



Just a note I thought I'd pass along . . .

Western parents have increasingly opted to shield their children from what they perceive as the dangers of the real world, despite the significant decrease in risks such as crime, violence, and accidents since the 1990s. However, this well-intentioned approach of creating a protective bubble of comfort for their children might inadvertently hinder their development. By sheltering them from frustration, consequences, and negative emotions, parents may impede the growth of crucial skills like competence, self-control, and emotional resilience. Studies suggest that such "coddling" or "helicopter parenting" correlates with anxiety disorders and a lack of confidence in one's abilities.

Children are naturally inclined toward seeking thrills and adventures. It's crucial for their development to indulge these impulses, as doing so helps them overcome childhood fears and wire their brains for exploration. They need the freedom to swing high and leap off, to roam forests and neighborhoods in search of novelty, and to experience the exhilaration of riding bikes down hills. Through these experiences, they acquire a diverse range of competencies, including risk assessment, decision-making in the face of danger, and resilience in handling setbacks, even if it means getting hurt occasionally without immediately seeking adult intervention.

At the same time, there is a reluctance to install age-appropriate guardrails for kids online. We leave children free to wander through the Wild West of the virtual world, where threats to children abounded. We are overprotecting our children in the real world while under protecting them online.

—Paraphrased from: Jonathan Haidt, *The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness* (2024)