

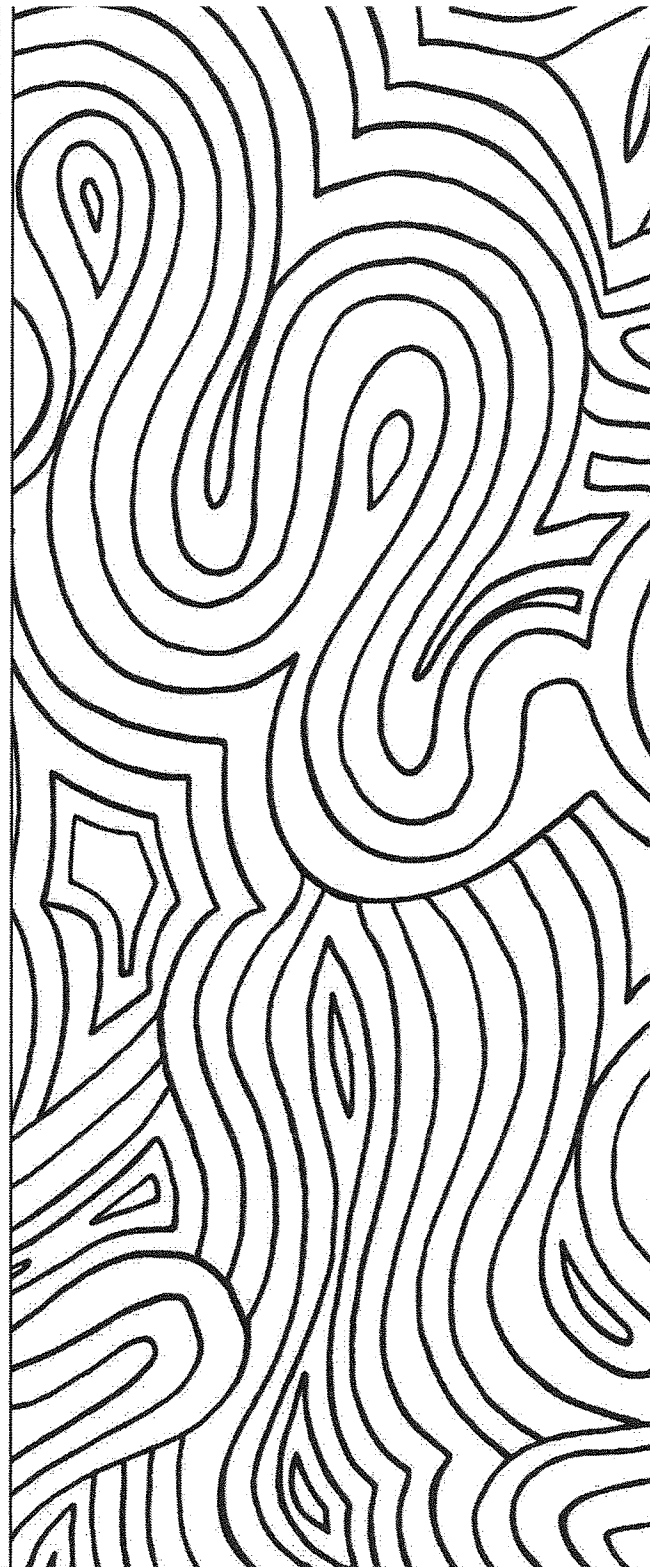
Because the teen brain prefers to push boundaries and take risks, find healthy ways to satisfy that need.

HEALTHY RISKS TO SATISFY THE THRILL SEEKING TEEN BRAIN:

Which ones will you try?

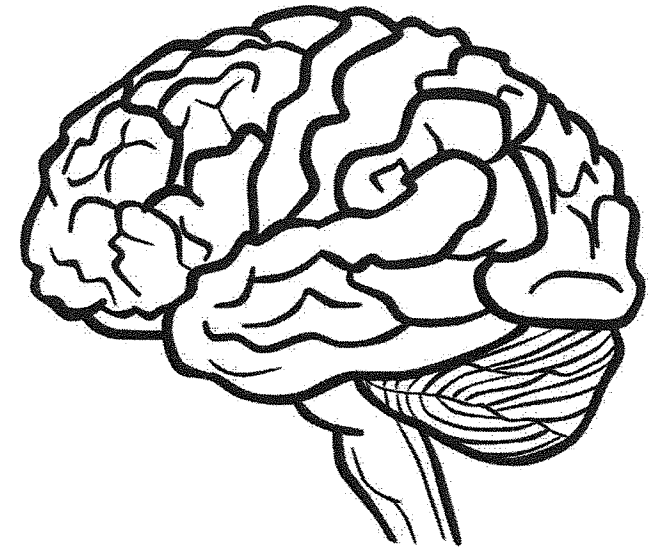
- Try out for a team or a school play.
- Enter a contest or challenge.
- Try public speaking.
- Volunteer to "go first" at something.
- Try new things.
- Volunteer somewhere.
- Learn a new skill.
- Strike up a conversation with someone new.
- Become a mentor.
- Ride a roller coaster.
- Dine alone in public.
- Get on the dance floor.

