

# Newsletter

Friday 17th January 2025

Spring term issue 2



## Letter from the Head

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are well. This week I thought I would share a reading piece that was shared with myself last week. It looks at resilience and overprotection of children. It really made me think and reflect and was a great discussion piece amongst the staff here. I am very proud of our early years provision, and the way Miss Steele ensures the children take risks, think independently and learn through play and talk. Anyway, I thought I would share it with yourselves as it really is interesting. Have a great weekend all and I look forward to seeing you next week.

'The Anxious Generation' shows how smartphones, social media, and helicopter parenting have led to a decline in young people's mental health and offers actionable solutions to help both our kids and ourselves become mature, emotionally stable adults.

In his new book, *The Anxious Generation*, famed social psychologist Jonathan Haidt provides both explanations and solutions for what he describes as "an epidemic of mental illness." His thesis? We are "overprotecting children in the real world and underprotecting them online." Children need "a play-based childhood in the real world" to thrive, Haidt asserts. The 2 main factors preventing this kind of childhood? Smartphones and "fearful parenting."

Let's say your child signed up to be one of the first humans to live on Mars. As you learn about the space company, you realize they only want test subjects and don't care about safety at all. Would you let them take your child? Of course not!

Since 2010, tech companies have basically done the same, Haidt suggests: exploiting our kids' attention and mental health for profit. "Childhood is an apprenticeship for learning the skills needed for success in one's culture," he writes. Millions of children are now hampered in learning those skills — because they live in their phones instead of reality.

Our connections in the real world share 4 distinct properties:

- They rely on body language.
- They happen in sync with others.
- Communication happens in sequence and with a few individuals max.
- They happen in communities with high barriers to entry.

None of this is true about our online activities. That's why they are often detrimental to human flourishing. Therefore, Haidt sees a phone-based childhood leading to 4 "foundational harms:"

*"Just as the immune system must be exposed to germs, and trees must be exposed to wind, children require exposure to setbacks, failures, shocks, and stumbles in order to develop strength and self reliance."*

# ★ Newsletter



## Letter from the Head

Social deprivation. Since 2012, the time adolescents spend with friends in face-to-face settings has dropped 50% — and the pandemic only made it worse.

Sleep deprivation. A lack of sleep leads to "depression, anxiety, irritability, cognitive deficits, poor learning, and lower grades" — and long-term studies have proven smartphones are making us sleep worse.

Attention fragmentation. Since our phones are constantly interrupting us, our ability to focus is severely impaired.

Addiction. Many kids are using their phones like dopamine slot machines, always in search of the next hit — and big tech has designed their apps to encourage this behaviour.

In the book's 2nd half, Haidt discusses what governments, schools, and parents can do to provide healthy childhoods. He calls out 4 "foundational reforms" to combat the 4 foundational harms:

1. No smartphones before high school. We should give our kids basic, text-and call only phones until they are 14 years old.

2. No social media before 16. When preteens are subjected to endless algorithmically chosen content and comparisons with influencers, it can damage their self-worth permanently.

3. Phone-free schools. More than just disallowing phones during class, schools should force kids to lock them away altogether. "That is the only way to free up their attention for each other and for their teachers," Haidt writes.

4. Far more unsupervised play and childhood independence. Let your kids learn to "develop social skills, overcome anxiety, and become self-governing young adults," naturally, Haidt suggests. Give them room to try, fail, and learn from it.

Laws and education must change, but those are slow to evolve. Thankfully, we largely control 3 of the 4 reforms. Remove phones and the internet, and bring back free-roaming and play.

"Just as the immune system must be exposed to germs, and trees must be exposed to wind, children require exposure to setbacks, failures, shocks, and stumbles in order to develop strength and self-reliance," Haidt writes. Let's make sure they get it while always having a safe haven to return to, and our young ones will become mature, emotionally stable adults.

Kind regards

Kieran Walsh



# Newsletter



## Lannergrams

Well done to everyone who received a  
Lannergram this week:

Y1: Hunter, Ben, Finley

Y2: Hollie, Thomas, Charlotte

Y3: Daniel, Dougie, Cara

Y4: Poppy, Tilly, Gracie

Y5: Miles, Lowen, Cinar

Y6: Jensen, Charlie, Darcie



### Dates for your diary

- ◇ Monday 17th —Friday 21st February—Half term
- ◇ Monday 24th February - Inset day
- ◇ Monday 7th—Monday 21st April—Easter holidays
- ◇ Monday 21st—Wednesday 23rd July — Inset days

### Word of the week

Our word of the week is – **Heroic**

Definition 1 — of or having to do with a hero or heroes.

Definition 2 — having to do with literature about a hero.

Definition 3 — like a hero; noble and courageous.

Jumping into the river to save the boy was a heroic deed.

Please try and use this word as much as you can with your child.

# Newsletter



## French word of the week



**'samedi'**

Means 'saturday' in French.

Please try and use this French word as much as you can with your child.

### Nuts in lunches/snacks

Just a quick reminder that we are a nut-free school. Please can you refrain from sending your child in to school with any form of nuts, nut butter or chocolate-nut spreads. This is to protect children in the school who have severe nut allergies. We thank you for your understanding with this.

Kind regards

**DIGITAL WARM HUB**  
Chat, Connect, Relax, and Stay Warm

Supporting you to build confidence with digital skills.

LANNER COMMUNITY CENTRE  
WITH LANNER PARISH COUNCIL

**FRIDAY MORNINGS  
10AM - 11.30AM**

Everyone Welcome

- Free Wi-Fi
- Free Tea Coffee & biscuits
- Free Warm Packs

- 3rd/10th/17th/24th/31st January
- 7th/14th/21st/28th February
- 7th/14th/21st/28th March

Lanner Community Centre, 9 Lanner Hill, Lanner, Redruth TR16 6DB

What 3 words  
///gracing.discount.survey

UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH Cornwall Community Foundation CRCC

**Wassail!**

Saturday 18th January 2025  
4pm - 8pm

Bless, Protect & Celebrate!

Kehelland Trust Orchards TR14 ODE

Music, Dancing, Cider,  
Food & More

\*sliding scale for entry from £8/£4 adult. Child. No booking required just come along ready to eat, drink, dance & be merry. Dress for the weather!