

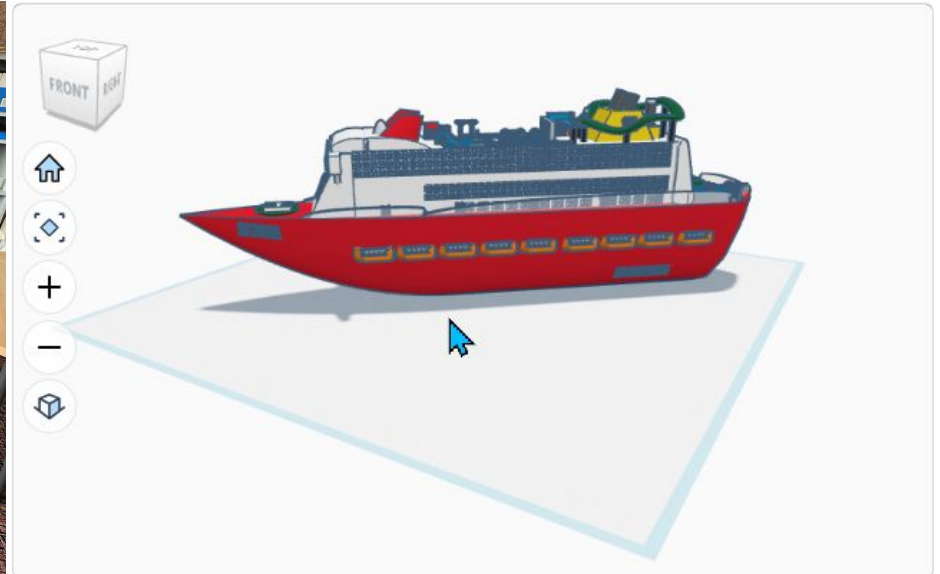
THE DIGITAL JUNGLE



Navigating Social Communities Safely

GENERAL PHILOSOPHY

Technology should be used more ***for purpose*** rather than ***passive*** action.



FINDING THE BALANCE BETWEEN CONVENIENCE & CONCERN

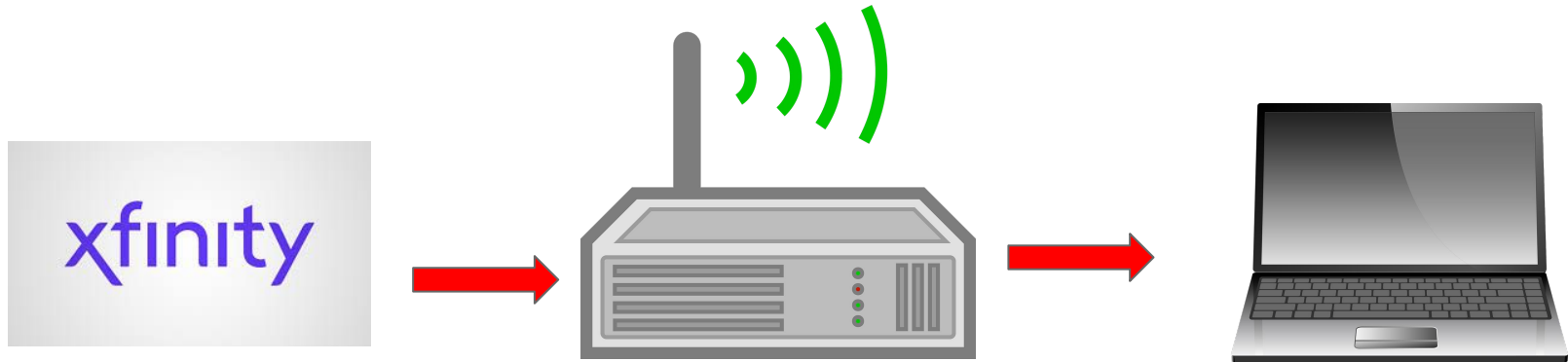


WHERE SHOULD I BE ON THE SPECTRUM?



