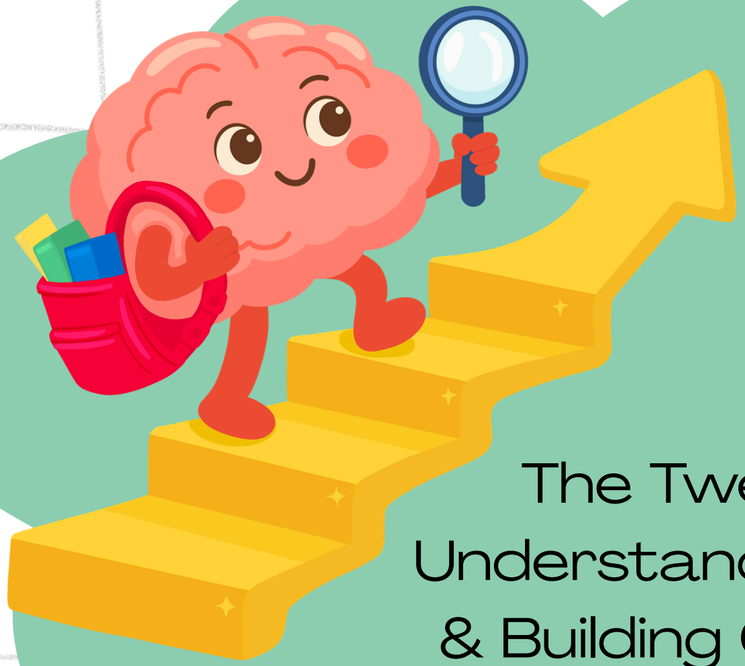
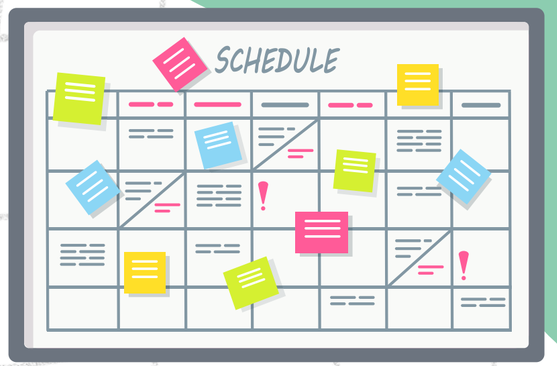






The Tween Years: Understanding the Brain & Building Organization Skills





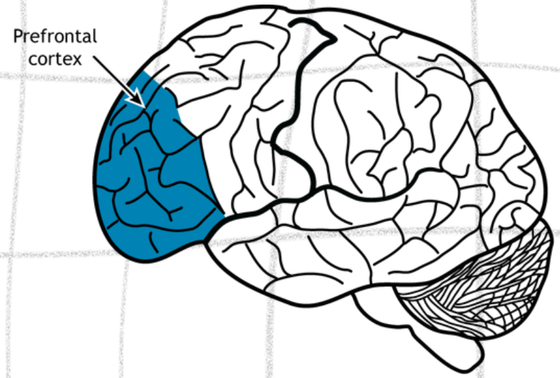
Presented by AJH
Counselors and School Psychologist

Maria Delamora, Student Support Counselor
Alexis Hance, Practicum Student
Valerie Moore, School Psycholgist
Brianna Pollinger, 7th Grade Counselor

DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE BRAIN

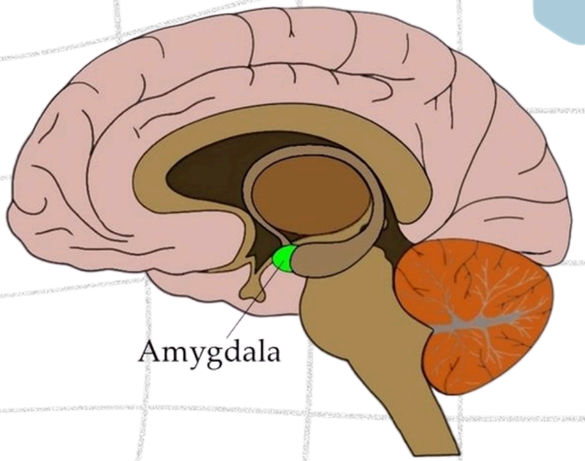
Prefrontal Cortex :

