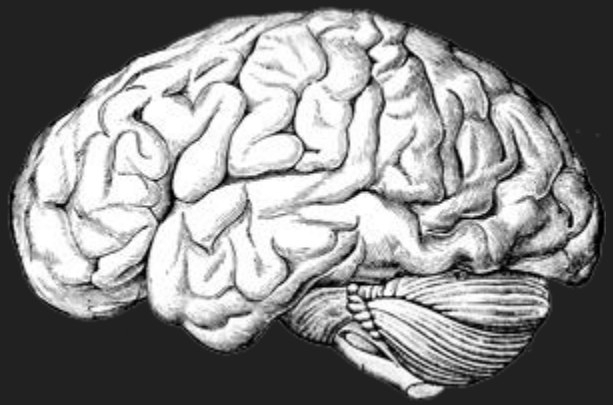
CBC YOUTH MINISTRY

OCTOBER PARENTS MEETING

UNDERSTANDING YOUTH

ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT



Who or what is an adolescent?

Adolescent Development

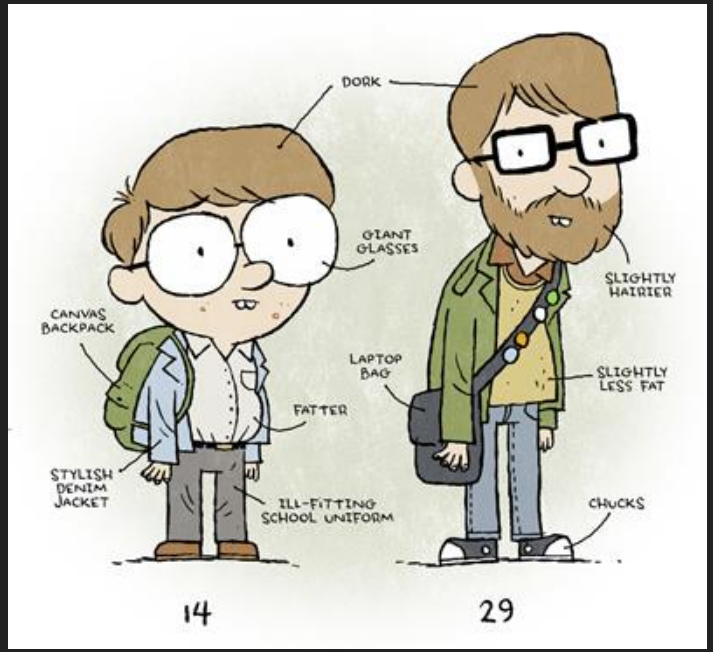
Children participated in family and culture at large in culturally accepted, boundaried ways, and were encouraged to look toward, aspire to, and prepare for the day they’d cross the line into the adult community (the Rites of Passage)

Adolescent Development

What are the Rites of Passages today?

- From culture
- From parents
- From society

By the time the 1970s rolled around, at least in the United States, adolescence was considered to be about 5 years long (or six school years)-extending from the commonly understood starting age of 13 to the normal graduation-from-high-school age of 18. At the turn of the 20th century, when adolescence was first talked about, the
average age for the onset of puberty was 14.5 years old. This physical change became the de facto starting point for adolescence. But between 1900 and 1970, the average age for the onset of puberty dropped by about a year and a half, to 13 years old.



Adolescent specialists

Adolescent specialists now say that adolescence, on average, extends to 30 years old. In fact, adolescence is so long now (almost 20 years - a full ¼ of the human lifespan!) that it's talked about in three stages:

- Young teen (11-14)
- Late teen (15-20)
- Emerging adult (20-30)

Do you know what's going on with your teen?

True/False Quiz

1.We often refer to teenagers as "young adults" because their brain development gives them complete adult skills, although they lack the experience of older adults.

False. From the standpoint of brain development, a "young adult" brain is that of at 25-year-old. Through the teenage years and into the early 20s, the brain is still getting organized. Some areas are growing in size, some areas are pruning unused connections, and connections are being strengthened between many areas. Still, a surprising number of cognitive functions are similar in adolescents and adults

2. The teenage brain has less matter in the areas that control planning and problem solving than does the adult brain. That's the reason teenagers make bad choices.