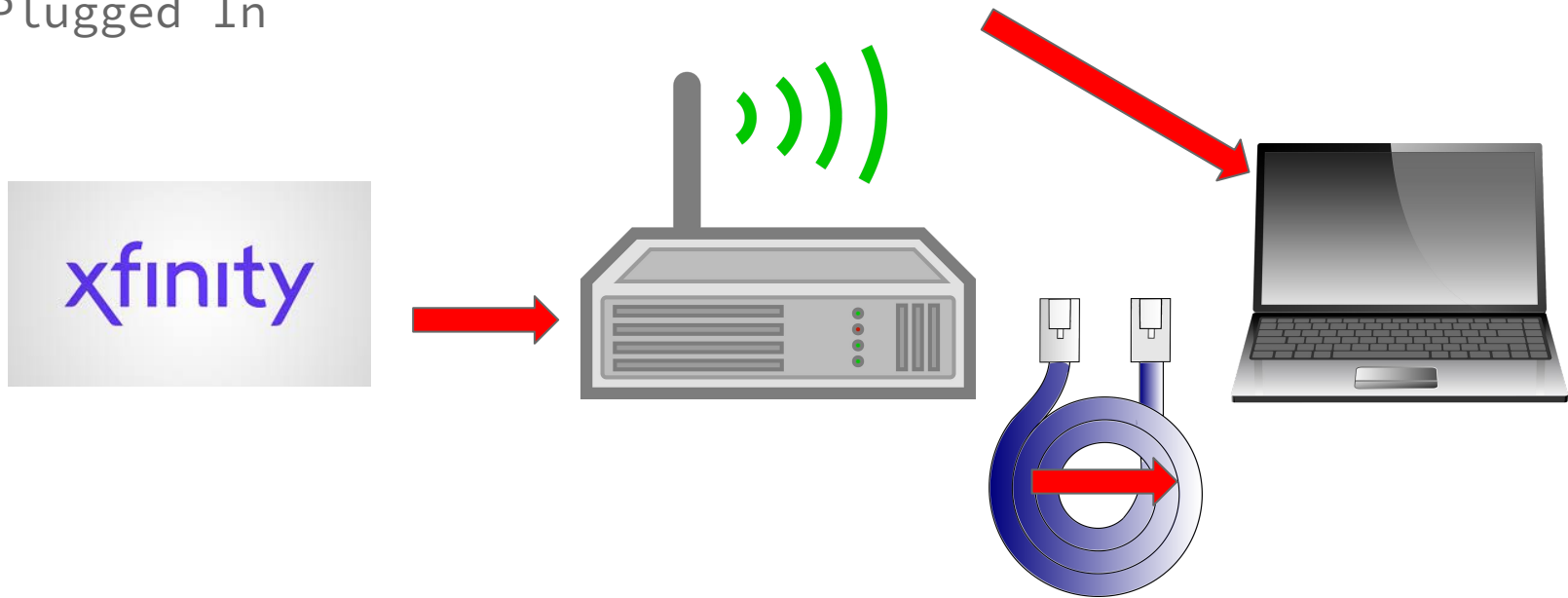
THE ENVIRONMENT

Wifi



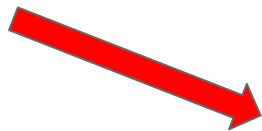
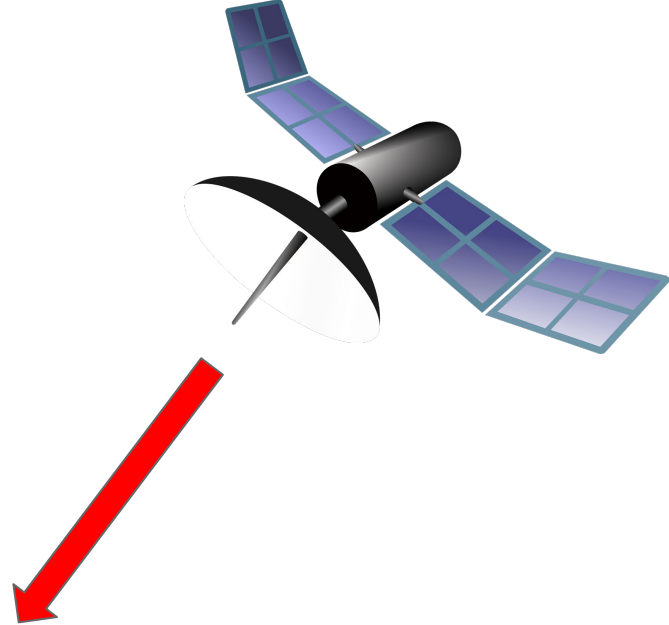
THE ENVIRONMENT

Plugged In



THE ENVIRONMENT

Cell & Wifi



POP QUIZ

You set up the parental controls with your Internet Service Provider. What happens when your student takes their device to their friend's house?

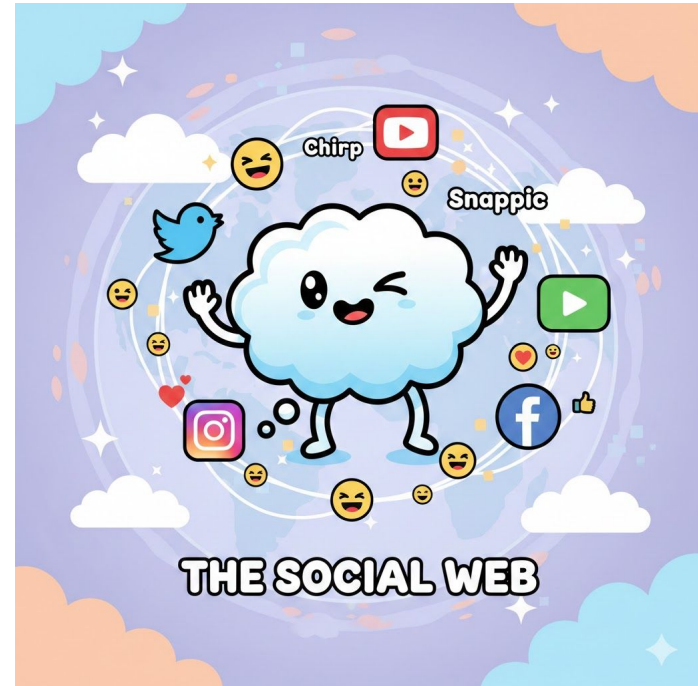


TWO SIDES OF TECHNO-CHALLENGE



MOST TYPES OF TECH “SOCIAL LANDMINES”

- Social Media
- Chats and Interactive live streaming
- Google
- AI chatbots*
- Social elements in Video Games



SOCIAL MEDIA & LIVE STREAMING (TIKTOK, INSTAGRAM, TWITCH)

- "stranger danger"
- Algorithm-driven content and advertisements
- Financial scams
- Teen grooming



GOOGLE

Sneaky chatting



Add people, groups, spaces, and calendar events

People with access



Christian Cloud (you)
ccloud@indyde.org

Owner

General access



Restricted ▾

Only people with access can open with the link

 Copy link

Done

SOCIAL ELEMENTS IN VIDEO GAMES

- Roblox
- Fortnite
- Minecraft
- Age Appropriate

My chilling week on Roblox: sexually assaulted and shat on as a child avatar roaming the online world

In seven days my young alter ego is cyberbullied and attacked while exploring clubs, casinos and horror games, all with parental controls in place. Is the platform safe for children - or an 'X-rated paedophile hellscape'?



[chenendikapro]: i cant survive
[ayan12341234]: 0-0
[ayan12341234]: hi nicollette
[chenendikapro]: i cant do it
[Ayoola63]: hi
[chenendikapro]: i give up...
[jacktheking1121]: come
[chenendikapro]: -bleeds-
[chenendikapro]: -close eyes-
[ayan12341234]: sorry to interrupt.. do you need help?
[jacktheking1121]: food ##### her
[chenendikapro]: -died from not eating-
[jacktheking1121]: can you feed this kid
[chenendikapro]: -dies-
[ayan12341234]: ok
Chat '/' or '/help' for a list of chat commands.
[jacktheking1121]: _____



Discord



AI CHATBOTS*

Home > Monitor on Psychology > 2026 > January/February >

EMERGING TRENDS

AI chatbots and digital companions are reshaping emotional connection

As digital relationships proliferate, psychologists explore the mental health risks and benefits

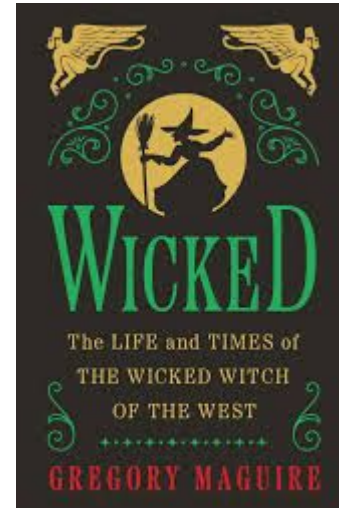
WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?



GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING ABOUT CONTENT



V.S.

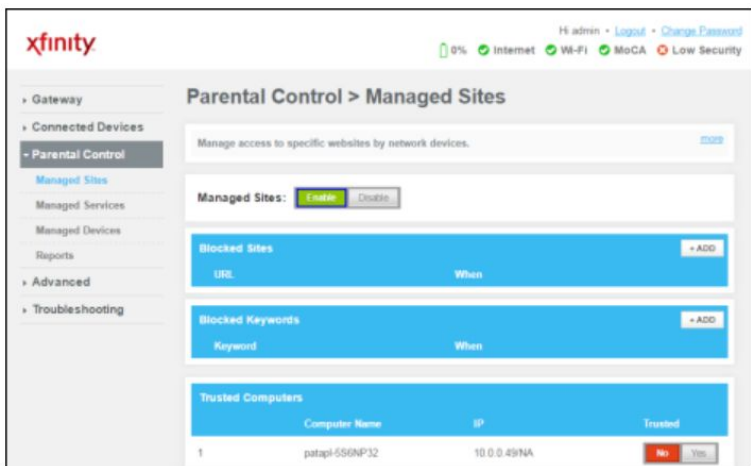


REMEMBER THE SPECTRUM?