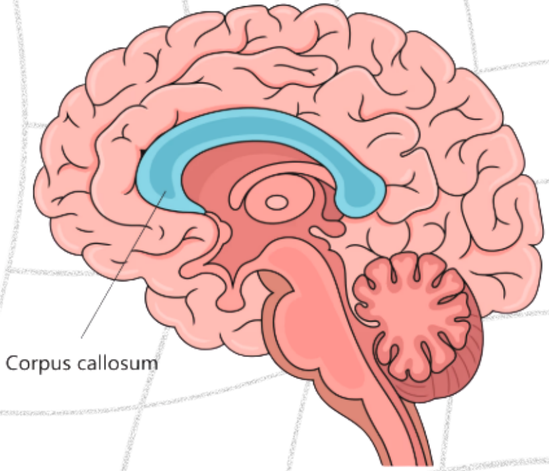
The "CEO" of the Brain, organization, logical thought, control of impulses



Amygdala:

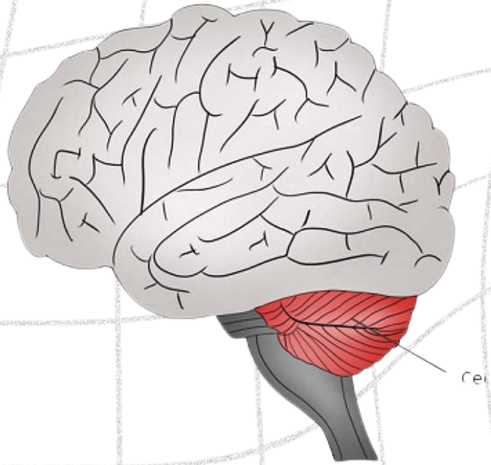
The "Guard Dog"





Corpus Callosum:

Creativity and Problem Solving, connects both Hemispheres

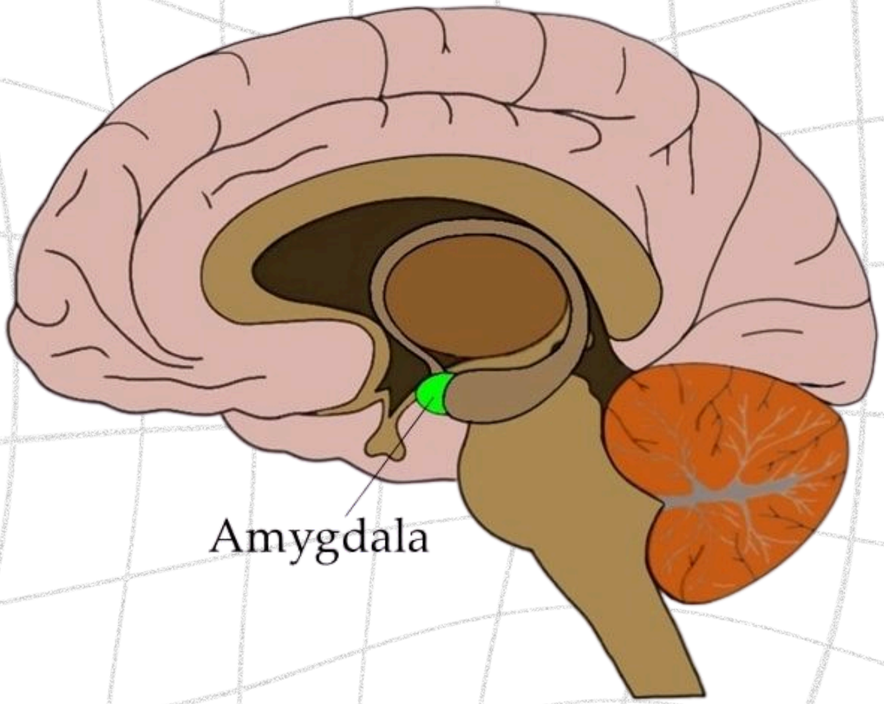


Cerebellum:

Coordination (mental and physical)

AMYGDALA

- Deals with processing emotions, especially fear and strong emotions
- vital for memory and motivation



- "The guard dog"



- Always vigilant and alert to potential threats.
- Reacts quickly to protect its territory,
- Helps us respond to dangerous or emotional situations, ensuring our safety and well- being.

