

April 2023



k^wik^wəłəm

Kwikwetlem First Nation

Land Acknowledgement for Coquitlam School District 43

We acknowledge that the Coquitlam School District operates on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the k^wik^wəłəm (*Kwikwetlem First Nation*). We thank the k^wik^wəłəm who continue to live on these lands and care for them, along with the waters and all that is above and below.

Our Journey

- Last in a 7-part series called SD43 Learning Series
- Focus is on promoting well-being and building stronger communities
- Topics were decided via informal data collection during High School open houses
- Has included guest speakers, field and school experts, health care professionals and those with lived experience

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.”

Helen Keller

Presenters



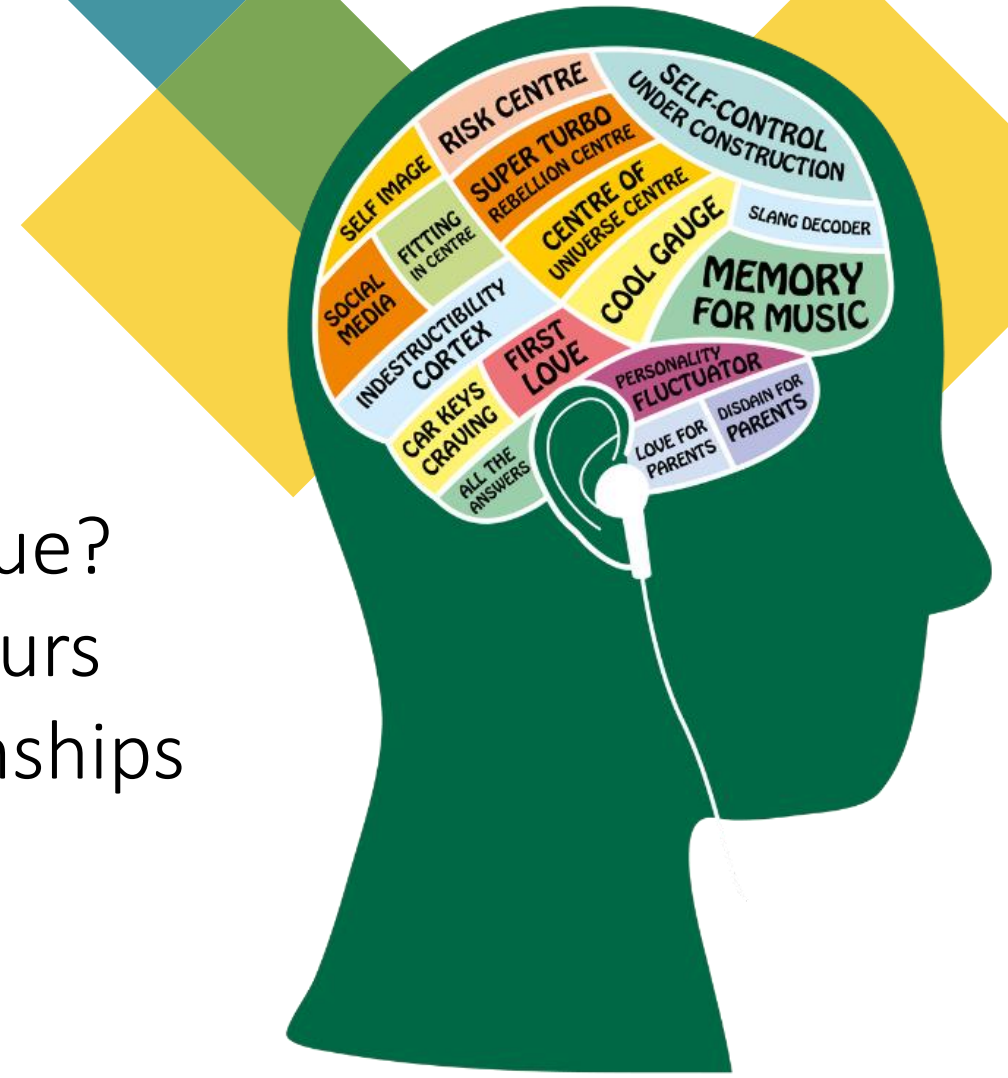
Sami du Sautoy, MEd, RCC
Licensed School Psychologist



Shannon Sullivan, MEd
Coordinator, Counselling Services and
Supports

Shape of the Session

1. Stages of brain development
2. How our brains learn and grow
3. What makes adolescent brains unique?
4. Healthy vs. worrisome teen behaviours
5. Setting boundaries, building relationships & communicating with your child
6. Resources
7. Q&A





