

Study of the teenage brain assignment



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Not many people realize that the brain is still undergoing changes and metamorphose over the course of adolescents. Scientists used to believe that the brain was fully developed by elementary school, but with brain imaging they proved that the brain still has a lot of work to do before a teen can be considered an adult. Once certain parts of the brain, such as long nerve fibers that gradually become more insulated with myelin, fully develop, the brain can work at a greater speed and is able to make stronger connections. Once that happens, teens are able to make utter decisions, balance out goals, desires, and think in more complex ways.

The article entitled “ New Science of the Teenage Brain” states, “ But at times, and especially at first, the brain does this work clumsily. It’s hard to get all those new cogs to mesh. ” This is what causes reckless behavior in teens and poor decision making. The brain is such a complex organ so it makes sense that it would take a while for it to fully mature. It’s important for scientists to understand, however, that these traits experienced by teens are only temporary and in fact don’t affect natural selection ND choosing traits that will be carried on to other generations.

It is expected for teens to make mistakes and to act out in reckless ways. There are many studies done to show the contrast between the impulse control in kids, teens and adults. Beatrice Ulna conducted an experiment to show the ways that teens and adults react when they are told not to do something they have a natural impulse to do. The participants needed to watch a screen and when a blinking light appeared, they needed to resist looking at it and look in the opposite direction.

To succeed, you must override both a normal impulse to attend to new information and curiosity about something forbidden,” It is harder for the kids and teens to resist looking at something they are not supposed to. The results showed that with practice and motivation teens can resist looking at the blinking light. However, by age 20 it became easier for them to not look at the light because they are able to use the part of their brain that controls decision making. Studies also show that teens take more risks when they have a friend present.

The pressure to impress their peers, causes teens to act more recklessly than they would if they were alone. The article states, “ These studies help explain why teens behave with such vexing inconsistency: beguiling at breakfast, disgusting at dinner; masterful on Monday, sleepwalking on Saturday. ” This shows that brain development can cause stress, fatigue and challenges in adolescence, which explains why teens act out. This also ties in with the beginning of the article when a woman talks about her son and how he got a citation for reckless driving.

He disagreed with the accusation that his driving was “ reckless. ” He claimed he was being safe even though he was speeding over a hundred miles per hour. He understood that what he was doing was wrong, but the pleasure he got from doing something bad, was worth the trouble he got into. Adolescence crave the unusual and unexpected, they look for adventure and thrill pleasure isn’t always a bad thing. It could be used in a positive way, such as meeting new friends and creating a larger circle of people to be around.

Laurence Steinberg mints out, teens recognize they're doing something wrong and actually weigh out the possible outcome of the decision they're making. However, teens are just more prone to take the chances even if the outcome could result in something bad. " In situations where risk can get them something they want, they value the reward more heavily than adults do," That is the difference between adolescence and adults. This obsession with risk taking and seeking opportunities to act out can directly be related to compulsive checking of social media and the use of technology and smart phones in teens.

The internet has never been this popular in adolescents before. Teens today are constantly on their cell phones, tweeting, texting, going on Mainstream, playing popular games, and blogging. Internet use can be very addictive, especially for teens who feel they are socially awkward and can't make friends easily. They find comfort in posting on the internet and talking to people online instead of in person. It takes pressure off of them to interact in the real world. This isn't necessarily a good thing though. Some teens have whole different lives on the internet than they have in al life.

This can cause complete isolation and depression. In the article, " Is the Web Driving Us Mad? " Sherry Turtle talks about how today's youth are all " cowboys" now. " The life of continuous connection has come to seem normal, but that's not the same as saying that it's healthy or sustainable, as technology... Becomes the cause of and solution to of all life's problems. " This shows that obsessive use of the internet in teens can cause long-term damage and even cause them to become depressed and isolated well into their adulthood.

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I think it is very important in this day and age that young adults have a healthy balance between real life human interaction and the world of technology, such as texting, tweeting or any social media for that matter. Personally, I'm glad I grew up in the time that I did because I feel that today's younger generation is completely consumed in their cell phones. Kids today in elementary school and middle school are a lot different than I was when I was that age. They are being brought up to rely on technology and I don't think that it is benefiting them at all.

However I do think technology can be very helpful when used in moderation. For example, if you are driving, lost and don't know where to go, you can just type an address in your cell phone and the GPS will tell you how to get there. Personally, I don't think I'm "addicted" to using my cell phone. However I can see how some people are. It gives you pleasure to surf the web or go on twitter when you've got nothing else to do. It's also a huge distraction when doing homework. If you're confused with an assignment, it's very easy to take a 10 minutes break and scroll through social media sites.

But, suddenly, that 10 minutes turns into an hour and you've wasted a great deal of time basically doing nothing. Also, it is very inappropriate to use your phone in class, especially if the professor prohibits it. When you're in class you should be focused on your work, not looking at pictures on Instagram or texting your friend. The two factors of teen risk taking and use of the internet definitely tie into each other. Internet should be used in moderation but because it is so easily available to teens, it makes it hard for them to resist the feeling