False. The final maturation process in the adolescent brain involves the "pruning" of nerve cell material, or "grey matter," rather than adding more. New connections are being made, but circuits that are unused also are being cut out. As adolescents approach adulthood, the active connections are insulated with myelin, which helps information flow more quickly and efficiently among regions of the brain. It's like having a computer that does massive parallel processing, rather than a single switch

3. Teenagers stay up late because they require less sleep than adults.

False. Adolescents require more sleep than adults—likely about nine hours—and there is a shift in the onset of sleep to later hours, accompanied by later waking. This is well established by research, but we have not discovered the biological mechanisms that underlie these differences.

4. The reason many teenagers seem emotionally reactive is that they respond to subtle cues that adults miss.

False. Brain imaging studies show that teenagers have less capacity to recognize anger in facial images than adults. That suggests that brain areas important for the processing of subtle changes in facial expressions are still developing through adolescence. Teenagers also may be more emotional because the parts of their brains that control social interactions develop earlier than the parts that censor overreactions.

5. Teenagers should not blame their inappropriate behavior on "raging hormones."

True. Puberty usually begins before the teenage years, with hormonal changes peaking at ages 12 to 15. Hormones then even out, reaching adult levels by age 18. Instead of hormones, teenagers can blame their behavior on the fact that they have a developing brain that is not yet capable of full regulation of behavior.

6. The teenage brain develops in a way that promotes impulsive and risk-taking activities.

True. The brain circuits that lead humans to expect good things to happen develop earlier than the circuits that allow people to anticipate the consequences of their actions. For example teenagers take greater (and inappropriate) risks in gambling experiments than adults do.

7. Teenagers are more at risk for drug addiction than adults.

True. Studies of human behavior show that the probability of becoming "hooked" on something is greater during adolescence. Animal studies suggest that the brain's positive reaction to drugs may be greater in adolescence, while at the same time negative effects hold less sway.

8. Adolescents often drink more than adults because they get less sleepy from alcohol, but they also typically get more buzzed.

True. Animal research shows that alcohol inhibits the firing of nerve cells less in adolescents than in adults, and thus they become less sleepy. But the effects that produce the buzz may be greater in adolescents than adults. So, there's a reason why older people say, "I can't drink like I used to."

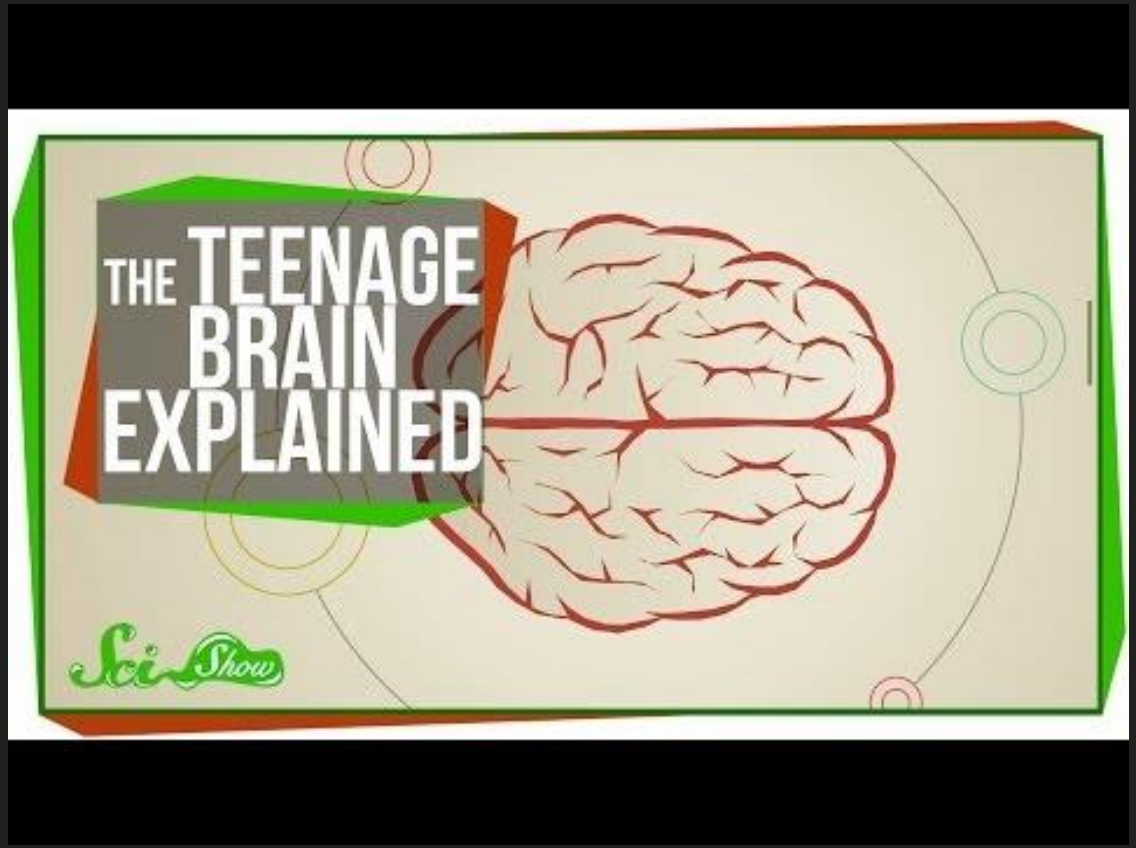
9.Parents don't have much influence on teenagers because their brain development makes them more sensitive to social cues from their peers.

