



9.18.2024

The Main Idea — *Why we need to ban phones in school.*

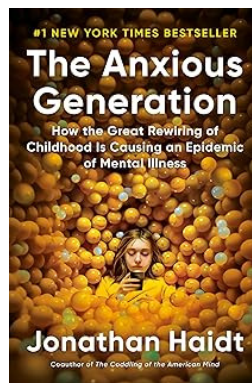
Does your school or district ban cellphones? Just about every school and district I know is talking about this.

But this isn't a small change like banning peanuts due to an increase in nut sensitivities.

The issue of cellphones at school has struck a chord because it connects to so many important issues:

- the **mental health** of our students
- the increasing **distractions** in schools
- the patience and ultimately **retention** of our teachers
- the **safety concerns** of our parents
- the ability of our students to **responsibly manage the tech** at their fingertips

So, it's no surprise that everyone in education is reading Jonathan Haidt's bestselling book, *The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*. I was a bit skeptical, but I was won over by Haidt's compelling evidence connecting cellphone use to increasing rates of anxiety, depression, and suicide in our students.



I'm summarizing this book so you can be prepared with the research as you consider or actually implement a cellphone ban.

But it's not enough to just ban cellphones in schools. The other side of the coin is that we're not giving kids enough time for **free play and face-to-face interaction**. That is, *autonomous, in-person* time in real life (IRL!)

The good news is that schools are **UNIQUELY POSITIONED** to help with both of these things. We can get phones out of the way *and* increase opportunities for more face-to-face interactions.

And if you want more inspiration, listen to my podcast conversation with a NY superintendent who is in his third year of a **successful cellphone ban**. He shares the *other* ingredients that went into making this work in addition to simply banning phones.

Here are my resources for you this month:

- A shorter 5-page book summary with **questions and a discussion guide** to use with families: [The Anxious Generation](#)
- My podcast conversation with a NY superintendent about the book and what he did to successfully implement a cellphone ban: [The School Leadership Show](#)
- You can hear directly from **Jonathan Haidt in a FREE webinar** I am moderating on September 24 at 3pm ET/ noon PT — [REGISTER HERE FOR FREE](#) (and learn more below)

I hope you're enjoying your own phone-free, face-to-face interactions this fall and I'll return on October 15.

— Jenn

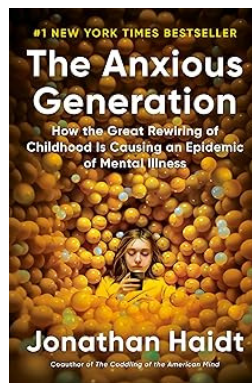


Join us Tuesday, September 24, 2024 @ 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm EDT for

Schools Can Help the Anxious Generation: A Call for K-12 School Leaders

[Register for free here.](#)

Many of us are seeing unprecedented numbers of students struggling with mental health challenges. There ARE things we can do in schools to help. **Join me** for a FREE live webinar with author Jonathan Haidt of the New York Times bestselling book, *The Anxious Generation*.



In this edWebinar, social psychologist Dr. Jonathan Haidt will walk educators through the research on our urgent youth mental health crisis, present four norms for collective action, and outline what schools can do *now* to improve mental health for kids and teens.

Come with any questions you might have for Dr. Haidt about the role of schools in dealing with social media, phones, and adolescent mental health issues. There will be time for questions at the end of the presentation.

Feel free to attend this edWebinar yourself or share the registration link with K-12 teachers, librarians, school leaders, district leaders, education technology leaders, and school counselors and psychologists.

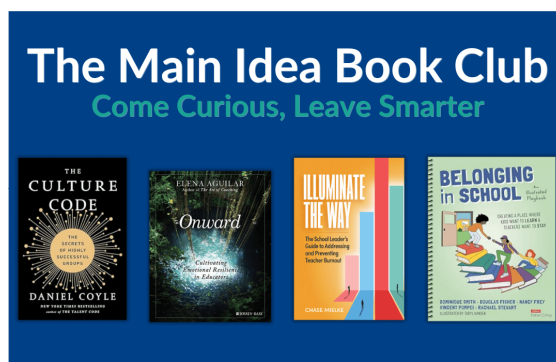
[Register for free here.](#)

Just in! The First-Ever Book Club with THE MAIN IDEA

Have you ever read one of my summaries and wanted to **chat with other leaders** about implementation ideas?

Could you use an **accountability group** to get you to read more book summaries?

Would you like to build more HOPE and BELONGING and a POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE?



**Session #1: Monday, September 23
4-5PM PT | Virtual**

The Book Club is the answer to *all three*.

I am partnering with AWSP (a great principals' association in Washington!) to lead a book club this fall:

- Read one book *summary* a month and discuss implementation ideas with other leaders
- Meet once a month, virtually: 9/23, 10/21, 11/18, and 12/9 at 7-8pm ET / 4-5pm PT
- We read 4 books that focus on building HOPE, BELONGING, and a POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE
- [Register here for \\$50](#) (for all 4 meetings) — the small fee gets you to read the summaries and show up;

[Learn more here](#) and see a video of me explaining the club.

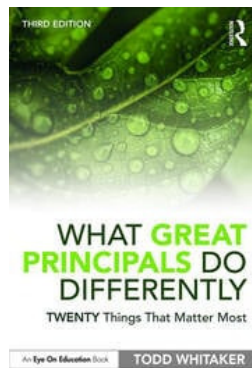
I've **never had** a BOOK CLUB for The Main Idea so come try it with me, and if we like it, we can focus on other themes later! Be an **inaugural member** of our group.

Come curious, leave smarter.

[Register Now](#)

In case you missed last month's book summary on Todd Whitaker's well-known *What Great Principals Do Differently...*

Click the book image for the summary.



A reminder that you can access all **180 of my previous book summaries**, and even SEARCH by topic or author, on the PAST BOOK TITLES page of my website.

PASSWORD: readtolead (all lowercase)

[LOGIN NOW](#)

Jenn David-Lang

The Main Idea

www.TheMainIdea.net

