WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for February 17, 2025
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about the anxious generation, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

Today, let's tackle why author Jonathan Haidt calls young people the "The Anxious Generation" in his 2024 book by the same name. Many of his ideas about healthy relationships resonated with me, and I wanted to share some of those thoughts with you today.

Dr. Haydt argues that a phone-based childhood interferes with child development. Play is a fundamental part of childhood. Play is critical for children to learn both physical skills and social skills. The best way to learn about conflict resolution is to encounter conflict as a child and practice ways to resolve it.

One of my favorite chapters in the book is the importance of risky play. Haydt shares this example. A tree that is planted and protected to never experience wind will not develop a strong root system. The roots expand and become stronger in response to the stress from occasional windy situation. Likewise, when we remove all obstacles and never allow our children to experience failure or stress, they do not develop skills to cope with these inevitable circumstances of life. We've become far too protective of our children in the real world and far too unprotective of our children in the virtual world.

Free and unsupervised play is needed. This is different from playing organized, adult coached sports or dance or music lessons. Remember the days of playing with friends outside until the streetlights came on? Riding bikes, playing basketball, fishing, exploring the woods. The worship of safety above all else is called safetyism. Children are less likely to thrive when fearful parenting and a phone-based childhood deprive them of opportunities for growth.

Haidt shares that virtual communities are not as satisfying or meaning-giving as real-world communities. The virtual world continuously promotes self above all else rather than community.

We have an opportunity to recognize how our fear as parents and grandparents contribute to the anxiousness of this generation. We can trust that all parts of life, even uncomfortable experiences, can help make our children more resilient as they transition to adulthood.

And now let's see what else is new from OSU Extension.

The ServSafe® Manager Food Safety Training course will be offered on Tuesdays March 4-18, with the proctored exam Tuesday, March 25. Registration information is now available at coshocton.osu.edu.

OSU Extension and Coshocton Regional Medical Center collaborate to teach Dining with Diabetes, which is a cooking school and nutrition education program designed for people with diabetes, pre-diabetes, and their family members. Dining with Diabetes will be held on Thursday evenings April 10 through May 1.

And registration is now open for the East Ohio Women in Agriculture Conference on Friday, March 21 in Wooster. The conference will feature break-out sessions and international speaker, Elaine Froese. You can find registration on our Facebook page.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and empower our families, individuals, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265, check us out on Facebook, or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!