronomy 6:4-7** - “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” (See also *Det 4:9; 11:19; Psalm 78:4*)

**Ephesians 6:4** - “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Christians parenting is discipleship. It is both preparing them for faith and fostering the faith they have.

## Instruction and Habits

Thesis: Set habits that contribute to your children’s discipleship

*“Habits of the household are not just actions that form our families’ routines, they are liturgies that form our families’ hearts... When it comes to spiritual formation, our households are not simply products of what we teach and say. They are much more products of what we practice and do... We are tasked not only with learning the right thing, which takes concentration and thinking, but also practicing the right things, which takes formation and repetition.”<sup>1</sup>*

Here are five ways you can begin to set some faith-forming habits in your household

### 1. Family Devotions/Worship

A simple pattern: Read, Pray, Sing

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<sup>1</sup> *Habits of the Household*, Justin Whitmel Earley, 11.

## 2. Bedtime and Rising

**Psalm 4:8** - In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

## 3. Mealtimes

**Luke 22:14-16** - “And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

**Revelation 19:9** - “And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.””

## 4. Conversation

**2 John 1:12** - “Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.”

## 5. Work & Play

**Suggestion: a good place to start is a family night once a week:**

- Pick one night a week that you guard from other activities.
- You eat a family meal (where everyone helps)
- Do a family devotion together.
- You do something fun
- No screens (unless you are watching a family movie)

Assess what habits are already in place in your home. What are the normal routines? How do they help or hinder discipleship for your family?

What new habits can you introduce? How would you go about doing it?

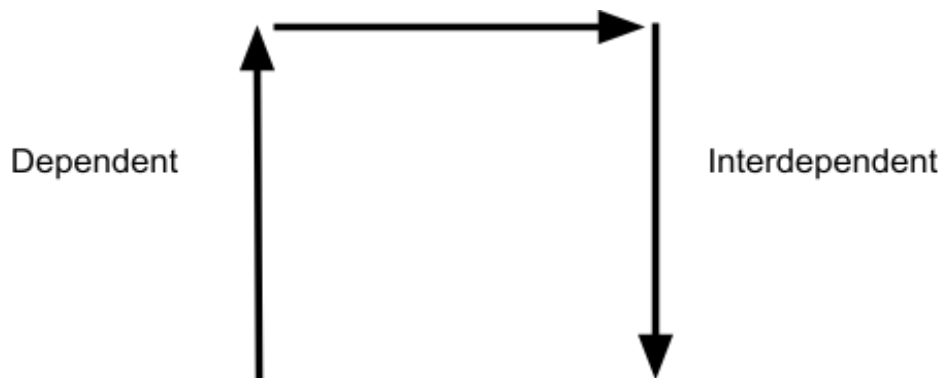
# Part 2: What is Adolescence?

## Adolescence & Adulthood: Definitions

**Adolescence is a crucial stage of life** marked by rapid physical, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual growth. Identity (Who am I?), Autonomy (Do my decisions matter?), Belonging (Do I fit in?)

**Adulthood:** When culture affirms that someone has individuated in terms of identity, is willing to take responsibility for his or her own life and choices, and has entered interdependently into the community and adult relationships, that person is said to be an adult. **Put simply, when both kids and the adult world around them recognizes them as adults.**

## A New and Lengthening Tightrope



# Part 3: Anxiety & Teens

## The Alarm: A Mental Health Crisis

### Who, What, Why

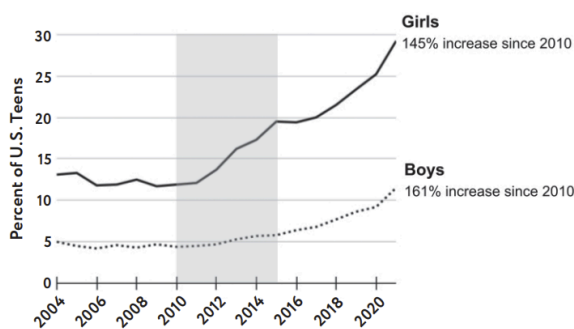
*Rates of major depression among teens have risen on average by 150% percent since 2010. We are witnessing the most distressed generation of adolescents in recent history.*

**Who:** The surge is concentrated in Gen Z, with some spillover to younger millennials.

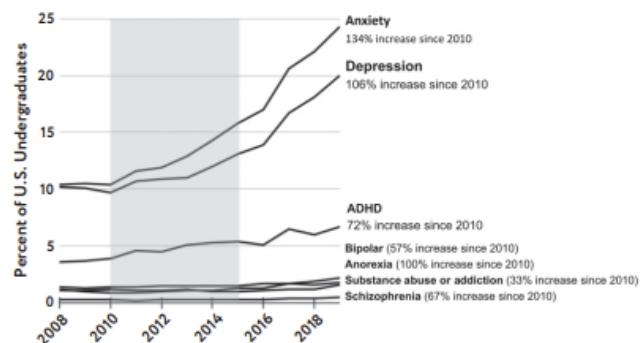
**What:** The rise is concentrated in disorders related to anxiety and depression.

