

Digital Media & Teen Suicide

What is iQ: smartparent?

iQ: smartparent is an Emmy-winning multimedia television and web series designed for parents that will empower them with new knowledge, tools, and abilities to successfully guide their children through the changing landscape of digital media and technology. It's a growing community of caregivers, national experts, educators, and parent bloggers who want to understand the opportunities and challenges of media as it relates to the development of their children. *iQ: smartparent* was created by WQED Multimedia in 2012.

About this Episode

Research has shown a direct link between expanded social media usage and teen depression. However, new research points to further possible links between social media usage and rising teen suicide rates. One study even found that teens who use their digital devices for more than 5 hours per day are 70% more likely to have thoughts of suicide. This episode explores the complex role the Internet, particularly social media, plays in self-harming and suicide-related behavior; and experts provide advice for families to navigate these alarming trends.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some common myths surrounding suicide?
2. Would you say there is still a stigma surrounding suicide? Why or why not? How can we combat against stigma?
3. Why is it important to consciously think about the way we talk about suicide? How does language affect people's perception of suicide?
4. How do you think social media influences mental health and suicide? How can you help your children build a healthy relationship with media usage?
5. What are some warning signs that social media is negatively influencing your life? How you can help children identify these signs?
6. What are some ways to decompress and get away from social media without feeling left out?

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
24/7 free and confidential support for people in distress:
1-800-273-8255



About the Guests



Patrick and Jackie Kimmel are board members for the Western Pennsylvania Chapter of American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). In Addition to information tabling, assisting with the Out of Darkness community walks, college campus walks, and a variety of other duties, they are also co-chairs for AFSP's Public Policy efforts. Part of this role involves scheduling and strategizing legislative meetings for AFSP advocates

from across Pennsylvania at the state and federal levels. The focus of AFSP's Public Policy is to advocate and promote legislation and policies that impact mental health/suicide and prevention at the state and federal levels. In addition, Patrick and Jackie also educate legislatures and staff about AFSP's mission and the organizations "Five Core Strategies"; funding scientific research, offer educational programs for professionals, educate the public about mood disorders and suicide prevention, advocacy, and provide programs and resources for survivors of suicide loss and people at risk. Jackie and Patrick advocate in remembrance of their son Jacob who they lost to suicide at the age of twenty-two. Knowing suicide is preventable they are confident that they can make a difference for others who struggle.



Katelyn Lamm lost her father to suicide in 2004, and has been volunteering with the Western PA Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention for over 12 years. She is currently serving as the Chapter's Chair, overseeing the Chapter's activities in 25 counties across Pennsylvania. Katelyn is a mother of one, with another on the way. In addition to her volunteer roles, she is a full time mom, and part time consultant.

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Online Resources

Let's Talk About Suicide: #LanguageMatters

www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/practice/lets-talk-about-suicide-languagematters/

5 Common Myths About Suicide Debunked

www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/September-2018/5-Common-Myths-About-Suicide-Debunked

Teen Suicide <https://familydoctor.org/teen-suicide/>

Talking About 13 Reasons Why & Teen Suicide: Tips for Parents

www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Talking-About-13-Reasons-Why-Teen-Suicide.aspx

The Risk of Teen Depression and Suicide Is Linked to Smartphone Use, Study Says

www.npr.org/2017/12/17/571443683/the-call-in-teens-and-depression

Depression and Suicide Rates Are Rising Sharply in Young Americans, New Report Says.

This May Be One Reason Why <https://time.com/5550803/depression-suicide-rates-youth/>

We Need to Talk About Kids and Smartphones <https://time.com/4974863/kids-smartphones-depression/>

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention <https://afsp.org/>

- Find support if you, or someone who know, is affected by suicide or suicidal thoughts - <https://afsp.org/find-support/>
- About suicide – warning signs, statistics, and treatment <https://afsp.org/about-suicide/>
- National Fact Sheet https://chapterland.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2017/11/US_FactsFigures_Flyer.pdf

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention – More Than Sad

<https://afsp.org/our-work/education/more-than-sad/>

- AFSP More Than Sad videos - <https://youtu.be/UP42v07aGUw>

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

- Campus Toolkit - Seize the Awkward https://seizetheawkward.org/docs/STA_Campus_Toolkit.pdf
- Social Media Assets – Seize the Awkward <http://seizetheawkward.adcouncilkit.org/social-media/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

- Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Glossary
<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/mental-health-suicide-prevention-glossary/>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Vital Signs: Suicide rising across the US
www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/suicide/index.html

- CDC Violence Prevention- Fast Facts – Suicide ideation -
www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/fastfact.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fviolenceprevention%2Fsuiicide%2Fdefinitions.html
- CDC Preventing Suicide PDF Fact Sheet - www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/suicide-factsheet.pdf
- Additional resources-Suicide / Violence Prevention
www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/resources.html

Centers for Disease Control – LGBTQ Resource - Sexual Identity, Sex of Sexual Contacts, and Health-Related Behaviors Among Students in Grades 9 – 12
www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/ss/ss6509a1.htm

NCBI – LGBTQ – Family rejection as a predictor of negative health outcomes in white and Latino lesbian, gay, and bisexual young adults. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19117902

JAMA Pediatrics – Sexual Minority Youth at Increased Risk for Suicide Attempt, With Transgender Youth at Highest Risk
www.psychiatryadvisor.com/home/topics/suicide-and-self-harm/sexual-minority-youth-at-increased-risk-for-suicide-attempt-with-transgender-youth-at-highest-risk/

JAMA Pediatrics – Association of Screen Time and Depression in Adolescence
https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/article-abstract/2737909?guestAccessKey=7f0019bd-f2eb-4dc1-a509-cd5bc2444a79&utm_source=For_The_Media&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=ftm_links&utm_content=tf&utm_term=071519

Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide www.sptsusa.org/

Suicide Prevention – Youth.gov <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/youth-suicide-prevention>
American Psychological Association: Talking to Teens: Suicide Prevention
www.apa.org/helpcenter/teens-suicide-prevention

WebMD – Youth Suicide Rate Reaches 20-Year High
www.webmd.com/parenting/news/20190618/us-youth-suicide-rate-reaches-20-year-high#1

PBS News Hour – Suicide among teens and young adults reaches highest level since 2000
www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/suicide-among-teens-and-young-adults-reaches-highest-level-since-2000

Family Acceptance Project – LGBTQ resource <https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/news-announce/family-rejection-lesbian-gay-and-bisexual-adolescents-negative-health-outcomes>

The Trevor Project - LGBTQ resource and crisis intervention– for LGBTQ youth at risk for suicide www.thetrevorproject.org/

Public Source: Why are young people taking their own lives?
<https://projects.publicsource.org/youth-suicide/index.html>

National Institutes of Health (NIH) News in Health – Teen Suicide: Understanding the Risk and Getting Help <https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2019/09/teen-suicide>

We Are Teachers – What Teachers Need to Know About the Rise in Teen Suicide
www.weareteachers.com/teen-suicide/

National Center for Biotechnology Information – Social Media and Suicide: A Public Health Perspective www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3477910/

American Psychological Association – Age, Period, and Cohort Trends in Mood Disorder Indicators and Suicide-Related Outcomes in a Nationally Representative Dataset
www.apa.org/pubs/journals/releases/abn-abn0000410.pdf

iQ: smartparent is created with support from:

