

Pressures Facing Today's Teens



We had a fantastic start this year with a total of about 140 parents at the group sessions for parents this month (35% more than last year!). Due to the enthusiastic response from our parent community, we added another session this year where parents can select from any of the 6 timeslots offered, depending on their schedules. We focused on the topic of “Pressures Facing Today’s Teens” and parents were given the opportunity to share their thoughts about this topic prior to the session. This is a new initiative to engage parents and get them thinking about the topic.

The parents began the session with a mini quiz to find out how iGen they are, where iGen refers to the post-millennials or the generation, who grew up with smartphones. We took a look at some of the research findings by Jean Twenge, presenting the different challenges faced by our teens. The session delved into the many trends shaping the current generation, how parents play a role in enabling some of these patterns and what parents can do in order to address the issues, which arise. One such trend is that our teens are growing up slowly – childhood and adolescence seems to be extended for quite a few more years. When we find it more difficult to allow our teens to take charge of their lives and be more independent, we slow down the process of them growing up. We discussed various ways in which parents can consider giving our teens more responsibilities and learn to manage themselves. Another major trend is the amount of time teens spend online. We are concerned about the amount of time they are not spending face-to-face, to build friendships and have deeper connections with one another, resulting in teens being more socially isolated and more vulnerable emotionally and mentally. We also talked about many other trends, ranging from how teens manage relationships, their work ethics, how they engage in social issues to views about religion, race and gender issues.

The next group sessions for parents will be held in April, focusing on “**Love & Dating in Today's World**”. If you have not signed up previously, you are welcome to sign-up online: [Here](#) See you in April!

Michelle Koay, High School Counsellor, michelle.koay@sjj-international.com.sg