

PARENTS AND LEARNING AT HOME



GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATION

This section will provide insight and background around the differences in lives of your children compared to learning throughout recent history. There are three key areas of discussion: Education/thinking, communication and lifestyle.

COMMUNICATION

1. 78% of teens (age 12-17) have mobile phones. For young people, smartphones have reduced the need for face-to-face communication and have become a source of instant information, porn, practical jokes, games, rumours, dating, and test answers.
2. Growing social media use has resulted in spending less face-to-face time with friends. It has created more opportunities for feeling left out. For those who are bullied, they can now be accessed 24/7 and the number of attackers can increase with the growing ability of bullies to bring in reinforcement.

LIFESTYLE

1. After school spend five to six hours a day texting, chatting, gaming, web surfing, streaming and sharing videos, and hanging out online. Get chores done, stay up late exposed to blue light and preventing sleep.



More than two hours a day raises the risk for serious mental health problems. Post 2000's are more likely to sacrifice sleep for online activities.

2. Completely saturated by unrealistic concepts of beauty, intelligence, lifestyle, body images, careers, emotions etc. Excessive, constant and unrealistic pressure in every domain of life.



Puberty triggers a cascade of changes in the brain. With the addition of modern pressures they are more emotional and sensitive to the world.

3. Appreciate events and things through a camera lens. Jeopardise the moments for phones be it education, communication, friendship etc.

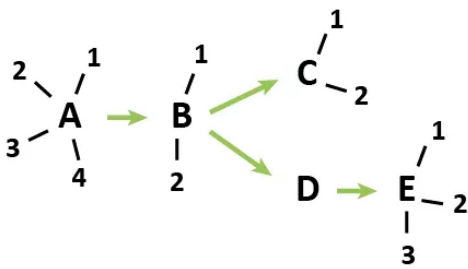
EDUCATION/THINKING

1. Greater recognition of the world with increased access to world issues. More opportunity and access to travel.
2. Entitlement: studies suggest this is because this generation has had a significant skill shift and level of knowledge. Also due to past generations being less tolerant to change and way society is now requiring instantaneous gratification- 'want in now attitude'.
3. More educated with the educational trajectory of young women especially steep. There has been greater than 14% increase young people attaining bachelor's degrees.

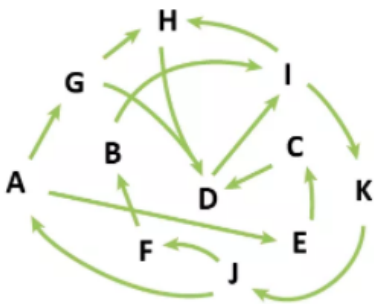
1946-1964 Baby Boomers were taught in a linear fashion. They read books. Not only that, they read books from cover-to-cover. They were taught by lecture. Prevalent learning technologies included overhead projectors, filmstrips, and some video

A → B → C → D → E

1965-1980 Gen Xers were taught in pods or modules. When they did research, they used the index in books to find the information they needed. They didn't read books cover-to-cover. They learned in a structured environment that included some lecture and small group activities. Were their minds affected by what we affectionately refer to as "Death by PowerPoint?" These students had calculators.



1981-2000 Millennials taught in a more constructivist environment. Research in a networked structure. When asked to investigate topics were more likely turn to a computer. They wondered why anyone would consider reading a book. They were the first entire generation of digital natives. Their learning environment accommodated flexibility. They have unlimited information available at their fingertips and comfortably change focus quickly.



iGens 2001 onwards are taught similar to that of Millennials. We are heading in the direction of remote education or online learning, new content areas, personalised curriculums and high connectivity.

HOW TO GET SCHOOL WORK HAPPENING AT HOME



INCENTIVISE

Set up a reward system. One less chore, an extra dollar in their allowance, whatever motivates your kids and works in your household. Make sure that you clearly explain how the system works, then stick to that system.

E.g. \$5.00 per A in a subject at report time

Example:

Chore/Job	Pay rate	Weekly Tally	Weekly total
Make bed each morning	50c		
Wash the dishes and clean the kitchen after dinner	\$2.50		
1 hour of study without mobile phone	\$2.00		
Clean the bathroom	\$1.50		
Complete siblings home reader	50c		
Put a load of washing on and hang it out	\$1.50		
		Overall total:	



SPACE AND MATERIALS

- Give them a space: Private, quiet and ordered.
- Buy what they need to actually start the process. Highlighters, fresh books, pens etc. This can be a great motivator
- Ask what they need in terms of study and learning space.
- Offer to help minimise distractions. Do you want me to hide your phone for half an hour, so you don't get so distracted?



AUTONOMY OVER FORCE

Tactical questioning instead of 'telling':

- It can be useful to ask, "What were you planning on studying today?" or "What can I do to help you with your studies?"
- Some gentle reminders may also be helpful, such as "Your assessment is only 1 weeks away. How do you plan to prepare?"
- Strategic questions / offering choice. Offer two school related choices rather than telling them what to do, this way the child believes they are the one in control. "are you going to start your maths homework or start preparing for your PDHPE assessment today?"



COMMUNICATE

- Talk about expectations, goals and ask what they think, what they want, and how they feel. Set realistic expectations and keep things in perspective.
- Communicate and remind them of what is happening.
- Debrief and allow them to vent.
- Discuss and offer help rather than nagging to do school work
- In the car is a good informal 'talk time' and eat meals as a family.



WORK TOGETHER

- Offer to proofread assessments
- Listen to their oral presentations
- Help them find support online
- Cook their favourite meal (healthy one of course)
- Get to know their teachers and encourage your kids to get their help.



EMOTIONS ARE NORMAL

Stressed, unhappy and worried? Pretty normal in this time.

- Remind them how they are feeling is normal.
- A break, a nice meal, hug and nights sleep can usually do the job.
- If they're feeling like tasks are huge and overwhelming, it can help to talk with them about how to break these into smaller, more manageable chunks
- If mental health is becoming a serious concern:
 1. Head Space (find on Google)
 2. Excellent school counselors- Contact the school for this.
 3. School Chaplain



STAY INFORMED

- Keep a close eye on information the school is sending out online and stay informed. Check the communication channels: Facebook, app, newsletter etc.
- Don't be afraid to ask the teacher questions yourself.



BALANCE AND REALISM

- Be the realistic goal setter and bring things into perspective. They are already trying to succeed in every domain.
- No one likes to be nagged. Tactical support.
- Children will absorb the energy around them and learn these behaviours. Unsettling parental behaviours can impact their learning.



EAT THEIR WAY TO SMART & STAY ACTIVE

- Bad foods (highly processed, high sugar etc.) contribute to weight issues, sleep problems, poor memory and poor cognitive function.
- Studies have shown that the Omega-3 fatty acids support memory and a whole array of neurological functions. Fish has a high density of Omega-3.
- Have healthy snacks as the only choice of snack: fruit, nuts, grain biscuits, boiled egg, celery and peanut butter etc.
- Do not underestimate the value of 60 minutes of exercise daily.



REST AND SLEEP

- Sleep consolidates memory, supports healthy heart function, support mood and mental health. A regular and consistent sleep pattern will help minimise that susceptibility to stress.
- Teach the importance of sleep.
- 7-9 hours sleep. A bedtime alarm is a good idea too.
- Encourage the screens to go 1 hour prior to sleep. Bright lights inhibit melatonin. Melatonin helps us fall asleep.
- Change the phone screen tone after 7:30pm. This can be done automatically.
- Breaks in front of people not screens- in simple terms, the brain is still stimulated while using phones and screens, Therefore it does not adequately rest.



SAVE ALONG THE WAY

- Swap, share, borrow resources with other students
- School libraries have an abundance of resources in this time. Contact schools
- Most education sites are offering free subscription in this time. Take advantage.



DON'T

- X Continually nag and complain to your child. This has been identified as a major student stressor.
- X Do not remind your sons and daughters that their entire lives depend on their education or in particular stage 6 and their HSC.
- X Continually detail the nature and extent of the financial and personal sacrifice that you have made for them.
- X Tell them what great work their siblings or friends of yours are doing.

STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING STRESS, LOW MOTIVATION AND IRRITATION

MAKE TIME TO WORRY

Allow for time to rest and debrief. The reduction of structure and low motivation can be irritating for your teens. Go outside and use informal settings for a debrief will allow kids to open up without them being aware. This is especially good for a child who had difficulty managing emotions.

CLIMB THE LADDER

Try a technique called 'laddering' – breaking down worries into manageable chunks and gradually working towards a goal.

ENCOURAGE POSITIVE THINKING

- Reminding them of times they've dealt with similar issues in the past and how things worked out OK
- Helping them to challenge the scary thought with facts and evidence.
- Make a plan for how they'll respond if things don't go as they'd like.

MODEL HELPFUL COPING

Don't just tell your child how to overcome stressful times – show them. When you get anxious or stressed, verbalise how you're managing the situation and remain neutral.

HELP YOUR CHILD TAKE CHARGE & REVIEW EXPECTATIONS

Think about what you can do to make your child feel like they have some control over the situation. For example, if your child gets anxious about running out of time, make plan together and clearly map out what will be manageable. Review clear expectations that were set early in the piece.

BE UPFRONT & CLEAR

Talk through their fears and answer any questions truthfully. Don't sugar-coat the facts – try and explain what's happening in a way that puts their understanding in perspective. "there are other options" "this is the worst that could happen".

BEHAVIOURAL AWARENESS

Children pick up all sorts of signals from the adults in their lives, so have a think about the messages you're sending. Over-protective family members can inadvertently reinforce children's fears and in some cases parents who 'over-help' are unconsciously telling their kids that they can't do anything without adult support.