INTERNET/PHONE PARENTAL CONTROLS

- Learn how to use the parental controls on your home internet and any app.
- Explore options for monitoring and alerts
- Control the wifi



Google <families-noreply@google.com>
to me ▾

Fri, Jan 2, 5:57 PM (13 days ago)



Review Christian's app install

Hi Christian,

Christian recently installed an app on his Pixel 8. Your current Family Link settings allow Christian to download no charge apps without your permission.

OTHER TIPS

- Most platforms allow you to filter out specific keywords (like "diet," "betting," or "challenge") so they never appear on your child's feed
- Protect your financial information to keep your student from getting scammed
- Have them use technology in common areas, not behind a closed bedroom door



OTHER TIPS

- Ask questions and “meet” their online friends
- Maintain an open door policy with their devices
- Model good digital practices
- Don't use AI as a “friend”



"Oh, you must be Jenny's parents - she's always on her cell phone too."

REMEMBER!

- No solutions are 100%
- Kids are smart and *will* find work arounds (if they want to)
- Look for changes in behavior & attitude



IN THE CLOUD HOUSEHOLD

- No **Social Media** until 18
- No **open chats** with strangers (text nor voice)
- Started with **specific function** kids devices (Gabb, Bark)
- **Locked down** Smartphone with **monitoring** software
- Do **spot checks**
- Made **tech free** times and places



SOME RESOURCES

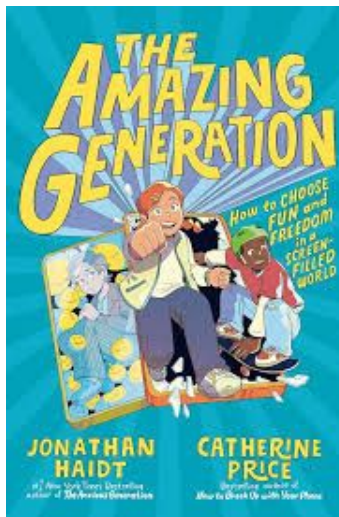
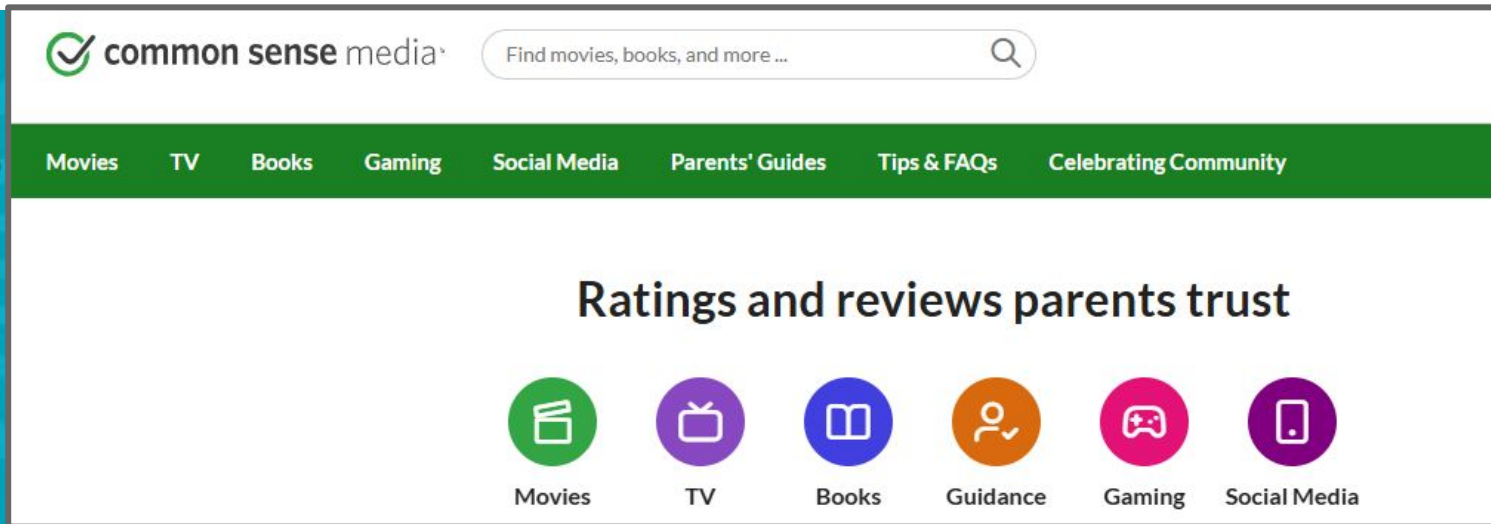
Devices: Gabb and Bark

