

Chapter 10

ONLINE SUPPLEMENT

WHAT GOVERNMENTS AND TECH COMPANIES CAN DO NOW

In this chapter, I describe the ways that many tech companies, particularly social media companies, employ design features to consume more of people's attention, distracting them from spending needed time in the real world. I then lay out how governments can change laws to incentivize different behavior and design choices, which would help parents protect their children from the harms of the virtual world. In the second part of the chapter, I show how governments can back off on policies that push parents and schools to overprotect in the real world, and how governments can take steps to make the real world more inviting for children, more supportive of their needs for play and autonomy.

In this document, Zach and I provide the original, color graphs from the chapter, updated with the latest data. We'll continue to update these figures. Additionally, you'll find supplementary graphs that provide additional nuance and insight that were streamlined out of the book for brevity. This document also contains links to our data sources and specific data points for our graphs. Feel free to use these graphs in essays and articles. You do not need to ask for my permission; just be sure to attribute the source as: *Source: Jonathan Haidt, The Anxious Generation, Online Supplement.*

I drew on these collaborative review documents:

- [Social media reforms: A collaborative review](#)

I also drew on the following Substack Posts from *After Babel*:

- [Gray \(2023\)](#). *Play Deprivation Is A Major Cause of the Teen Mental Health Crisis.*
- [Haidt \(2023\)](#). *Why Some Researchers Think I'm Wrong.*
- [Haidt \(2023\)](#). *Social Media is a Major Cause of the Mental Illness Epidemic in Teen Girls. Here's the Evidence.*
- Also see Lenore's book, [Free Range Kid](#), and [Letgrow.org](#).

NOTES:

- Date created: May 25, 2023, Last Updated: August 29, 2023
- You can use these graphs Xyz. Please cite this document as Haidt & (ongoing). *The Anxious Generation*....

If you are a researcher and would like to notify us about other data or add comments or counterpoints to this document, please request commenting access to the Google Doc, or contact Haidt directly, and he will set your permissions to add comments to the Google doc, or will paste in your comments. This document is evolving based on feedback.]

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The Race to the Bottom of the Brain Stem

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Appendices: Post-Publication Additions

Errata (what I got wrong):

--p. 236: **The Louisiana pornography law:** I said that a 2023 law “required sites whose content is more than one- third pornographic to verify that visitors were over 18, using the state’s digital wallet app to present their Louisiana driver’s license.” Soon after publication, Rep. Laurie

Schlegel contacted me to tell me that I was wrong about what the law required. Here is the relevant part of her email:

Your book states that Louisiana's law, in 2023, required users to upload their driver's licenses, leading to Pornhub blocking access for Louisiana residents. This is not quite accurate. While the law became effective Jan 2023, it passed in 2022 and allowed for multiple methods of age verification. One method to verify a user's age, which Pornhub decided to utilize, was the LA wallet app. LA Wallet is a third-party system that verifies age without storing personal data or requiring direct upload of identification to the website. It does not send any identifying information to the websites; just the course age that the user is over 18, thus protecting people's privacy and identity. Our system more closely aligns with the model you advocated for as a preferred method instead of one to be discouraged.

This approach has not only been effective in our state but also respects user privacy and minimizes data exposure, differing significantly from the direct upload of identification to a site you mentioned. In addition, because of this option in Louisiana, Pornhub decided to comply with our age verification laws and not block access to their site in Louisiana. I think we are one of the only age verification states where they have not pulled out of and instead decided to comply with our law.

This is very exciting, that Louisiana actually did allow for multiple verification methods, using third party (non government) methods, and it seems to be working! I'll update the text of the ebook and book over the next few months. For a review of the law and what it requires, [see here](#).