**When:** There was little sign of an impending mental illness crisis among Adolescents in the early 2000s. Then quite suddenly, in the early 2010s, things changed.

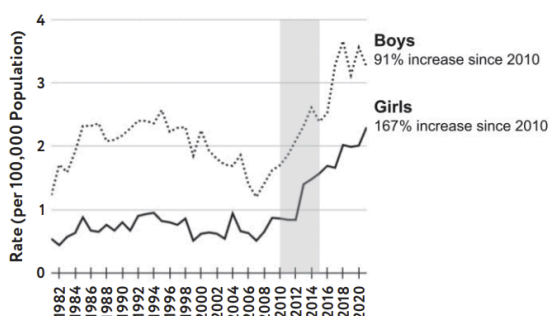
Major Depression Among Teens



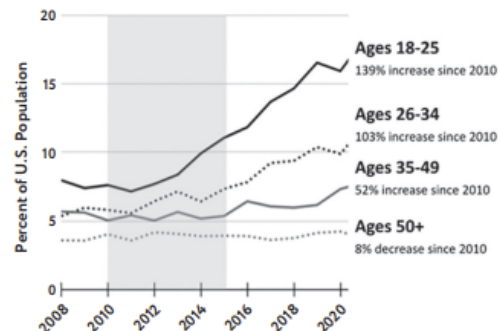
Mental Illness Among College Students



Suicide Rates for Younger Adolescents



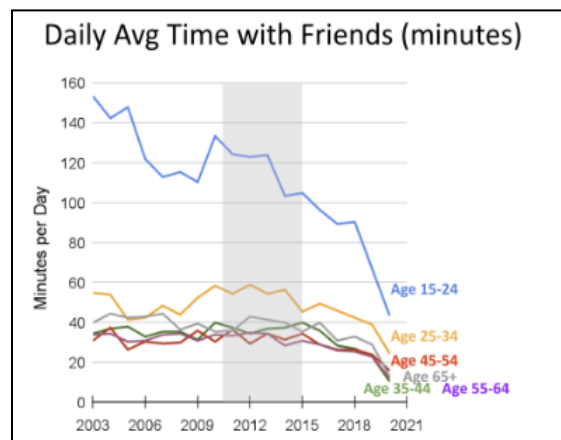
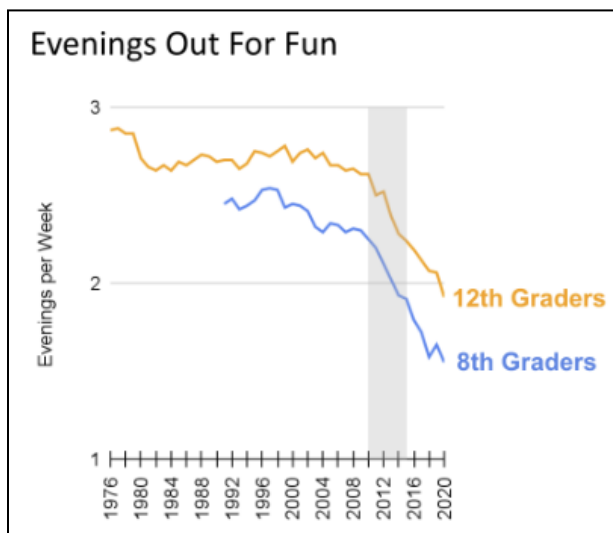
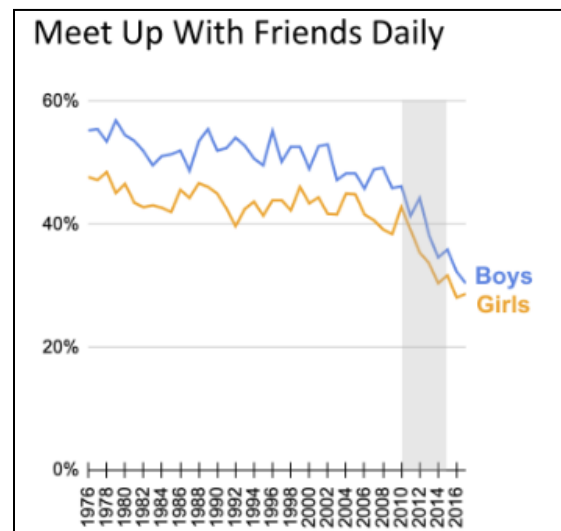
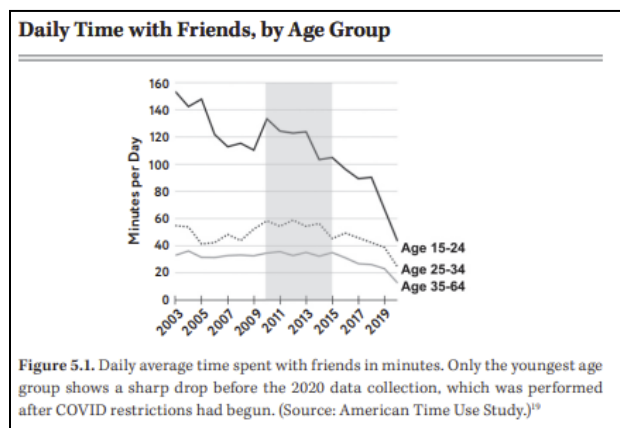
Anxiety Prevalence by Age