Software: Qustodio,
Bark, Norton Family,
Google Family Link

***Bark** doesn't show you everything—it only alerts you when its AI detects a "problem."



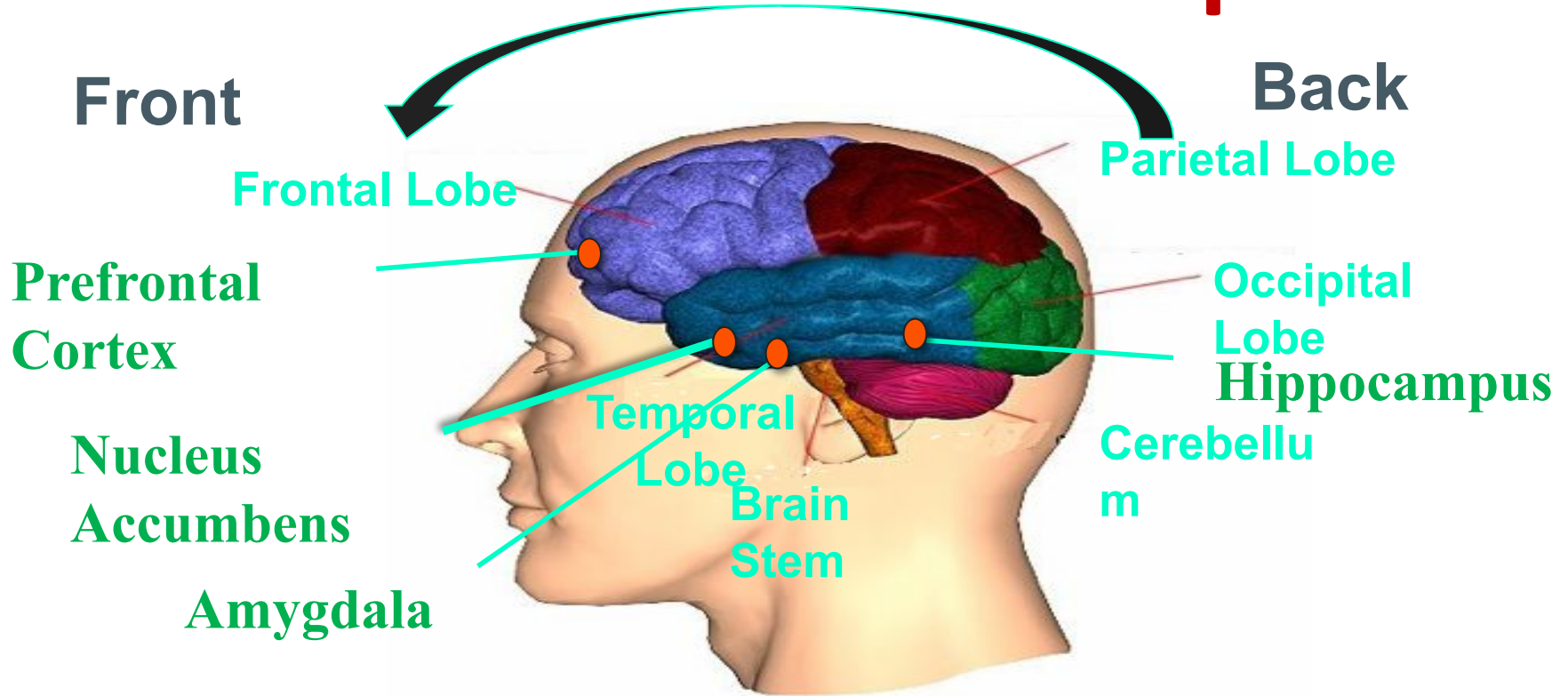
SOME RESOURCES



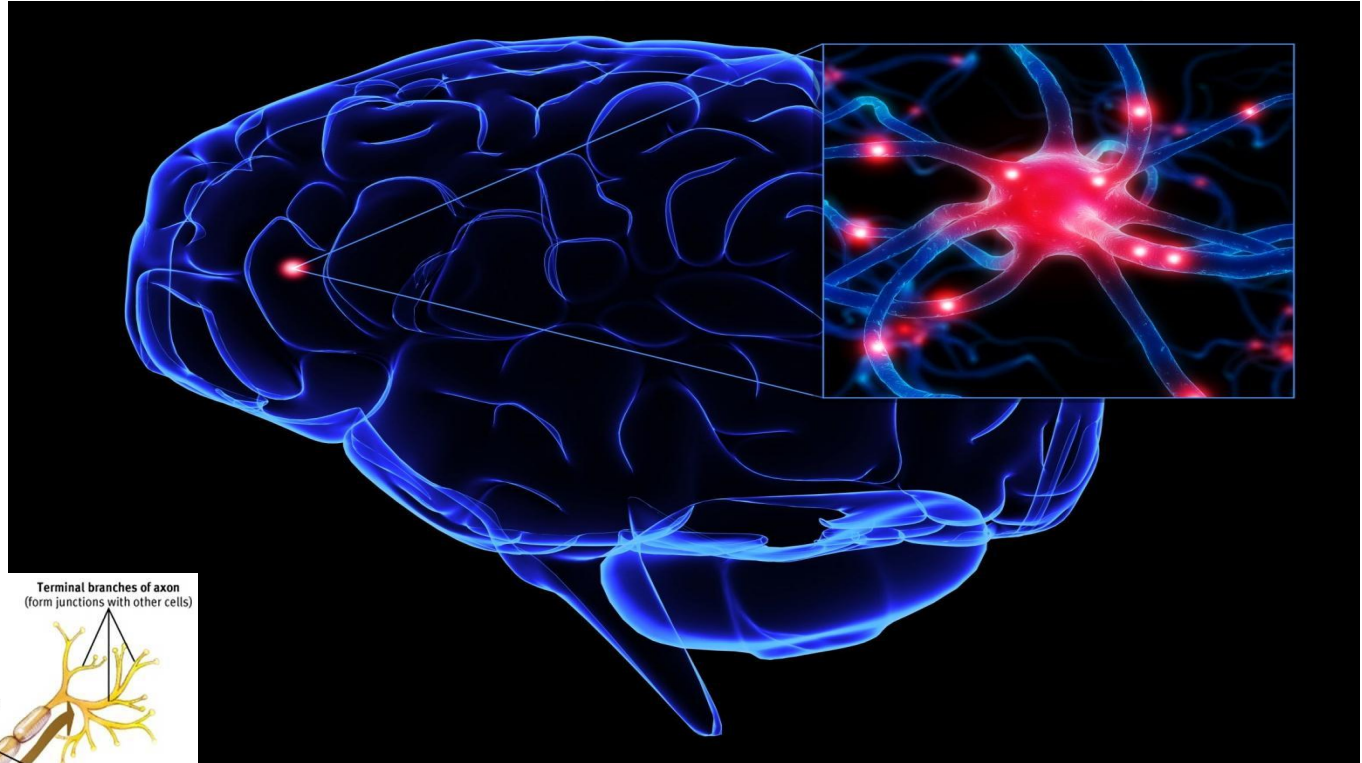
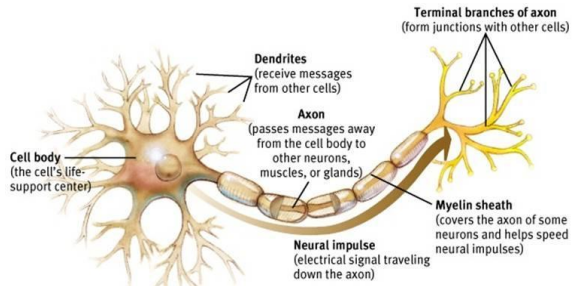
ccloud@indyde.org