The Adolescent Brain

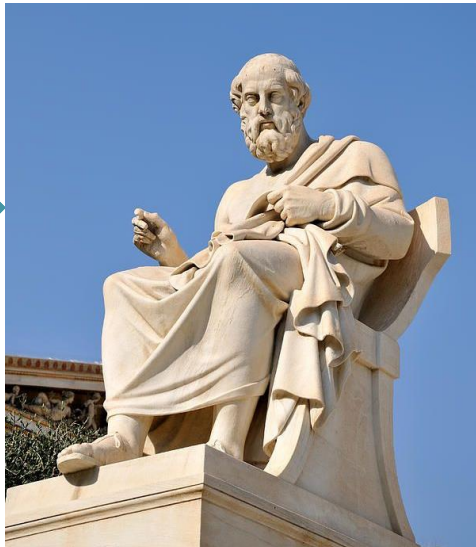
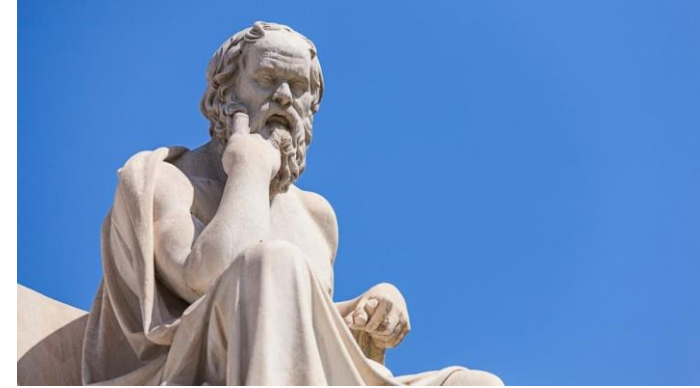
Doing the best they can at the mercy of their brains.

Note. This talk was prepared by a Licensed School Psychologist in the hopes of bringing understanding about adolescent development. Neuropsychology is a distinct field of expertise and the full scope of research on this topic extends beyond what will be presented today. Please see resources for further information.

Oppositional or Misunderstood?

Historic Misconceptions

- **Socrates (469–399 B.C.)** – *“The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households.”*



- **Aristotle (384–322 B.C.)** – *“The young people of today think of nothing but themselves. They have no reverence for parents or old age. They are impatient of all restraint ... As for the girls, they are forward, immodest and unladylike in speech, behaviour and dress.”*

Stages of Rapid Brain Development



Stage	Age	What's happening in the brain?
1	0-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 1st wave of plasticity✓ Building blocks and connectivity✓ 90% of brain development happens before age 5
2	10-20 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 2nd wave of plasticity✓ Neurons sprout and go through myelination and pruning✓ Neurons that are used become stronger, faster, masterful (<i>myelination</i>)✓ Those that aren't are <i>pruned</i> away

Neurons: tiny messengers in your brain working together to create & reinforce connections



Unlocking the Adolescent Mind: Insights from Dr. Siegel

Pruning and Remodeling of the Adolescent Mind – Insights from Dr. Dan Siegal

Neuroplasticity...

the brain's ability to change and adapt by forming new connections in response to learning, experience or injury

Key Understandings

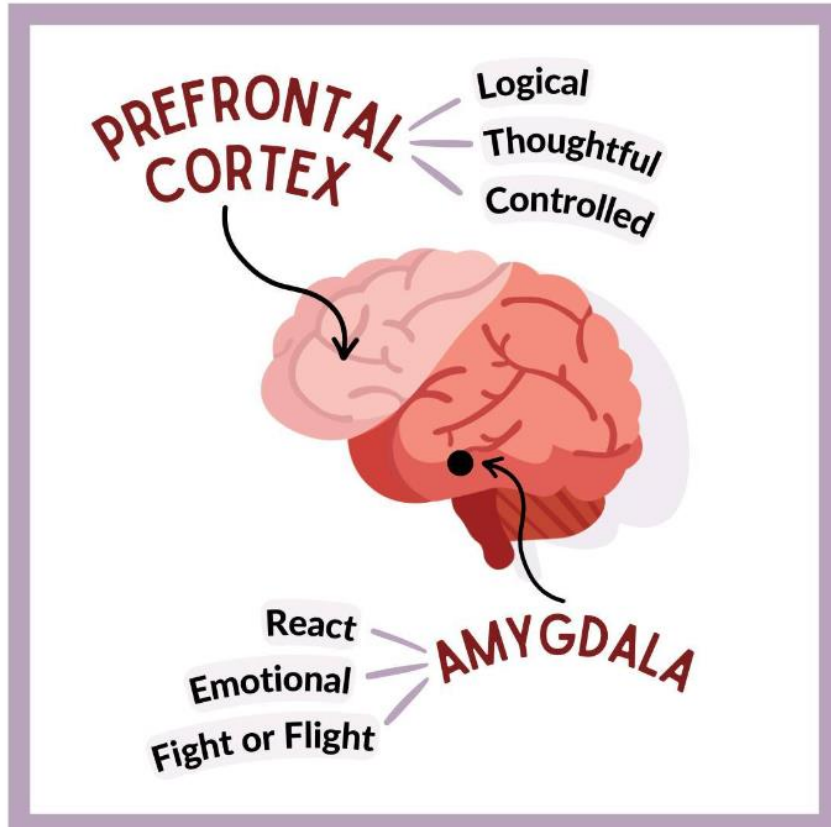
- ✓ The brain makes *no distinction* in making positive or negative connections stronger.
- ✓ Important for teens to understand the *role they play* in molding their brain
- ✓ Once synapses solidify, stick and becomes ingrained, *it's hard work to unlearn undesired skills or habits*

Caregiver considerations

- People they socialize with?
- Activities they are involved in?
- Skills they want to improve in or learn?
- The learning they engage with/in?



