Beyond Measure: Rescuing an Overscheduled, Overtested, and Underestimated Generation



Beyond Measure: Rescuing an Overscheduled, Overtested, Underestimated Generation by Vicki Abeles ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ↓ 4.7 out of 5 Language : English

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In the relentless pursuit of academic excellence, we have unwittingly created a generation of young people who are overscheduled, overtested, and underestimated. From the tender years of elementary school to the pressures of college applications, our children are burdened with an excessive workload that is taking a toll on their physical, emotional, and intellectual health.

The Overscheduled Child

In the name of giving children a competitive edge, we have filled their schedules with an endless array of extracurricular activities, from music

lessons and sports practices to tutoring and enrichment programs. While these activities may provide valuable opportunities for skill development and socialization, they can also lead to chronic stress and anxiety. Research has shown that children who are overscheduled are more likely to experience:

- Sleep deprivation
- Poor physical health
- Difficulty concentrating
- Emotional problems
- Social isolation

Moreover, overscheduling can interfere with children's free time, which is essential for creativity, imagination, and exploration. When children are constantly busy, they have less opportunity to develop their own interests and passions, and they may miss out on the important social and emotional benefits of unstructured play.

The Overtested Child

In addition to the pressures of overscheduling, our children are also facing an unprecedented level of testing. From standardized achievement tests to high-stakes college entrance exams, students are constantly under the microscope. While testing can serve as a valuable assessment tool, excessive testing can be detrimental to student learning and well-being.

Research has shown that overtesting can lead to:

Increased anxiety and stress

- Reduced motivation and engagement
- Narrowing of the curriculum
- Teaching to the test
- Educational inequity

Moreover, overtesting can create a culture of competition and stress that undermines the collaborative and creative learning environment that is essential for optimal student development.

The Underestimated Child

While we may be overestimating the importance of academic achievement, we are often underestimating the value of our children's well-being. Many adults dismiss the concerns of young people, assuming that they are simply being lazy or whiny. We fail to recognize the real and significant challenges they are facing.

Underestimation can lead to:

- Depression and anxiety
- Low self-esteem
- Difficulty coping with stress
- Substance abuse
- Suicide

When we underestimate our children, we send the message that their feelings and experiences are not important. This can have a devastating

impact on their mental health and well-being.

A Call to Action

It is time to break the cycle of overscheduling, overtesting, and underestimation that is harming our children. We need to create a new educational paradigm that prioritizes student well-being, creativity, and holistic development. This will require a fundamental shift in our thinking about education and the role of schools.

Here are some specific steps we can take to create a more balanced and supportive educational environment for our children:

- Reduce the number of extracurricular activities that children are involved in.
- Limit the amount of testing that students are subjected to.
- Create a more creative and collaborative learning environment in schools.
- Provide more support for students' mental health and well-being.
- Empower students to have more control over their learning.
- Listen to the voices of young people and take their concerns seriously.

By taking these steps, we can create a generation of young people who are healthy, happy, and fulfilled. We can give them the tools they need to succeed in life and make a positive contribution to society. The well-being of our children is paramount. We must not sacrifice their health and happiness in the pursuit of academic excellence. It is time to move beyond measure and create an educational system that truly supports the holistic development of our young people.

Call to action: Join the movement to create a more balanced and supportive educational environment for our children. Let's work together to ensure that the next generation is one that is healthy, happy, and fulfilled.



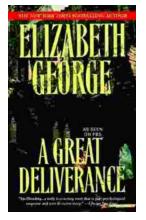


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