Gemini

How the Brain Develops



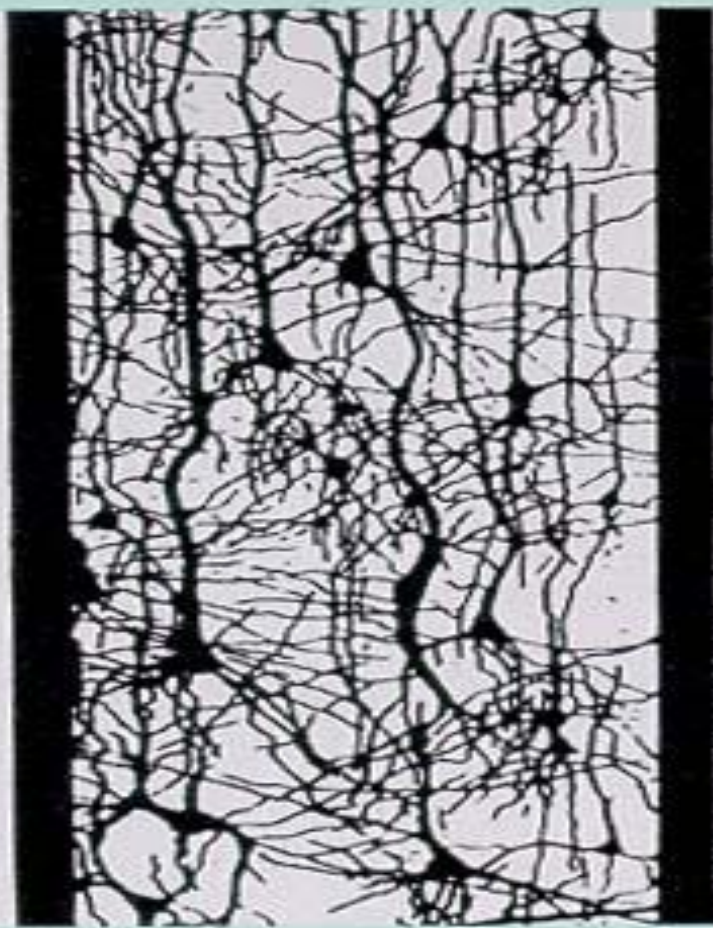
Brain cells (Neurons)



