



# Brain Development: Teenagers

TEEN TALK

BY CHARM TINN

# KEY POINTS

- ▶ As children become teenagers, their brains grow and change.
- ▶ Thinking and behaviour affected.
- ▶ Healthy teenage brains need positive behaviour and thinking, and sleep.



## Children brain development: the basics

By 6 years old a brain is 90-95% developed.

Brain remodelling happens in adolescence

Brain change depends on age, experience and hormonal changes in puberty

# The 'Three Brains'

[The Three Main Parts Of Your Brain by Dr. Russ Harris – YouTube](#)

The image shows two axial MRI scans of a brain, one above the other. The scans are in grayscale with a blue tint. Technical data is overlaid on the scans, including parameters like TR, TE, SL, TA, and patient information like 'Chilam' and 'Hammond'. A red vertical bar is on the right side of the image.

# INSIDE THE TEENAGE BRAIN

- ▶ Adolescence a time of growth and development.
- ▶ Connections are pruned or made
- ▶ Amygdala is used and relied on instead

# SHIFTS AND CHANGES

- ▶ While your Child's brain is developing, your child might:
- ▶ Choose high-risk activities or risky behaviour
- ▶ Express more and stronger emotions
- ▶ Make impulsive decisions.



# BUILDING A HEALTHY TEENAGE BRAIN

- ▶ HOW YOU GUIDE AND INFLUENCE YOUR CHILD WILL BE IMPORTANT IN HELPING YOUR CHILD TO BUILD A HEALTHY BRAIN TOO.





# Behaviour strategies

- ▶ Encouraging positive behaviour
- ▶ Promoting good thinking skills
- ▶ Helping your child get plenty of sleep



# HOW TO TALK TO TEENS

Understanding  
Emotions

Staying calm

Fairness

Listening

Communication

Communication  
and resolution

Partnering with  
your teen

# 6 KEY ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS



Pay Attention



Defer judgement



Ask open-ended questions



Reflect - of which more later



Clarify



Summarise

# HOW TO KEEP COMMUNICATION OPEN:



Talk “off message”



Use ‘I’ messages



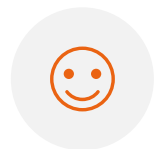
Use open questions



Share something



Emotional Validation



Find words for feelings



Praise and positive reinforcement

# PACE: A KEY PROTECTIVE FACTOR

DR DAN HUGHES



# P R R R – evidence based research

- ▶ Protect
- ▶ Relate
- ▶ Regulate
- ▶ Reflect

# KEY RELATIONSHIP NEEDS FOR TROUBLED CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS



- ▶ Affect Attunement – meeting the child’s emotional intensity
- ▶ Empathy – recognising how the teenager is experiencing the event
- ▶ Containment – staying with the feelings
- ▶ Emotional regulation - soothing

# TALKING TO TEENS WITH COMMON TEENAGE PROBLEMS

- ▶ TALK OPENLY
- ▶ EMPATHISE AND ACKNOWLEDGE
- ▶ FOCUS ON LISTENING, NOT LECTURING
- ▶ CHECK-IN REGULARLY
- ▶ TRUST YOUR GUT
- ▶ PROVIDING RELEVANT RESOURCES

## WINE (I wonder, I imagine, I notice, empathy)

- **I wonder if...** (e.g. it felt like no one understood you).
- **I imagine...** (e.g. that was horrible when that happened).
- **I notice...** (e.g. how you perked up when you said you felt close to your brother).
- **I felt moved when you said...** (e.g. for years you thought you were to blame for the abuse. But now you realise you were not to blame and you feel freed from a terrible burden).
- **That sounds...** (e.g. painful because you were all on your own). [empathy]
- **This is my drawing about what you said** (show drawing).
- **I respect you for...** (e.g. your courage).
- **Will you help me understand x?...** (e.g. what it was like for you when your mum went to hospital?).

After voicing your curiosity, e.g. 'Will you help me understand' always follow up with **empathy** e.g. 'So when you Mum went to hospital your say you felt terribly lost and alone. I can understand that. So painful, as I know how close you are and how much you feel supported by her.' (This should not be simply a parroting of what they said but showing that you have understood the main emotional themes in their response.)

© Margot Sunderland 2020  
WINE was originated by Chris Davies (Head of Training Trauma Informed Schools East of England)

**TRAUMA  
INFORMED  
SCHOOLS**

REMINDER: SENTENCE IDEAS TO ASSIST WITH EMPATHY AND REFLECTION

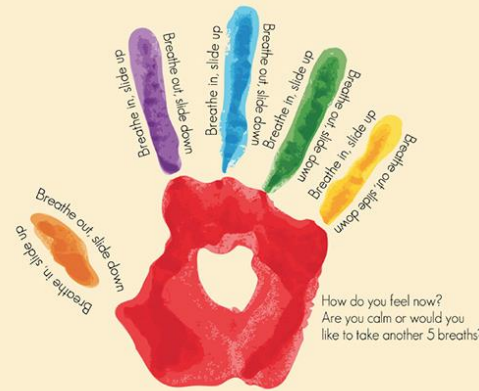


# ORGANISATIONS THAT SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE AND PARENTS

- ▶ [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- ▶ [www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk) 0808 808 4994
- ▶ [www.Samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan](http://www.Samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan) call 116123
- ▶ [www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk)
- ▶ [www.youngpeoplecornwall.org](http://www.youngpeoplecornwall.org)
- ▶ <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/earlyhelp>

# STRATEGIES FOR ANXIETY

## CALM DOWN WITH TAKE 5 BREATHING



Stretch your hand out like a star.

- Get the pointer finger of your other hand ready to trace your fingers up and down.
- Slide up each finger slowly ~ slide down the other side
- Breathe in through your nose ~ out through your mouth
- Put it together and breathe in as you slide up and breathe out as you slide down.
- Keep going until you have finished tracing your hand.

PRINT YOUR COPY AT [CHILDHOOD101.COM](http://CHILDHOOD101.COM)

## GROUNDING WITH YOUR FIVE SENSES

What are <sup>things</sup> 5 THINGS YOU CAN SEE

4 THINGS YOU CAN FEEL

3 THINGS YOU CAN HEAR

2 THINGS YOU CAN SMELL

1 THING YOU CAN TASTE

**SUN**  
PICTURE ON THE WALL  
PEOPLE WALKING

**WIND BLOWING**  
FEET ON THE FLOOR  
PENCIL IN HAND

**BIRDS CHIRPING**  
CLOCK TICKING  
CAR HORNS

**FOOD FROM THE CAFETERIA**  
LAUNDRY DETERGENT ON CLOTHES  
FRESH CUT GRASS

**MINT**  
Breakfast  
TOOTHPASTE



STRATEGIES FOR REGULATING STRESS AND HYPER-AROUSAL

# MANAGING FEELINGS