False. While it's true that teenagers take more risks in experiments when they're with other teens than when they're alone, a large body of research shows that parents have great influence over teenagers' attitudes and behaviors.

10. You have the brain you are born with, and there's not much you can do about it.

False. Animal studies show that the structure of the brain changes with experience. Based on imaging experiments in people, we also know that the ability to use parts of our brain changes over time. People who learn how to play the violin, for instance, have different brain connections than people who don't play that instrument. And as people become expert at playing music (or another such skill), the theory is that their brains become more efficient and use less "bandwidth," so to speak, for that task.

WHAT HAPPENED TO MY TEEN?



THE BRAIN

BY JACKSON MOHSENIN

Made with love in Barcelona, Spain. Inspired by Colorbind for iPhone.

PARIETAL LOBE

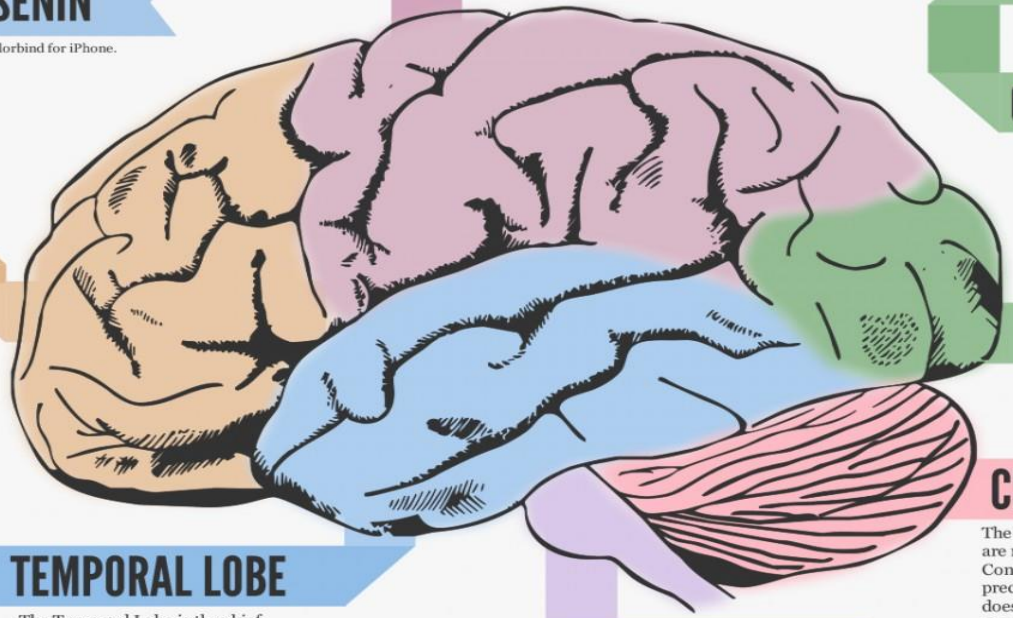
The Parietal Lobe plays an important role in integrating information from several senses. Also processes spatial orientantion, some parts of speech, visual perception, and pain and touch sensations.

OCCIPITAL LOBE

The Occipital Lobe is the visual processing center of the brain. It contains most of what is referred to as the "visual cortex". It is also the part of the brain where dreams originate.

FRONTAL LOBE

The Frontal Lobe deals chiefly with cognition and memory. Ability to concentrate, judgement, consequence analysis, problem solve, plan, personality (including emotional traits).



