# Navigating the challenges of parenting a teenager in the age of social media



In a recent article in The Boston Globe, author Kara Baskin reflects on the complexities of parenting a teenager amid the challenges of modern social dynamics exacerbated by social media. Baskin recounts her experience with her eighth-grade son, Andy, who recently faced exclusion from sports and social engagements. She describes a stark contrast between the simplicity of childhood friendships and the harsh realities of adolescence, where subtle forms of exclusion can cause significant emotional distress.

This situation has led Baskin to observe broader themes among her readers, who often seek advice on how to help their children navigate the difficulties of friendship during teenage years, particularly in an era rife with anxiety and social media pressures. Central to her narrative is the notion that social media platforms like Snapchat and Instagram can intensify feelings of isolation and FOMO (fear of missing out), manifesting in real-life scenarios where not every child is included in social activities or teams, despite earlier childhood norms.

As she shared her son's struggles, Baskin noted how Andy, despite his previous successes in sport and friendship, found himself isolated within his team. Compounding this issue was the fact that he was often sidelined due to his relative newness to the sport and the interrelationship dynamics at play, particularly when his father served as a volunteer coach. Baskin's experience led her to acknowledge the challenges of providing support without overstepping, recognising that each child's journey through adolescence is unique and cannot always be solved with parental guidance.

Meanwhile, The Washington Post reported on developments within the United States' Department of Education, under the leadership of President Donald Trump, which is currently employing artificial intelligence as part of its efforts to improve efficiency. This initiative, known as the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), has raised concerns among Democratic legislators regarding the handling of sensitive personal data as the department seeks ways to streamline federal spending. An Education Department spokesperson responded to these concerns by assuring the public that their efforts are aimed at increasing efficiency and do not involve any inappropriate use of data.

Trump's administrative focus on potentially dismantling the Department of Education introduces a new layer of complexity to the broader conversation on education in America. He posits a shift towards state control over education, intending to diminish federal oversight while addressing criticisms regarding the influence of federal funding and educational mandates on local systems. His nominee for Education Secretary, Linda McMahon, has been met with scrutiny regarding her qualifications and potential conflicts of interest and is currently awaiting confirmation.

As the landscape of how education is managed across states in the US continues to evolve, the intersection of personal and systemic challenges in both parenting and educational governance highlights a tumultuous political and cultural moment. Baskin’s reflections on providing emotional support for her son during his struggles with social relationships parallel the overarching debates on educational policy and child welfare that continue to unfold in the public sphere.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.yourarlington.com/component/easyblog/entry/80-community/3322-lonely-032724.html?Itemid=406164> - This article by Kara Baskin discusses the challenges of loneliness among young people, which aligns with Baskin's reflections on her son's experiences with social exclusion.
* <https://www.bostonglobe.com/> - The Boston Globe is where Kara Baskin's article was published, reflecting on parenting challenges in the context of modern social dynamics.
* <https://www.washingtonpost.com/> - The Washington Post often reports on developments within the U.S. Department of Education, including initiatives under past administrations like President Trump's.
* <https://www.ed.gov/> - The U.S. Department of Education's official website provides information on initiatives and policies, including those related to efficiency and data handling.
* <https://www.whitehouse.gov/> - The White House website offers insights into presidential policies and initiatives, including those related to education under past administrations.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source is mentioned as the origin of the article, though it does not directly corroborate specific claims about Kara Baskin or the Department of Education.