PREFRONTAL CORTEX

- The front part of the brain
- Responsible for thinking, decision- making and emotions.
- Helps us remember things, focus, and control impulses.



ADOLESCENT BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

The teen years are all about fine-tuning how the brain works.

Social Experiences

The teen brain is resilient.

Ready to learn and adapt

Different response to stressors

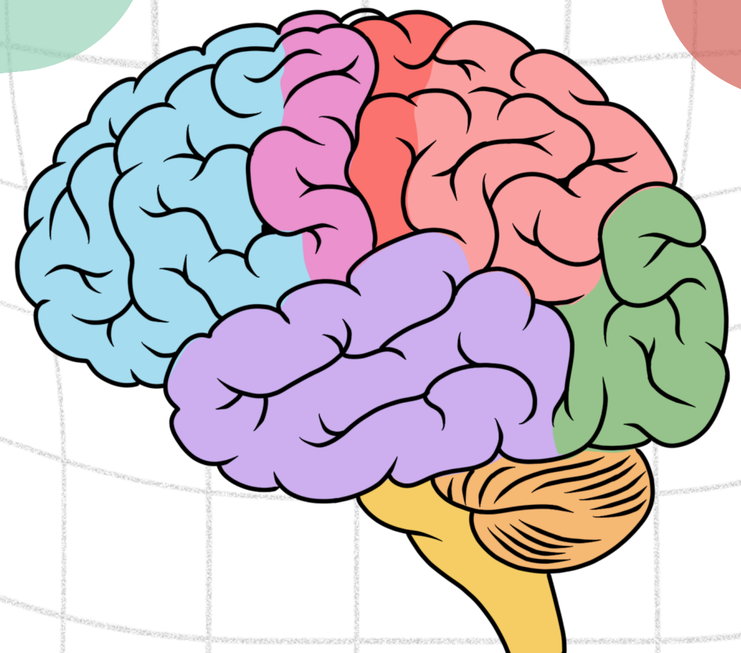
Sleep Changes

Crucial parts of the brain are not yet fully matured.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ADOLESCENT BRAIN?

It's a paradox: their brains are sharp, but they do not know what to do with them yet.

Synapses in some areas are growing rapidly, while others are not connected at all.



BEHAVIOR

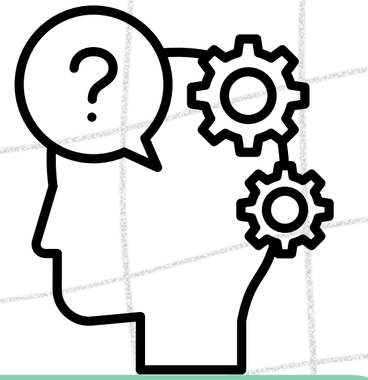
Teenagers start to question "who am I?" and they begin forming their identity, which includes self-concept and self- esteem

They express themselves through debate due to new and developing reasoning and logic skills

They become very interested in fairness or justice



BEHAVIOR



They begin to think more abstractly

Looking at the bigger picture, hidden meanings, and underlying reasons.

They start developing their own beliefs and may take up a cause such as becoming a vegetarian, women's rights, bettering the environment, etc...

They spend an immense amount of time thinking about themselves - this is not out of selfishness, it's an actual stage of teenage brain development.

BEHAVIOR

They are naturally impulsive

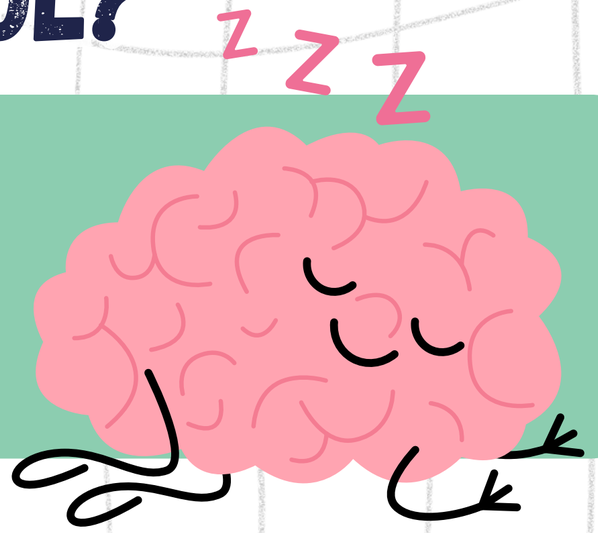
They react from their limbic area (emotions) while adults react from their prefrontal cortex (rational).