CEREBELLUM

The Cerebellum chief function are motion-related activites. Contributes to coordination, precesion, accurate timing, but does not initate movement. Regulates fear and pleasure responses, and some cognitive functions such as attention and language.

TEMPORAL LOBE

The Temporal Lobe is the chief auditory receptive area and contains the Hippocampus, which is the chief region where long-term memory is formed. Also deals with high-level visual processing (faces & scenes).

BRAIN STEM

Serves as brain's warning system and sets alertness level.

Big Discovery #1: Meet the Temporal Lobes

The temporal lobes are an area of significant underdevelopment in teenage brains. The temporal lobes are responsible for **emotional interpretation** and **understanding**.

They’re underdeveloped in all teenagers, but are significantly more underdeveloped in guys.

apprentice adults

It is important to think through how we respond to this information. The research does not prove that teenagers are incapable. In fact, there’s research to show that teenage brains compensate in other ways for this limitations. So a healthy way of response is a combination of patience and understanding, coupled with a tour-guide approach to helping teenagers interpret their emotions and the emotions of others.

Teenagers spend almost every waking minute in a homogeneous grouping of peers (or alone). Today’s teenagers have almost no opportunity to spend time with adults in the world of adults (the only time they spend with adults is when the adults come into the world of teenagers). As a result, teenagers and young adults have little opportunity to practice being what I like to call apprentice adults.

Big Discovery #2: Meet the source of your parental frustrations, the Frontal Lobe

One of the biggest discoveries is the underdevelopment of the prefrontal cortex in teenagers. The frontal lobe is often called the brain's CEO, or the decision-making center. Here's a partial list of the functions it's responsible for:

- Decision-making
- Wisdom
- Prioritization
- Impulse control
- Planning
- Organization
- Focus

the Frontal Lobe

The major shift, then, has that we no longer provide responsibility (and the expectation that goes along with it) to teenagers and young adults. And in our misguided ideas about protecting our children, we often remove the consequences to their choices, which completely undermines the learning about responsibility that consequences provide.

Responsibility given -> responsibility experienced -> responsibility learned.

Big Discovery #3: Rerouting the Highways (or, Neurons Grow Then Go)

Neurons are the “electrical wiring” of the brain and, when grouped together, are referred to as neural pathways. By the way, best estimates of normal neurons counts in a human brain are between 80 and 120 billion. A couple of years prior to the onset of puberty, the brain goes into a massive growth frenzy, adding millions of additional neurons. They, at puberty, a switch is tripped, and the process reverses itself. Over the two to four years following the onset of puberty (roughly 11-12 through 15-16), the brain cuts back millions of neurons.

Jay Giedd, the lead researcher on teenage brains at the National Institutes of Health, calls it a “**use it or lose it principle**”.

Ok...so now what?

What do you believe are the main tasks of adolescence?

The three main tasks of adolescents is:

1. Identity “Who am I?”
2. Autonomy “How am I unique, and what power do I have?”
3. Affinity “Where and to whom do I belong?”

ROLE OF THE PARENT IN ADOLESCENCE

DEUT. 6: The Principle Discipler: In worldview, in ethics, in social skills, in life skills, and faith…

What is the primary goal of parenting? The goal of parenting a teenager should not be creating miniature versions of ourselves. It shouldn’t be making nice, compliant citizens. And it sure shouldn’t be raising “successful” wage earners. The primary goal of parenting a teenager is to raise an adult. They should finish their adolescence by saying “I’m ready to take responsibility for myself, for my decisions - good and bad - and for my influence for myself.”

Research shows that most believers begin their journey of faith prior to the age of 13 or 14. There is no question that the peer group begins to play a more significant role in the life of your young teen; but you’re still in the top spot, influence-wise. It’s not until the later years of high school that peer influence starts to eclipse parent influence, with peer influence clearly taking the lead during emerging adulthood.

INFORMATION

Youth Chickfila Fundraiser: Buy your tickets after SS in the foyer and FLC

Winter Retreat - Dec. 28-30. https://goo.gl/forms/plPgZJnInhKaD7rM2

Costa Rica Missions - March 12-18 Registration: https://goo.gl/forms/LPEONCkDsL4ENjw12. Check CBC youth website for full details

April 2 - spaghetti luncheon

May 28 - senior banquet

June 26-july 1 - world changers (Dallas)

Discovery camp july23-26