

NORTH STONINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Another successful year of teaching and learning is in the books for North Stonington Public Schools! We are planning for next year to be even better.

Summer has arrived and I would like to offer a few thoughts of how you might use time. Recently, I participated in a book club, on The Anxious Generation, with area superintendents which included meeting with the author Jonathon Haidt. Dr. Haidt articulates the negative consequences of technology overuse, especially social media and gaming. He also describes a shift from a play-based childhood to a phone-based childhood, claiming this change was compounded by both parental overprotection and access to technology, and resulted in increased mental health issues and decreased self-reliance and social skills. While technology's impact varies, all of us should reflect on how we can achieve even healthier balances in our life and the lives of the young people in our care. So, here are some suggestions for using time wisely this summer.

Read, possibly even The Anxious Generation. Spend time away from distracting technology so you can fully enjoy the people in your presence or the beauty and sounds of nature. Encourage your children to take on new responsibilities so they can develop confidence and independence. Allow your children to be creative through unstructured playtime that is supervised only as much as necessary. One final thought - break out of routine. While following the same sequence of tasks, again and again, can be efficient and comfortable, it can also be boring. You will never know how much you might enjoy something unless you try it. So when you are tempted to do something different, do it! You will probably be glad you did.

I hope that everyone has a safe and exciting summer, filled with technology-free experiences.

If you would like to have a conversation, please approach me if you see me, reach out to me directly at hopkinst@northstonington.k12.ct.us, or schedule an appointment by contacting Irma Wilhelm, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, at (860) 535-2800, x-2310.

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