HELPING YOUR TEENAGER WITHOUT RESCUING

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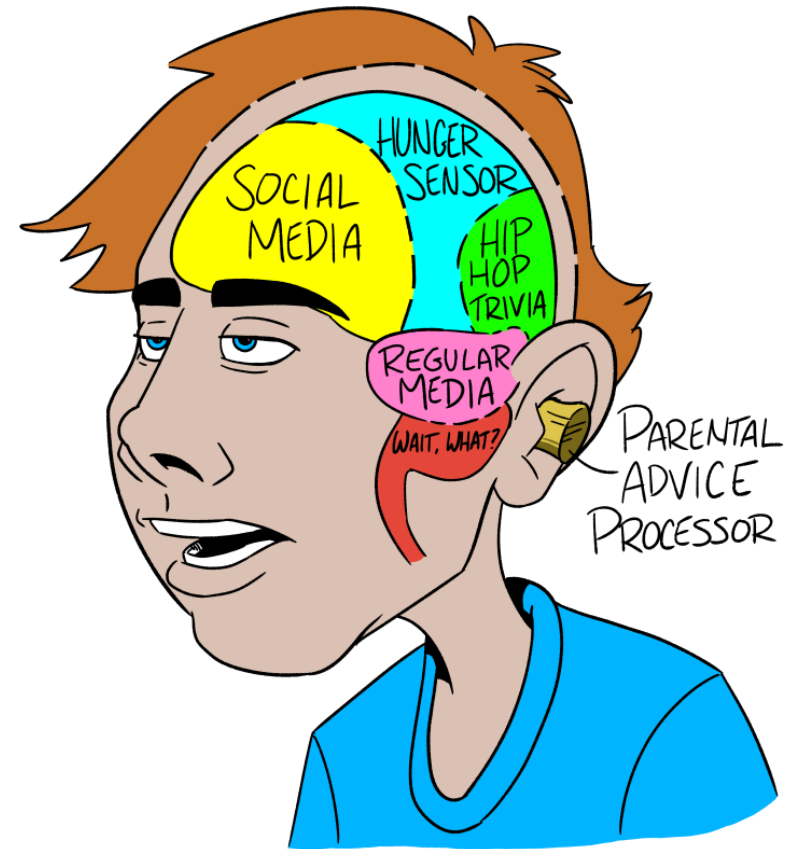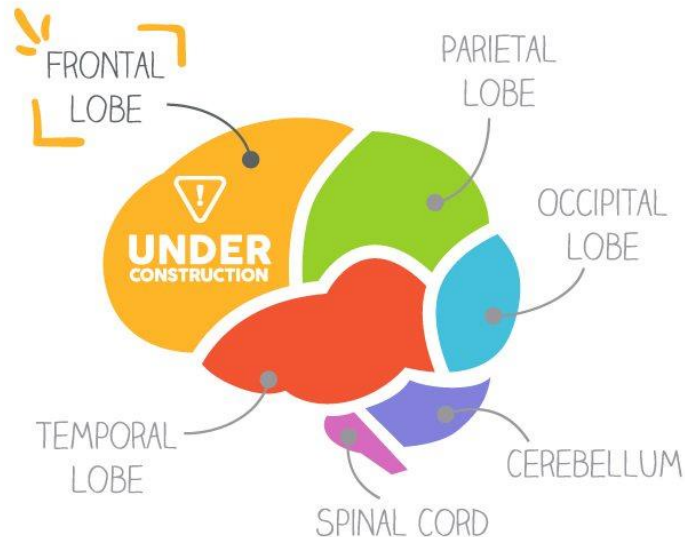
NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

PARENTING LABELS

TEENAGE BRAIN BASICS

- The human brain isn't finished developing until the mid to late twenties

- Large increase in neural connections forming

- Use it or Lose it → brain forms new matter which

- More neural connections = a higher dopamine levels (i.e. pleasure seeking and risk taking behavior)

TEENAGE BRAIN BASICS

The Teen Brain

FRONTAL LOBE

PARIETAL LOBE

OCCIPITAL LOBE

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

CEREBELLUM

TEMPORAL LOBE

SPINAL CORD

- Brain develops from the back to the front

  - Limbic System → (the accelerator) Emotion, risk taking, immediate gratification

  - Pre Frontal Cortex → (the brakes) problem solving, rational thinking, decision making, future orientation, consequences

- Striatum →Brain's reward center, releases dopamine to the brain
  - This part is very reactive in teenage years making teenagers very receptive to rewards. Hyper responsive to feedback helps them learn faster
  - Connected to risk taking

THE DOWNSIDE TO RESCUING

- Avoiding pain and discomfort
- Child never feels the consequences of their actions
- Can escalate destructive behavior
- Stunts social-emotional learning
- Creates struggles with communication
- Low motivation
- Lower self-esteem

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES

- Communication
- Guided Independence
- "Rupture and Repair"
- Separating Us vs. Them
- Modeling
- De-personalize
- Allow opportunities for natural consequences
  - Debriefing/processing vs. intervening
- Boundary setting
- Why vs. How

THE OPPOSITE OF RESCUING IS RESILIENCY

Resiliency: being able to 'bounce back' from difficult times, setbacks, and other significant challenges. It includes being able to deal effectively with pressure, and get through tough times with good outcomes.

- Resiliency can be taught at any age and any stage of life
- Benefits of resiliency include:
  - Improved learning and academic achievement
  - Lower absences from work or school due to sickness
  - Reduced risk-taking behavior
  - Higher involvement with community and family activities
  - Lower mortality rate and increased physical health
  - Less depressive symptoms
  - Better ability to cope with stress

RAISING RESILIENT CHILDREN

Build Confidence

Don't accommodate every need	Avoid eliminating all risk	Let them take charge sometimes	Help them manage their emotions

Build Competence

Teach them to become problem solves	Teach concrete skills	Avoid "why" questions	Model resiliency

BUTTON PUSHING

Words or actions that a child uses intentionally to frustrate or anger someone during an argument

- Building a Button Pushing Plan:
  1. Recognize how are you being "baited"?
  2. Button pushing vs. personal attacks
  3. Develop the skill to Exit & Wait

BUTTON PUSHING EXAMPLES

Child's Buttons

- Preaching
- Talking in chapters
- Labeling
- Futurizing
- Instant problem-solving
- Questioning their mood ("what has suddenly gotten into you?")
- Not tolerating experimental behavior
- Collecting criticisms

Parent's Buttons

- "You never let me do anything"
- "You don't love me"
- "I hate you"
- Swearing, yelling, verbal abuse
- "You're not my real parent. I don't have to listen to you"
- Eye rolling, whining, improper gestures
- "I'm going to kill myself"
- Lying
- "Fine, I'll run away"

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