Social anxiety may increase because they start worrying what others are thinking of them.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR DAILY LIFE & SCHOOL?

Teenagers are largely sleep-deprived. Changing hormones impact the release of melatonin so they tend to fall asleep later.
They NEED 8-10 hours each night!



Sensory overload hinders recall - we can't close off the world, so they must learn how to manage.

Practice with them the habits you want to create.

Stay close - be interested in what interests them

Help them problem solve.

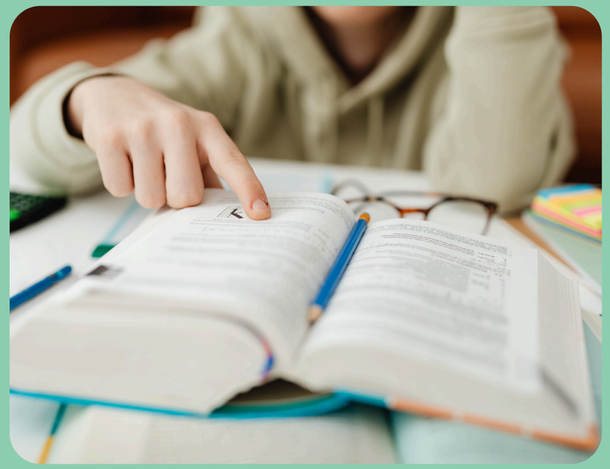
STAY POSITIVE & CONSISTENT



Don't be afraid of mistakes

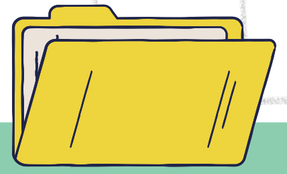


Keep practicing

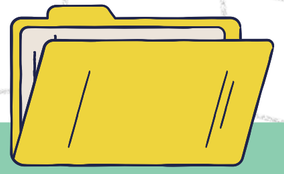


Stay disciplined

WHAT CAN PARENTS/TEACHERS DO?



Discuss consequences. It helps their brain make the connections and wires the brain to make those connections more often.



Remind them of their resilience and competence – they play a part in changing bad situations.



Don't be too quick to jump in to "fix" – help them with the process of problem solving.

WHAT CAN PARENTS/TEACHERS DO?

Hold them responsible for their actions.

Be aware of their stage of life and supportive as they move forward.

Communicate feelings to expand their awareness.

Model and assist the child in developing decision making skills

Don't take the behavior changes personally!

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES



Prepare for the following day the night before (pick out clothes, load backpack, discuss any events, etc.)

Come up with a system for documenting homework (Canvas, planner, list, etc.)



Have a conversation to help them determine what works best for them.



Practice with them until it becomes a habit and then regularly check in - it takes 30 days to make or break a habit.

ORGANIZATIONAL MODELING

Model how to communicate with teachers and other adults.

Model how to advocate for themselves.

Show them how to check their grades (HAC or grade app)

DO A REGULAR "CLEAN-OUT" OF UNNECESSARY PAPERS AND SCHOOL ITEMS

- start out weekly
- or progress report then report card time
- at end of 6 weeks, take out papers not needed.
- keep quizzes and tests to study for final exams, all the rest can go - but check with teachers!

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPLIES



Have a binder to help organize. It can be a binder for each class, one bigger binder with dividers for each class.

You can also get a hole puncher to place in the binder to better organize their work.

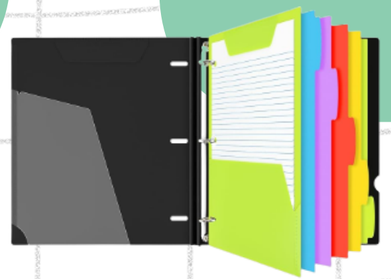




Folders with pockets for each class.