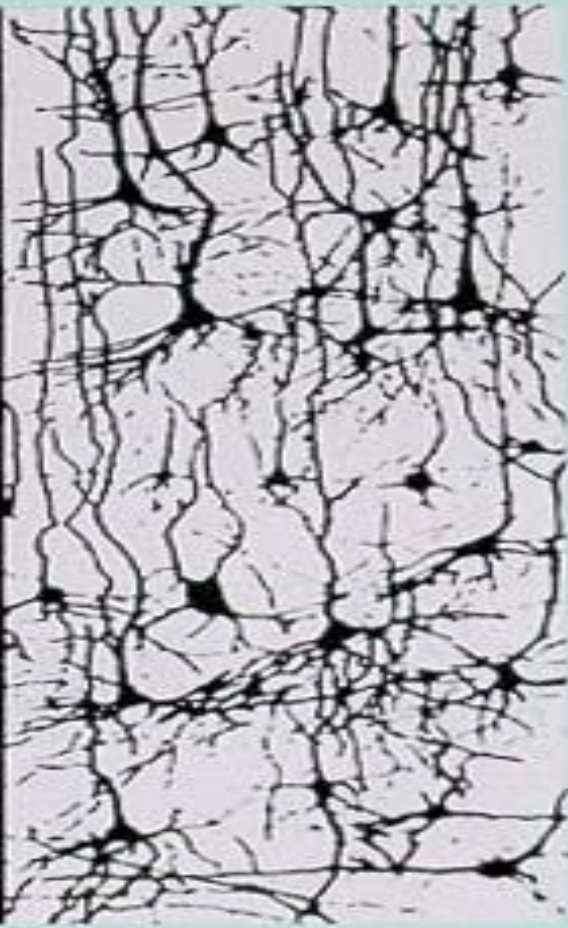
At Birth



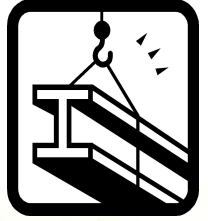
6 Years Old



14 Years Old

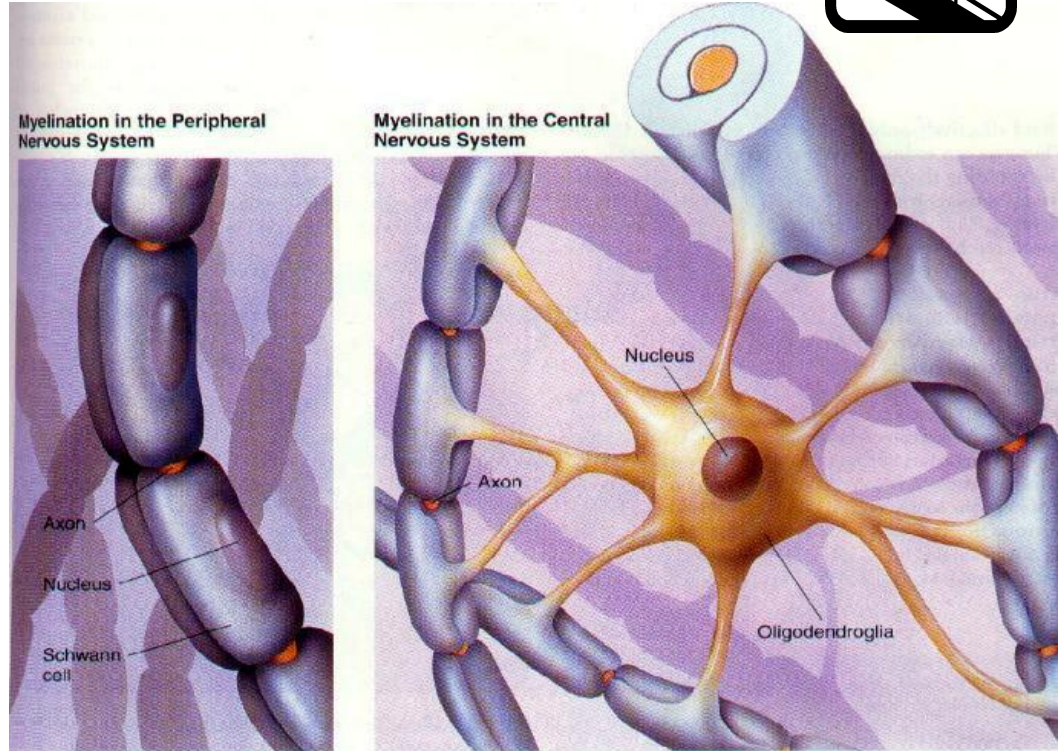


Construction Ahead



Along with pruning, **myelin** starts to cover axons and then thicken.

The myelin sheaths help action potential travel



Slide courtesy of Ken Winters, PhD.

Brain Maturation in Adolescence

Nucleus Accumbens

(highly active in adolescence)

- Pleasure center
- Active during pleasurable activities, including feeding, sex, and drug use
- Plays a major role in addiction



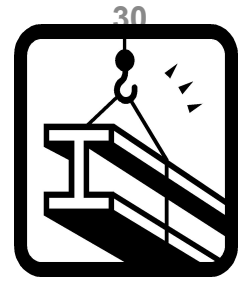
Prefrontal Cortex

(matures late adolescence or early adulthood)

- Impulse control
- Decision-making
- Organizing and planning
- Abstract thought, rational thinking