## Potential Cause #1: Loss of Play & Independence

*“We are overprotecting them in the real world.” — The Anxious Generation*

**Romans 5:3-5** - *“Suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character, and character hope.” —*



## Potential Cause #2: Phone-Based Childhood

### Philippians 4:8

“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”

*“Gen Z is the first generation to have gone through puberty hunched over smartphones and tablets, having fewer face-to-face conversations and shorter adventures with their friends. As childhood was rewired, especially between 2010 and 2015, adolescents became more anxious, depressed, and fragile. In this new phone-based childhood, free play, attunement, and local models for social learning are replaced by screen time, asynchronous interaction, and influencers chosen by algorithms. Children are in a sense deprived of childhood.”*

*“Children born in the late 1990s were the first generation in history who went through puberty in the virtual world. We gave them smartphones in the early 2010s, the largest uncontrolled experiment humanity has ever performed on its own children.”*

- Social Deprivation
- Sleep Deprivation
- Attention Fragmentation
- Addiction

Life Often Feels Meaningless

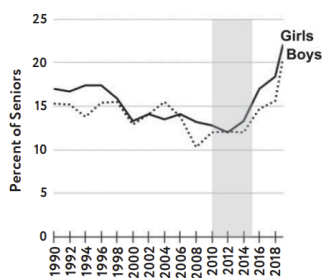
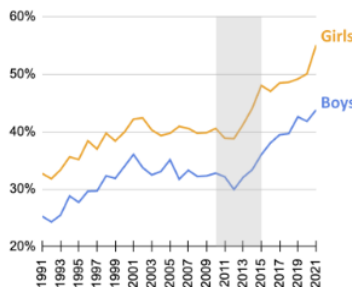


Figure 7.6. Percent of U.S. high school seniors who agreed or mostly agreed with the statement "Life often feels meaningless." (Source: Monitoring the Future.)

Sleep Less Than 7 Hours a Day (USA 8th, 10th, and 12th Graders)



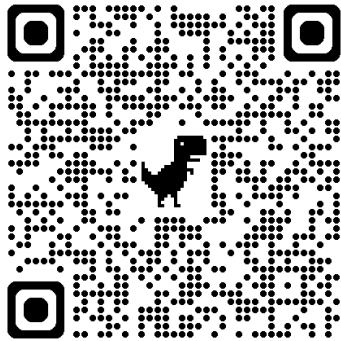
## Actions Steps For Parents

1. Reclaim real-world risk & play

2. Delay and limit tech

3. Be a steady presence

4. Root their identity in Christ



(Scan for resources)



# Part 4. The Hope of Parenting

## Panel Discussion

### Notes

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## **Additional Resources**

*Habits of the Household*, Justin Whitmel Earley

*The Anxious Generation*, Jonathan Haidt

*The Christian Family*, Herman Bavinck

*Future Men*, Douglas Wilson

*Show them Jesus*, Jack Klumpenhaur

*Revolutionary Parenting*, George Barna

The child discipleship podcast (Awana)