



Launch Points

Turning test prep success into college and career success



Conquering the Biggest Threat to Success

Today's young people, often referred to as iGen or Generation Z, are among the most criticized and ridiculed of any generation. They have been called "snowflakes," "generation me" and a whole host of other insults.

Everything from work ethic to fashion sense is fair game for a generation who has come of age during the establishment of social media. The irony is that the social media generation that is so widely criticized receives much of that criticism through social media.

Ever present smartphones with social media apps front and center provide an endless feed of memes mocking iGen. Out of these circumstances a "call out culture" has developed where young people are quick to memorialize both their proudest moments and their most embarrassing moments. Another major feature of iGen's social media landscape are Internet trolls who can take moments of pride and quickly turn them into moments of humiliation.

What is less known about this generation is that iGen is suffering from unseen levels of mental illness. Rates of depression and anxiety disorders are increasing quickly for iGen. San Diego State University Professor of Psychology and author of the best selling book *iGen*, found that the number of U.S. adolescents reporting symptoms of depression increased from a little less than 9% to over 13% between the years of 2005 and 2017. Between 2009 and 2017, the percentage of young adults in the U.S. who reported experiencing suicidal thoughts also increased from 7% to over 10%.

While depression and suicidal thoughts grab headlines because of the imminent threat they pose to young people, a more insidious development among iGeners is chronic anxiety. Anxiety that is as present as social media limits academic success and creates a snowball effect where self doubt increases with every failure -- real or perceived. An inability to succeed in the classroom amplifies self doubt and can eventually lead to more serious mental conditions.

Concerns about mental wellness are especially pronounced on college campuses where many young adults experience independence for the first time and are unprepared for the challenges the change brings.

Atlantic Cape SAT Prep's Newsletter

Our team at AC SAT Prep is always impressed by the progress our students make when armed with good test-taking strategies and a strong routine. Many who follow our program, make progress, get accepted into a college and wonder what is next?

This newsletter is an effort to show students what can come next. Through *Launch Points*, you get short articles looking at the best books, latest research and methods for making students successful. We do the reading for you so you can focus on actually being successful.

Supporting our students doesn't stop with a good SAT score. We want anyone who enrolls in our program to view AC SAT Prep as a go to resource for planning the future with excitement and confidence. You can see more *Launch Point* articles at: www.acsatprep.org.

Atlantic Cape SAT Prep Services

Regular Class Sessions: Cover the math, reading and writing sections of the SAT. Taught by two teachers. One is a math expert. The other a reading/writing expert. Class meetings involves three, two-hour sessions the three weeks prior

However, there is hope as many college counselors are finding success with a treatment that can benefit anyone who experiences anxiety. For many students, it has helped them overcome anxiety, become more self aware and perform better academically.

The treatment, long a part of a therapist's arsenal, is called cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). Generally speaking it involves challenging unhelpful distortions that all people experience. Often the distortions are negative. In *The Coddling of the American Mind* (2018), authors Jonathan Haidt and Greg Lukianoff recommend the following thought progression:

1. Ask yourself or the person experiencing anxiety to think about what is causing the anxious thoughts.
2. Rate the stress level on a scale of 1-10 when experiencing peak anxiety.
3. Look at and discuss what was happening during the moments just before peak anxiety was felt.
4. Consider any thoughts that might be distorted by these peak anxiety moments. Examples include:
 - Over generalising: a bad grade means failing for the marking period.
 - Labeling: I'm stupid and will never do well in school.
 - Catastrophising: if I can't do well on this one assignment, my parents are going to think that I am an even bigger loser than they already think I am.
5. Look at evidence that supports negative thoughts and evidence that contradicts negative thoughts.
6. Explore what someone who disagrees with the negative views would say in response to overly negative self assessments.
7. Reconsider the self assessment after acknowledging distortions and anything that contradicts the initial negative self assessment.
8. Again, rate the stress level on a scale of 1-10 after completing all the previous steps.

Authors Haidt and Lukianoff say the progression above requires dedication and thoughtfulness. If followed, it often leads to more confidence, satisfaction and higher academic achievement. They recommend keeping a journal and writing out your thoughts as you go through each step of the progression. Over time, the positive impact of using the CBT progression will increase. Anxiety will decrease. Confidence will increase. Eventually, users of a CBT journal internalize the progression and develop a more positive mindset with less effort and without having to write out thoughts.

Recommended Reading

One proven way to improve critical thinking skills is to make time to read books that explore society, human interaction and other universal themes. This month we recommend:



David Burns's *Feeling Good*

Another best seller, *Feeling Good*, is written by Psychiatrist David Burns who outlines the most effective methods he has employed in helping his patients deal with chronic anxiety. The book is practical and offers advice that is easy to follow for students, parents and anyone else who is interested in having methods for reducing stress or anxiety.

to a SAT. As a part of the tuition fee, all students get a copy of the College Board's *SAT Study Guide*, 2018 Edition. Students also get daily, online mini lessons sent through email Monday through Friday up until the actual SAT happens.

Current Participating Schools Include

- Absegami High School
- Cedar Creek High School
- Mainland Regional High School
- Middle Township High School
- Wildwood High School
- Wildwood Catholic High School

Keys to Success on Test Day

- Read daily AC SAT Prep emails
- Develop a practice routine
- Try to make practice as similar to how you will work on test day as possible.
- Remember all questions count the same so try to answer as many of the easy questions as possible without getting hung up on hard questions.
- It is good strategy to skip certain questions and return to them after completing other questions. However, you need to make sure that you clearly mark any skipped questions and return to them later to complete.

Contact Us

Instructors are best reached via email at acsatprep@gmail.com. Questions regarding payment, registration or program details will be answered promptly through email or by phone at 609-827-0679.

Staff

Larry Lhulier, reading/writing instructor
Emily Ryan, math instructor
Tug Ryan, math instructor
Dave Smith, math instructor