- Attention, focus
- Working memory

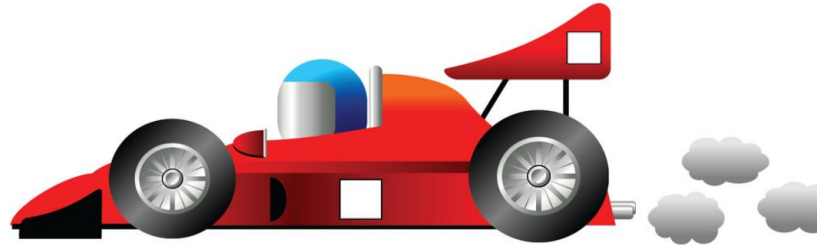


Construction Ahead



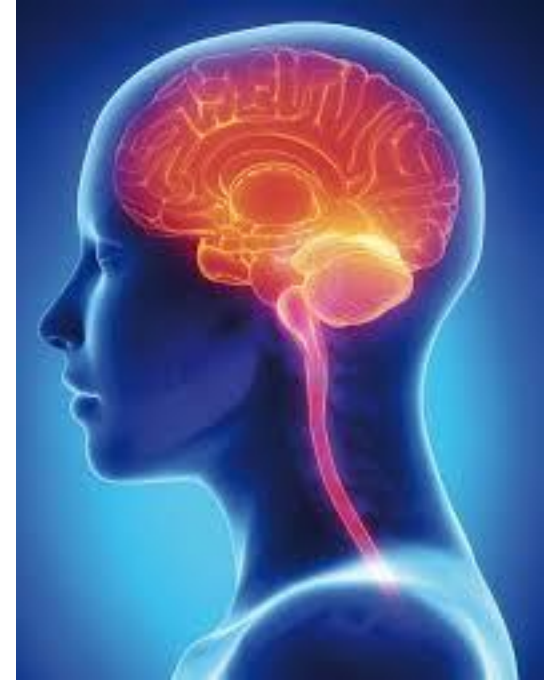
Result of Pruning and Myelination:

Fewer but faster
connections
in the brain.



DOPAMINE, MOTIVATION, AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Dopamine helps the brain decide **what matters**
- It drives **motivation, attention, and learning**
- Screens provide **fast, frequent reward signals**
- Kids' brains are still **developing self-control**
- Real-world social skills need **time and practice**



WHAT HELPS KIDS' BRAINS STAY BALANCED



- Protect **face-to-face connection**
- Build **screen-free routines**
- Encourage **effort-based activities**
- Normalize **boredom**
- Model **balanced screen use**

QUESTIONS?