Write about some other ways you can try exciting things that are not going to put you in danger:



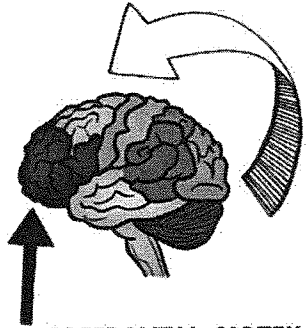
THE TEEN BRAIN

UNDERSTAND AND HARNESS THE POWER OF THE TEEN BRAIN.



Research shows that the teen brain has a unique ability to be innovative, creative, and to think outside of the box.

TEEN BRAINS EXPLAINED

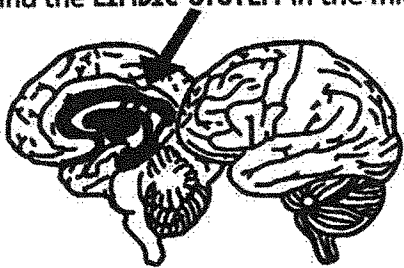


The brain develops and matures from back to front. Front areas are not well developed until around age 25-30.

The **PREFRONTAL CORTEX** in the front is not well developed. It's responsible for:

- Impulse control – thinking through your actions before acting on them.
- Emotional regulation – being able to maintain a calm emotional state without overreacting.
- Organizational skills – being able to find things and keep them in order.
- Rationalization – analyzing and making judgement calls based on facts.
- Reasoning - thinking of something in a logical way often using facts over emotions.

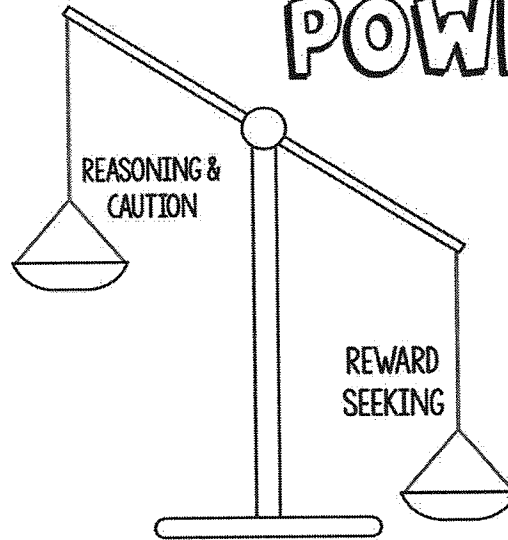
If you looked at the inside of the brain, you would find the **LIMBIC SYSTEM** in the middle.



This is the part of the brain in charge of emotions and reward processing. It gives you the exciting feeling from taking risks. It is well developed during the teen years.

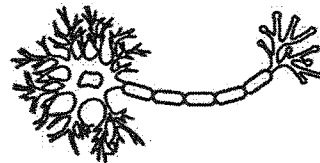
***Knowledge is power.** Knowing how the teen brain works can help you make better choices.

IMBALANCE OF POWER



The thrill seeking and emotional part of the brain is on overdrive, while the rational and cautious side is not fully developed.

FUN FACT!



Great learning happens during this time because of a process called pruning. As you learn, you make new connections in your brain. The connections that are used the most are strengthened and the ones that aren't used as much are lost (or "pruned"). This makes way for faster, clearer learning and more complex thoughts. It's a great time to pick up skills!

Take advantage of this amazing phase of brain development by learning new things as often as possible!

FAQ'S ABOUT TEEN BEHAVIOR BASED ON THEIR BRAIN DEVELOPMENT:

- ✓ Vulnerable to addiction (reward seekers)
- ✓ Don't bounce back from the effects of drugs and alcohol as fast as an adult.
- ✓ May take more risks.
- ✓ Fall in love fast because of high emotions.
- ✓ Mental illness emerges during this time period. Watch for anxiety and depression (when sadness lasts weeks or months).
- ✓ May appear rude and self-centered because they are less able to understand the effects of their behavior on others.
- ✓ Teens understand when they are making bad choices but they often live more in the present, so they do it anyway.
- ✓ High emotions may cause social anxiety.
- ✓ Lack of organization skills can cause poor grades and forgetfulness.
- ✓ May get into frequent arguments due to emotions running high and reasoning running low.
- ✓ Easily influenced by peers.

Teens may need to seek out ways to find focus, regulate emotions, get organized and get advice from adults when things aren't clear.

Helpful tips for teens:

- Practice deep breathing.
- Try yoga.
- Take calming breaks and find simple calming activities like coloring, crafting, playing an instrument and listening to music.
- Try counting to ten before reacting.
- Get advice from adults when making big decisions.
- Watch videos on organizing & planning.
- Take a study skills class.
- Stay away from bad influences.
- Wait 24 hours before making big decisions.