Impacted areas



The amygdala (the emotional reaction center) is more reactive and sensitive than the adult brain, which could explain why teens may feel the emotional effects of music, friendships, and conflict more intently than adults do!

1. Prefrontal Cortex:

- ✓ Frontal Lobe
- ✓ Executive functioning skills (skills that help you get things done and stay organized)
- ✓ Houses logic and reasoning
- ✓ Not fully developed until age 25

2. Amygdala:

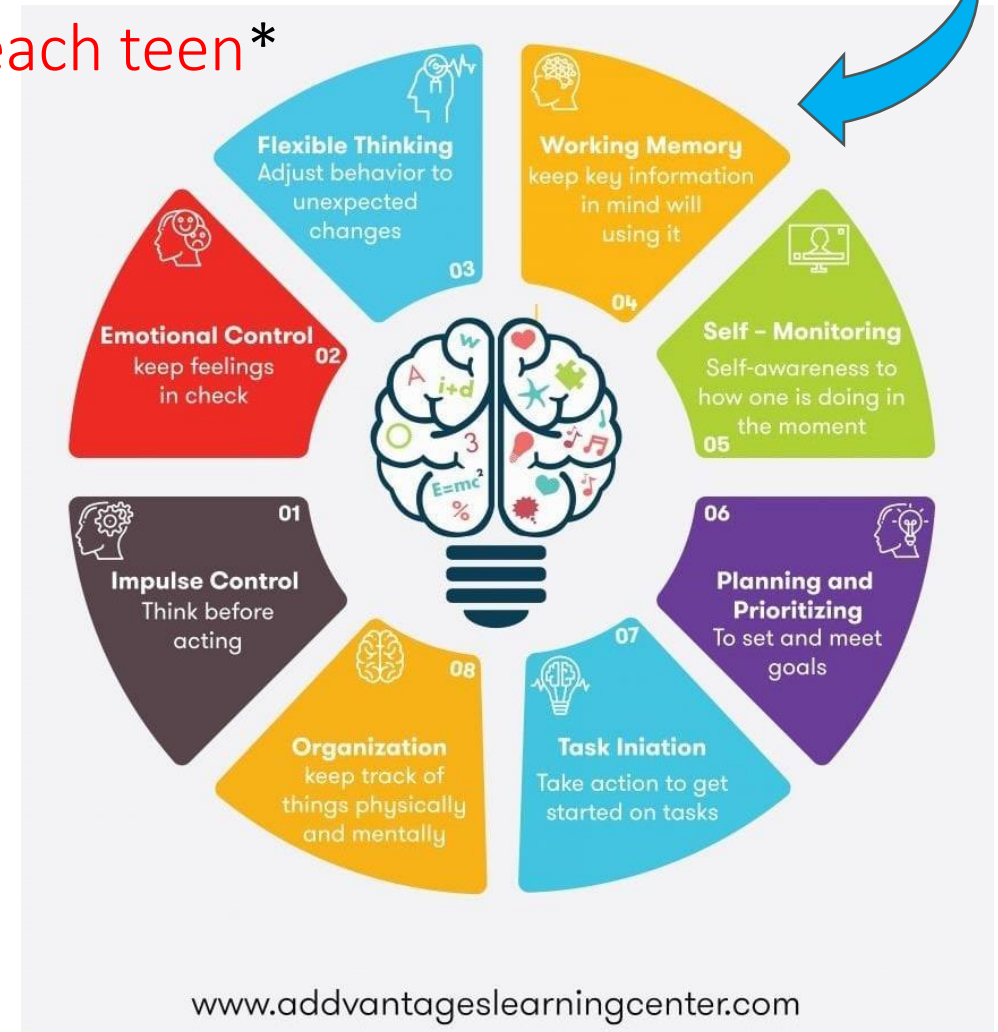
- ✓ Threat detector – alerts to danger
- ✓ Responsible for our emotions
- ✓ Helps remember emotional experiences

Pre-frontal Cortex & Executive Function Skills

The collection of skills that allow you to set goals, manage multiple tasks, stay organized and make good decisions.

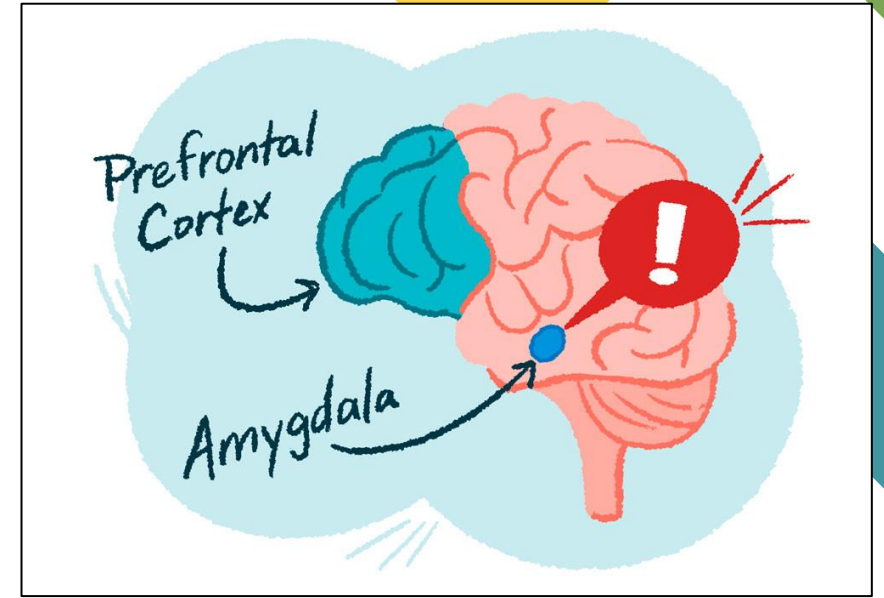
Strengths and weaknesses will ***vary significantly in each teen***