Accordian style folder.



AJH STUDENT SUGGESTIONS ON ORGANIZATION

Start the week with writing down in a journal what is due EVERYDAY of the week.

Print calendar and have it in your room so you can see it everyday when you wake up. Add what is due, and update it weekly.

Make sure to check the board in class, the teachers have reminders all the time.

Use a planner to write down what is due each day, and color code it by class.

Every Sunday open up Canvas and transfer all the due dates of assignments, quizzes, tests to your parents calendar so they can also help hold you accountable.

Use a sticky note and write a to-do list and place it on your chromebook so you can have a visual reminder of what you need to work on.

Set alarms on phone titled the name of the assignment that is due.

PARENT SUGGESTIONS FOR ORGANIZATION

Have the Canvas app on your phone and log on as a student so you can see everything your child sees. The parent version does not do that. Always encourage them to email the teacher when they have a question about class. Help them learn to advocate for themselves.

Take advantage of enrichment time. Even if you are not failing a class and you feel you need extra time, ask the teacher to place you in that class for enrichment.

On your personal calendar, set a reminder to check HAC every Friday. This makes you consistent on checking their grades and holding your student accountable if you see any missing grades or low test/quiz grades.

Kids have to be doing for themselves. When they have a problem, they need to learn how to solve it. So when they go to college, and out in the real world they can know how to solve their own problems.



CONCLUSION: MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS!

"Ongoing changes in the brain, along with physical, emotional, and social changes, can make teens more likely to experience mental health problems."

Remember that their brain is still developing.

Students need support and guidance during this stage of life.

Be patient with your student and yourself.

Source: National Institute of Mental Health

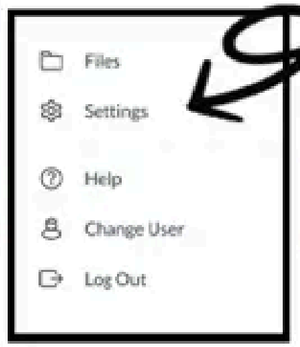
HOW TO SYNC A CANVAS STUDENT CALENDAR TO YOUR PERSONAL DEVICE

STEP 1: Download Canvas Student App

STEP 2: Login with your child's KISD account and password. You will have an option to add another child if necessary, and you can toggle between students in the top left corner.

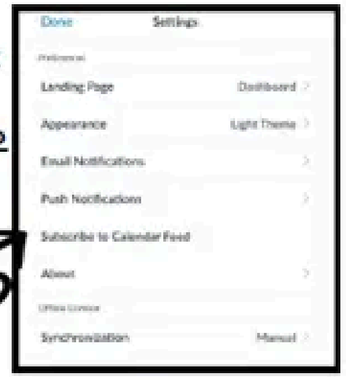


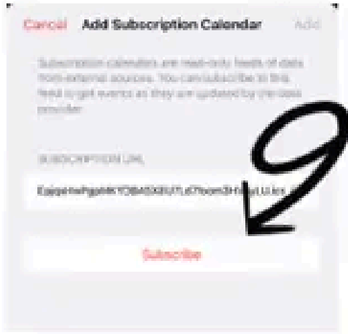
Step 3: Once logged in, you should click **Dashboard** and see all of the courses listed on the home page. Click the 3 lines in the top left corner.



Step 4: Click on **Settings**

Step 5: Click on **Subscribe to Calendar Feed**





Step 6: Click **Subscribe**! HOORAY! Repeat the same steps if you have multiple children - you have to subscribe to each individual calendar feed.



*Note: These steps are for an iPhone. They should be similar for an Android! In your **calendar app**, you should be able to color code these feeds for each account that is subscribed.*



Contact Information:



Erin Freeland – 6th Grade (ErinEFreeland@KATYISD.ORG)

Brianna Pollinger – 7th Grade (BriannaBPollinger@KATYISD.ORG)

Shelly Watson– 8th Grade (ShellyDWatson@KATYISD.ORG)

Maria Delamora – Student Support (MariaRDelamora@KATYISD.ORG)

Valerie Moore – School Psychologist (ValerieMoore@KATYISD.ORG)