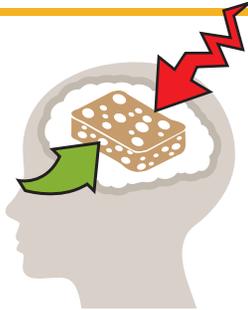


# Are They Out Of Their Minds?

These notes offer a way to think of brain development and how it affects people's perceptions, processing and responses. The changes taking place during each developmental phase of life are profound. Understanding the brain's characteristics in each phase helps interpret people's behaviors and respond effectively.

## CHILD'S BRAIN



### BRAIN CHARACTERISTICS

- Absorbs information easily
- Brain structure is most vulnerable to neglect/trauma
- Brain's "wiring" becomes permanent

### BEHAVIOR CHARACTERISTICS

- Absorbs information
- Concrete thinking
- Great capacity to mimic and learn
- Imprinted by good/bad experiences
- Wants to please adults
- Magical thinking about cause and effect

## TEEN BRAIN



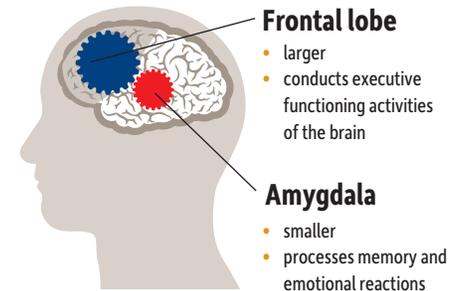
### BRAIN CHARACTERISTICS

- Big amygdala
- Active pruning of un-useful neurons
- Myelination strengthens pathways between brain areas

### BEHAVIOR CHARACTERISTICS

- Impulsive
- Tests boundaries
- Extreme responses and difficulty self-regulating
- Cannot quickly predict both positive and negative consequences
- Concerned about image with peers
- Focuses on own emotional responses
- Self-image trumps self-interest
- Easily distracted

## ADULT BRAIN BY 25



### Frontal lobe

- larger
- conducts executive functioning activities of the brain

### Amygdala

- smaller
- processes memory and emotional reactions

### BRAIN CHARACTERISTICS

- Frontal lobe harnesses amygdala

### BEHAVIOR CHARACTERISTICS

- Can control expression of emotion and impulses
- Adheres to boundaries and recognizes benefits of doing so
- Able to plan and put things in sequence
- Can more accurately anticipate consequences.
- Less subject to peer influences as own identity "sets"