- Organized thoughts
- Changing plans
- Flexible thinking
- Reasoning
- Behaving appropriately
- Self-control
- Making good decisions
- Thinking about their thinking (metacognition)



Amygdala

- Most **primitive** part of the brain
- The threat detector – **fight, flight or freeze**
- Extremely reactive and sensitive during adolescents
- **Stress** is caused by **external factors**
- **Anxiety** is an **internal state** caused by your own thoughts



Poor executive skills + high emotional reactivity = complex behaviours / moody teenagers

From *pathology* to a *window of opportunity*

Adolescents: A period of constructing themselves which is fundamental to the adults they will become

Within this period

- ✓ Develop a sense of self
- ✓ Self-identity
- ✓ Social identity
- ✓ Motivational system = over exaggeration to reward (what's most joyous to them)
- ✓ The reward motivates the behaviour

What do they value and how are they rewarded?

- Social relationships
- Sports
- Hobbies
- Recognition

Typical vs. Worrisome Behaviours



Typical Adolescent Behaviours

✓ Sensation seeking	✓ Risk taking – especially around peers
✓ Increased pro-social behaviours + social conflict	✓ Wanting to drive or take the bus alone
✓ Trying alcohol or drugs (click here)	✓ Dating (how to talk to teens about sexual health click here)
✓ Working for pay	✓ Seeking freedom and autonomy
✓ Higher need for privacy	✓ Changing interests/priorities
✓ Changing their appearance	✓ Gaining interest in music
✓ Mood swings	✓ Academic struggles (forgetting homework)
✓ Pushing/Ignoring curfews	✓ Increased “attitude” or “tones”

Atypical or Worrisome Behaviours

1. Any sudden change from baseline *over a 2-4 week period*
2. When behaviour begins to *interfere with daily life and functioning.*
3. When “typical” methods of parenting no longer work

○ Zero desire or tolerance to be involved in family activities	○ School refusal
○ Self-harm or self-injury (cutting, burning, scratching, digital self-harm)	○ Frequent drug use and abuse
○ Consistently disrespectful to people in authority (parents, teachers, police)	○ Only engaging with online “friends” ○ Paralyzing perfectionism
○ Preoccupation/obsession with body weight or appearance; self-loathing or extremely low self esteem	○ Prolonged sad mood, signs of depression or intense mood swings
○ Dropping all activities and friends, excessive sleeping	○ Vandalism, theft, aggressiveness
○ Risky or “mature” sexual activity	○ Excessive lying, hiding, defiance

Resources



Surrey Memorial Hospital if you are worried about child's safety or they are in crisis



START – Short Term Assessment Response Team for mental health or substance use crisis
Self or caregiver referral



Kelty Mental Health Resources and Help including phone line with REAL people!



Child and Youth Mental Health Intake: Tuesday 9am-3pm



SHARE Community Counselling and Services



How to Build and Maintain a Relationship with your Tween and Teen.



Family Boundaries and Values

- 2-3 clear family goals and values - the “non-negotiables”
- Flexibility within your boundaries/non-negotiables
- Negotiate boundaries with your teens

Connection before Correction

1. Bring their attention to what's happening in their brains and thus their emotions.
2. Show curiosity – activities, friends, likes, dislikes
3. Collaborative problem solving: what's your end goal?
4. Pick your battles
5. Have boundaries and be consistent-don't be afraid of their reaction.
6. Share your experiences
7. Get their input (what do you think is important here?)



Conversation Starters

See your child as competent rather than incapable

-
- ✓ How did you know what to do?
 - ✓ That sounds tricky, how did you handle that?
 - ✓ How do you hope for that to be good for you?
 - ✓ Do you think that will go in the direction that you want? what do you want to be different?
 - ✓ What will you notice that will let you know it was a good decision?
 - ✓ If it goes exactly as you want/hope what will you notice that will let you know that was a good idea?

Adults who ground their parenting in a solid relationship with the child parent intuitively. They do not have to resort to techniques or manuals but act from understanding and empathy.

