




THE PROBLEM

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THE PROBLEM


- Let's first review a bit of evidence about how kids are maturing more slowly.
- I'm not going to drown you in research statistics
- I'll share some basic data on this trend so that you have some context before we move into the reasons why it's a problem and what to do about it.



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THE PROBLEM

- Doing less on their own (Twenge, 2017):
 - Kids are less likely to be at home alone or go out without their parents.
 - 1 out of 5 high school seniors ask their parents for money for what they want versus managing their own money.
 - Kids spend less time on homework, paid work, volunteering, and extracurricular activities compared to previous generations.



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THE PROBLEM

- Doing less on their own
 - Lack of independence to prepare for adolescence and adulthood
 - With iGen'ers less likely to work, manage their own money, and drive in high school, perhaps they are not developing the resilience that may come from doing things on their own (Twenge, 2017).



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THE PROBLEM

- Growing up slower (Twenge, 2017):
 - Kids are passing milestones to adulthood later.
 - Adolescence is being shortened but at the lower end, while childhood has lengthened.
 - In terms of maturity, 18 year olds now look like 14 year olds, and 14 year olds now look like 10-12 year olds.



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THE PROBLEM

- Growing up slower
 - Kids are waiting longer to get a drivers license (Twenge, 2017).
 - College students are markedly higher on measure of "maturity fears" - they wish they could stay children for longer (Smith et al., 2017).



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THE PROBLEM

- Dating, sex and drinking (Twenge, 2017):
 - They are less likely to date, and boys lack the courage to ask.
 - They are having less sex than previous generations.
 - Teen birthrates hit all-time low in 2015, but porn and sexting increased.



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THE PROBLEM

- Dating, sex and drinking (Twenge, 2017):
 - Fewer and fewer iGen'ers drink alcohol, and tend to try it later.
 - Arriving on college campuses or entering adulthood without much experience with alcohol, and ramping up their drinking in a shorter period, including binge drinking.



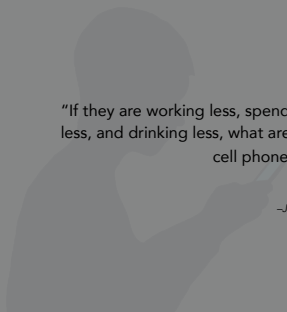
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THE PROBLEM

- Now that you have a little more context around the problem, let's explore the reasons we are seeing this problem in our kids.



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"If they are working less, spending less time on homework, going out less, and drinking less, what are they doing? Look no further than the cell phones in their hands."

-Jean Twenge

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WHY IT'S A PROBLEM

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WHY IT'S A PROBLEM

- We will review the following 4 reasons kids are growing up more slowly:
 - The Helicopter Effect
 - Safetyism
 - Reduced Drive for Freedom and Independence
 - Missing Opportunities to Build Resilience



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WHY IT'S A PROBLEM

- The helicopter effect
 - One study found that students with “helicopter” parents had lower psychological well-being and were more likely to have been prescribed medication for anxiety and depression (Schiffirin et al., 2014).
 - Continues into college: parents registering them for class, reminding them of deadlines and wake them up for class (Twenge, 2017).



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WHY IT'S A PROBLEM

- Safetyism
 - What is safetyism?
 - How it prevents kids from developing the necessary skills of resiliency.
 - Distracted kids are not challenging parents for more independence.



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WHY IT'S A PROBLEM

- Reduced Drive for Freedom and independence
 - Why do kids need to be nagged to pursue independence, like getting a drivers license?
 - Fear factor.
 - Missing growth opportunities from traditional rites of passage.



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WHY IT'S A PROBLEM

- Missing opportunities to build resilience
- They can text their parents at anytime, and what this means to developing social skills and resilience.
- The longer they wait to manage situations independently, the more fearful the idea of facing and handling those situations becomes.
- They begin to doubt their capability to handle situations on their own.



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WHY IT'S A PROBLEM

- So a quick recap, we reviewed these 4 reasons for kids growing up more slowly:
 - The Helicopter Effect
 - Safetyism
 - Reduced Drive for Freedom and Independence
 - Missing Opportunities to Build Resilience



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WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT



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WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- This section covers major concepts for encouraging growth
- It is not intended to be prescriptive
- It is intended to provide guidance toward your own personal strategies



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WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- We will review the following 3 ways to encourage growth:
 - Phone-free outings
 - More responsibilities
 - Foster mature use of technology



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WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- Phone-free outings
 - Treat it like an experiment with other parents you know.
 - Discuss a place, duration of stay, and pick up location for the phone-free outing.
 - Set a goal of 3 to 4 phone-free outings per month to start.



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WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- More responsibilities
 - Assign chores and hold them accountable.
 - Encourage them to help a neighbor or volunteer their time once a month.
 - Have them get a job and teach them to manage their own money.



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WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- Foster mature use of technology
 - Teach your child how to use technology as a tool
 - Teach them to problem solve if something is not working
 - Have them schedule their own appointments
 - Encourage development of marketable technology skills



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WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- Just a quick recap, we reviewed these 3 ways to encourage growth and maturity:
 - Phone-free outings
 - More responsibilities
 - Foster mature use of technology



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