Gordon Neufeld, Gabor Mate
Hold On to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers

[#kindlequotes](#)

Conversation Starters

if you're worried about social grouping or friendships

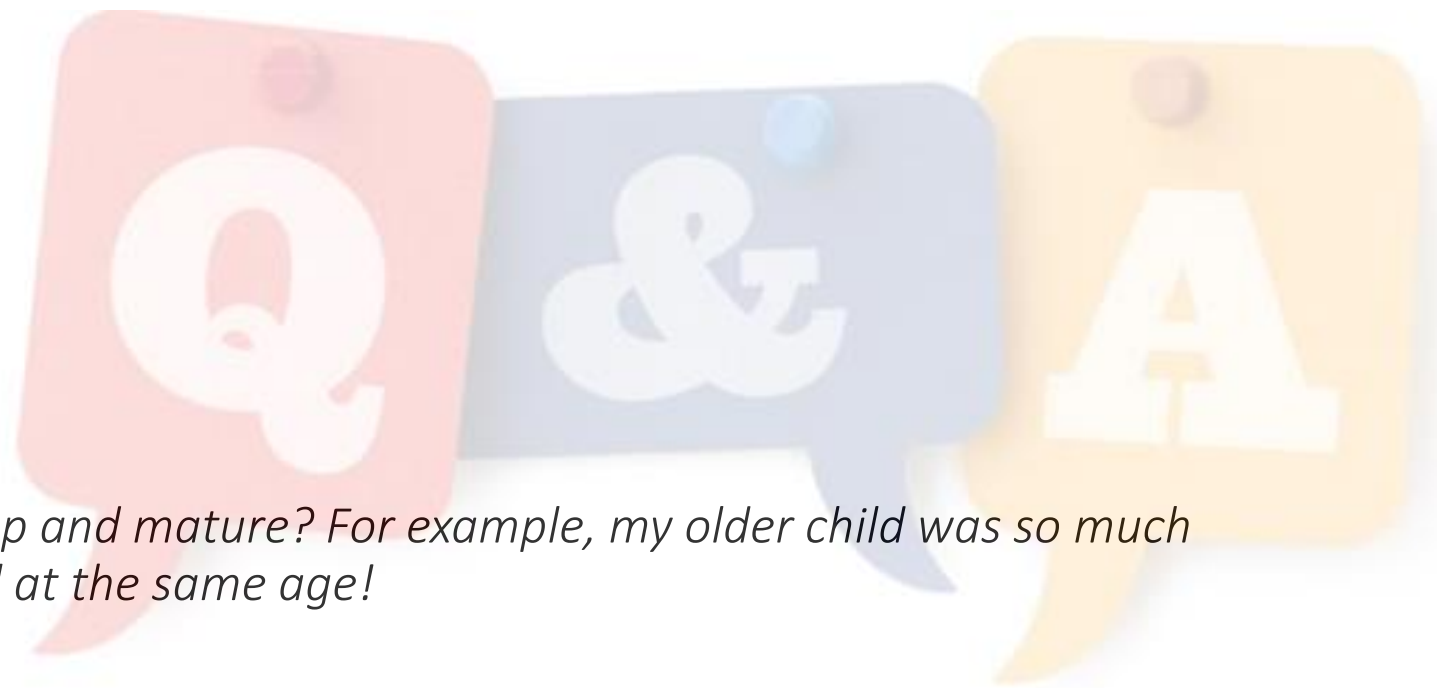
- Is this person good for you?
- What do you notice that lets you know this friend is good for you?
- What do you notice about yourself when around your friend that lets you know you are at your best?
- What does confident look like for you?
- What would you notice that lets you know you are on your way to feeling more confident?



Resources and Questions

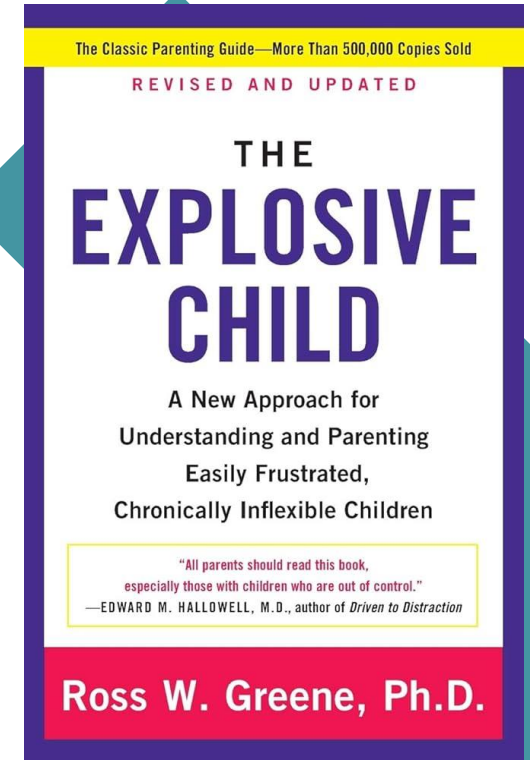
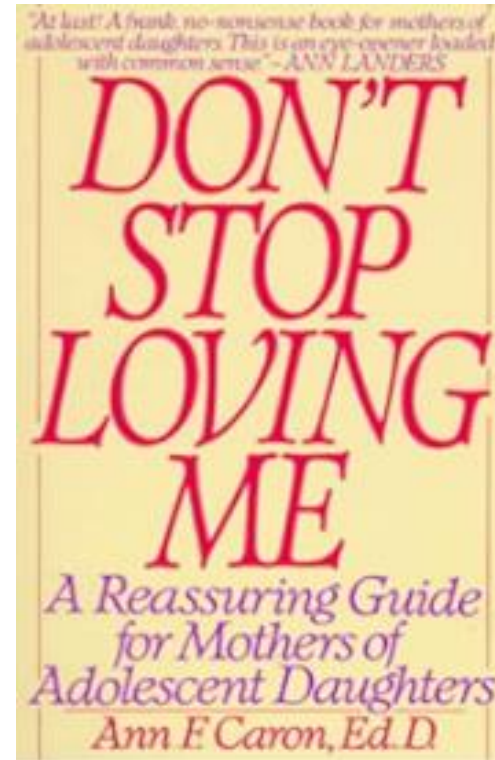
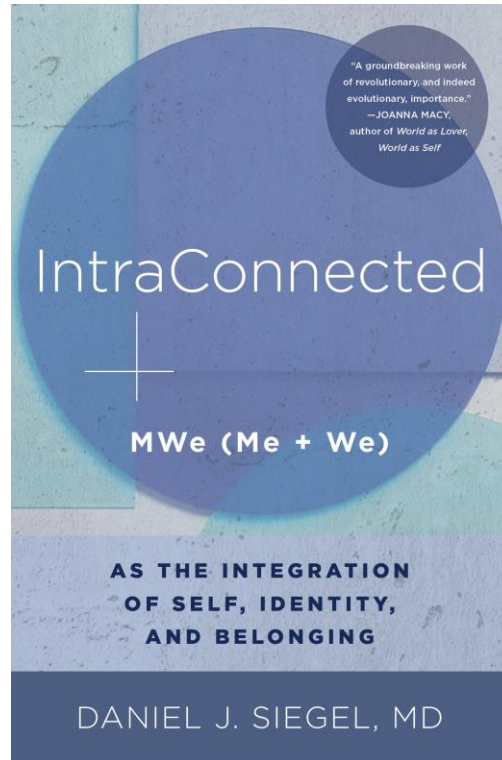
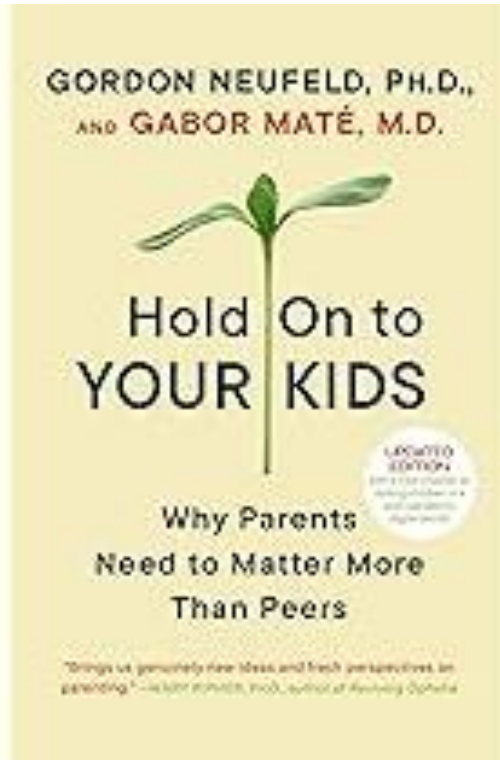


Themes

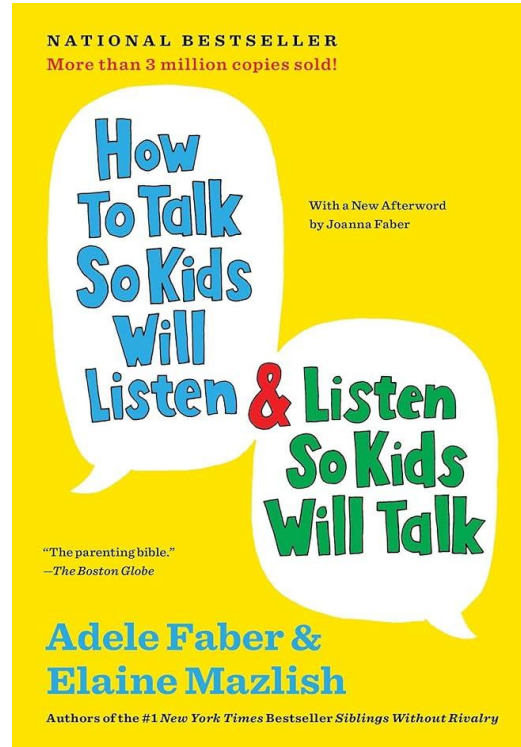
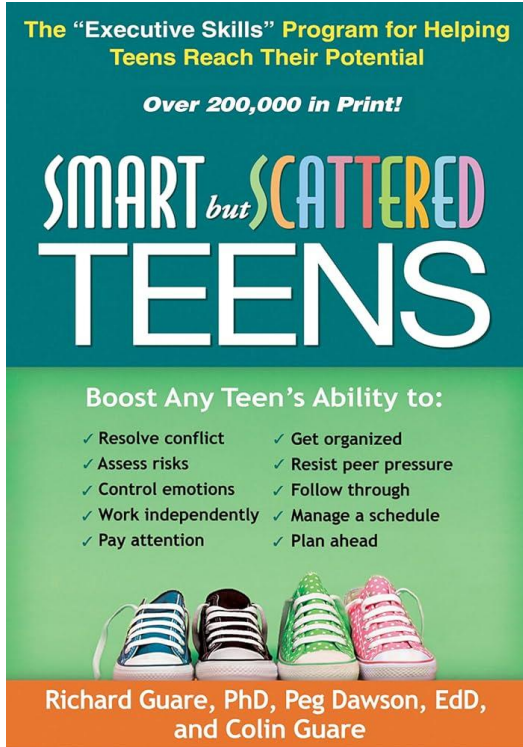


- 1. Are there differences in how teens develop and mature? For example, my older child was so much more independent than my younger child at the same age!*
- 2. What kind of challenges to teenagers with ADHD face? How does ADHD affect teens? What are some communication strategies for working with adolescents and ADHD?*
- 3. I am a newcomer to Canada. How can I help my teenager if I didn't grow up here and don't know the expectations and customs?*
- 4. How can I manage my teenager's screen use?*

Resources



Resources



Parent peer support to help navigate the mental health and medical system. Free & no waitlists.



Non-profit organization that works to improve the lives of queer, trans and 2 spirit individuals.



Family-focused online mental wellness resources and learning

Resources

Tri-Cities Child & Youth Mental Health Organizations and Resources

LOCAL RESOURCES

- Foundry BC
Foundrybc.ca
Access Virtual Services: Foundry BC App
- Child & Youth Mental Health
300-3003 Saint Johns Street, Port Moody
236-468-2373
- Tri-Cities Transitions Society
402-2071 Kingsway Ave, Port Coquitlam
Info@tricitytransitions.com
604-941-7111
- START: 1-844-782-7811
Anyone can book an appointment: youth, families, schools, and medical professionals
9am-9pm M-F / 12-9pm Sat, Sun & Holidays
- SHARE
Youth Substance Use Services/General Counselling/Child & Family Supports/School-age Therapies/Mental Health Initiatives
sharesociety.ca/substance-use-supports
- Tri-Cities Youth Clinic
Newport Public Health 604-949-7200
Wed: 2:30 PM-6:00 PM / Fri: 2:00 PM-4:00 PM
- FamilySmart
Society for Kids' Mental Health
Famlysmart.ca / 1-855-887-8004
- Fraser Health Virtual Care Line
1-800-314-0999
7 days a week/10 am-10 pm
- Spirit of the Children
www.sotcs.ca
- PCRS Astra Outreach Counselling
www.pcrs.ca/our-services/astra/
PCRS IRAYL Outreach Program for Youth
https://pcrs.ca/our-programs/inter-regional-risk-youth-link-irayl/
- PLEA Public Referrals
www.plea.ca/make-a-referral/public-referrals/

Tri-Cities Child & Youth Mental Health Organizations and Resources

URGENT SUPPORT HELP LINES PHONE TEXT CHAT WEBSITES

Kids Help Phone (Youth up to age 20)
 310-1234 (British Columbia) 1-800-668-6868 (Canada)
 Text CONNECT to 686868

KUU-US Crisis Line (for Indigenous people only)
 604-951-8855 or 1-877-820-7444

The Crisis Centre of BC (24/7) – Call 1-800-SUICIDE: 1-800-784-2433
 crisiscentrechat.ca (chat service for adults; Noon-1am)
 youthinbc.com (chat service for youth; Noon-1am)

310 Mental Health Support
 310-6789

Victim Link BC (24/7)
 1-800-563-0808

SUPPORT LINES PHONE TEXT CHAT WEBSITES

Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD)
 Social Service Intake Line/Child Protection
 1-800-663-9122

bc211 – non-profit society connecting people to resources, where and when they need it (including shelter information)
 call or text 2-1-1 (8:00 am – 11:00 am)

811 non-emergency health advice on substance use services
 call or text 8-1-1

Youthspace.ca
 chat service (6pm-midnight) or text 778-783-0177 (6pm-midnight)

Alcohol and Drug Information & Referral Service
 604-660-9382 or 1-800-663-1441

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Strong Start
 Free play-based early-learning program for parents, grandparents and caregivers of children 0 to 5 years old. No charge and snacks are provided. Please register at: https://www.sd43.bc.ca/Programs/StrongStart 604-937-6381

Tri-Cities YMCA Childcare Resource & Referral: 1130C Austin Avenue, Coquitlam 604-935-3400

MENTAL WELLNESS ACTION PLAN

Visit your family doctor - this will help identify what is happening and determine support.

Don't have a family doctor? Check out these options:

Walk-in clinics wait-times / hrs Medimap.ca

Pathways pathwaysmedicalcare.ca

Urgent & Primary Care Clinic - 604-469-3123 (Port Moody)

APPS

- Lifeguard
- Calm
- Foundry
- Breathr
- MindShift
- HeadSpace
- Wellness Circle
- The Mindful Way

Digital Citizenship

Digital Citizenship

- Rights & Responsibilities
- Guiding Practice
- Reference
- Parent Resources**
- Help Lines

Digital Citizenship & Online Safety for Parents

SD43 Family and Community Learning Series is a comprehensive series dedicated to Student Wellness and Safety. This series is designed to address current trends and pivotal topics in child and youth well-being and development, acknowledging the dynamic nature of our world today.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY SERIES WEBSITE – [click here for more information](#)

May 9, 2024 – Inclusive and Safe School Communities – [for more information click here](#)

FREE EVENT FOR FAMILIES!

Inclusive & Safe School Communities
 Thursday, May 9, 2024
 Virtual via Microsoft Teams
 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

SD43 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEARNING SERIES 2024

PERSONAL SAFETY: Where to Begin and What to Discuss?

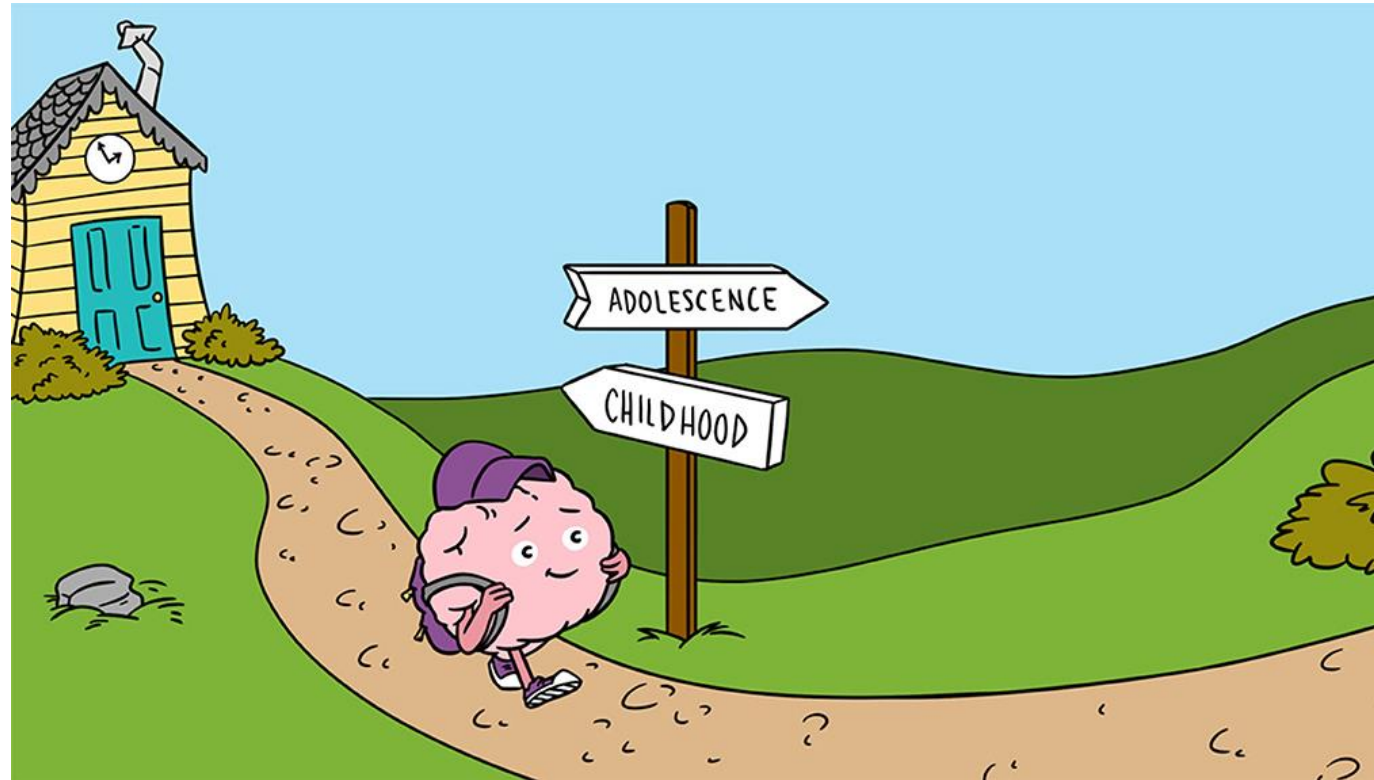
The discussion points in the links below can be applied to online behaviours and situations.

- Beginning the discussion (4 to 7 years old)
- Continuing the discussion (8 to 11 years old)
- Teaching Your Children Safe Surfing Habits (Tip Sheet)
- Family Guidelines for New Tech Devices (Tip Sheet)
- Social Media Rules (Tip Sheet)
- Family Online Rules (Tip Sheet)
- Promoting Ethical Online Behaviours with Your Kids (Tip Sheet)
- What Parents know about their kids digital lives | Pevnet Parent Survey Report 2021
- For Parents: Blogs, Games, Tip Sheets, Guides, Workshops + Tutorials, Videos
- Social Media and Your Kids - to help parents better understand how their kids are using social networking and to provide them with tips and tools they can use to help them minimize negative experiences and maximize the positive opportunities that social media has to offer.

References

- Blackmore, S.J., (2006)., Development of the Adolescent Brain: implications of executive function and social cognition.
- Goddings et al, (2014)., The influence of puberty on subcortical brain development.
- Herting et al, (2014)., Human Brain Mapping
- Vijayakumar,N., (2018)., Puberty and the Human Brain: insight into adolescent development

Thank you!



Basic needs

✓ Sleep

- 8-10 hours/night
- Typical for teens to stay up later & want to sleep in

✓ Nutrition

- Typical for teens to crave sugar and carbohydrates
- Balance of whole foods & food they crave

✓ A sense of belonging no matter how tough it gets

- Foster a feeling of connection to home
- Encourage connection to family and healthy adults

