

TOGETHER WE THRIVE

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES



Imagine the profound impact when schools and caregivers unite. This collection was forged with families at its heart, grounded in the undeniable truth that collaborative partnerships ignite student success. Within these pages lie a potent array of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) flyers, tools, and activities, meticulously crafted to fortify bonds within the home, cultivate deep emotional resilience, and empower the acquisition of essential lifelong skills. Whether you are embarking on your SEL exploration or seeking to amplify its influence, these resources stand ready to guide and uplift you at every stage.



Website and Contact Information

Social Emotional Learning
Unit

JUNTOS PROSPERAMOS

RECURSOS DE APRENDIZAJE SOCIOEMOCIONAL PARA FAMILIAS



Imagine el profundo impacto que se produce cuando se unen las escuelas y los cuidadores. Esta colección se forjó con las familias en su corazón, basado en la verdad innegable de que las asociaciones de colaboración encienden el éxito del estudiante. Dentro de estas páginas se encuentra una potente gama de folletos, herramientas y actividades de aprendizaje socioemocional (SEL), meticulosamente elaborados para fortalecer los lazos dentro del hogar, cultivar la resiliencia emocional profunda y potenciar la adquisición de habilidades esenciales para toda la vida. Tanto si se está embarcando en la exploración del SEL como si busca ampliar su influencia, estos recursos están listos para guiarle y elevarle en cada etapa.



Sitio web e información de contacto

Social Emotional Learning
Unit

Social Emotional Learning Unit

Family SEL Resources



Support SEL at Home with These Family Resources

As educators, we know how powerful family engagement is in helping students grow socially and emotionally. This curated collection of SEL resources is designed for families and caregivers to use at home. Feel free to share these tools and activities with your families to help strengthen skills like self-awareness, self-management, and social connection beyond the classroom. Click on any of the links below to explore the SEL resources.

How We Learn

- [Dr. Nadine Burke Childhood Trauma](#)
- [How Children and Adolescents, and Adults Learn](#)
- [A New Theory on the Teen Mental Health Crisis](#)
- [Getting to Know and Love Your Brain](#)
- [The Teen Brain](#)

SEL Resources

- [Families Want to Know: What is SEL?](#)
- [SEL Wellness for Families](#)
- [SEL Family Resources](#)
- [SEL Competencies for Families](#)
- [SEL Wellness for Students](#)
- [Wellness for Families](#)

Worth Sharing

- [Do you know why we also get sick?](#)
- [Sometimes the best medicine is...](#)
- [There is something magical about you!](#)
- [I AM - Positive Affirmations](#)
- [Daily Self-Care](#)
- [Words of Wisdom](#)

SEL Programs

- [RethinkEd Monthly Family Workshops](#)
- [Second Step Mind Yeti](#)
- [Mindfulness Practices with Inner Explorer](#)
- [Harmony Academy Family Resources](#)





Social Emotional Learning Unit

Family and Caregivers



SEL Resources to Help Families Connect, Reflect, and Understand the Teen Brain

Curious about what's really going on in the teenage brain? The resources below offer insights into adolescent development—including short videos on the teen brain, engaging mindfulness practices, and helpful handouts that dispel common myths. You'll also find simple, creative ways to strengthen connection and encourage reflection at home. Just click the links to explore tools designed to support meaningful social and emotional learning experiences with families.

Family Practices

- [Knowledge of How Children, Adolescents, and Adults Learn Resources](#)
- [You Can Grow Your Intelligence](#)
- [Mindfulness with Inner Explorer](#)
- [Getting to Know and Love Your Brain](#)
- [Fact Sheet-Myths About the Brain](#)
- [Vision Board Activity](#)
- [Mindful Breathing Tools](#)
- [The Teen Brain Under Construction \(Video\)](#)
- [The Brain Teen Development \(Video\)](#)



Scan the QR Code to
Access the Resources



Social Emotional Learning Unit



Wellness for Families and Caregivers

The Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Wellness resources are designed to empower families with practical strategies that promote emotional, mental and physical well-being. Practicing self-care, compassion, and mindfulness cultivates gratitude and fosters resilience. Click the links or scan the QR code to access these resources.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness helps us stay present and approach ourselves with kindness and compassion.

- ★ [Mindfulness practices with Inner Explorer](#)
- ★ [Relax with Mind Yeti from Second Step](#)
- ★ [RethinkCare Wellness Journey](#)
- ★ [Mindful Breathing Tools](#)

Self-Compassion

Self-compassion allows us to treat ourselves with the same kindness we give to others.

- ♥ [Be Kind to Your Mind: 50 Things You Can Control](#)
- ♥ [Ways to Show Yourself Some Love](#)
- ♥ [Self Compassion and Compassion for Others Exercise](#)
- ♥ [Tip Cards for Self-Care and Self-Compassion](#)
- ♥ [You Are Loved](#)
- ♥ [Self-Care Toolkit](#)
- ♥ [Compassionate Reframes](#)
- ♥ [Positive Affirmations](#)
- ♥ [Humor to Brighten Your Mood](#)
- ♥ [Self-Care Strategies: Here's What I Can Do](#)

The Power of Gratitude

Gratitude helps us appreciate the present, fostering joy, connection, and overall well-being, while also nurturing hope for the future.

- 😊 [The Science of Gratitude](#)
- 😊 [Tips: How to Practice Gratitude](#)
- 😊 [Gratitude Practice](#)
- 😊 [Gratitude Journal](#)
- 😊 [Gratitude Jar](#)
- 😊 [Thank You Notes and Resources](#)

QR Code

Scan the QR Code to access the Family Wellness Resources



<https://bit.ly/4gM68q2>



Aprendizaje Socioemocional (SEL)



Recursos para el Bienestar Familiar

Los recursos para el bienestar familiar están diseñados para empoderar a las familias con estrategias prácticas que promueven el bienestar emocional, mental y físico. Practicar el autocuidado, la compasión y la atención plena cultiva la gratitud y fomenta la resiliencia. Haga clic en los enlaces o escanee el código QR para acceder a estos recursos.

Atención plena

La atención plena nos ayuda a estar presentes y a acercarnos a nosotros mismos con amabilidad y compasión.

- ★ [Prácticas de atención plena de Inner Explorer](#)
- ★ [Relájate con Mind Yeti de Second Step](#)
- ★ [RethinkCare Meditaciones guiadas](#)
- ★ [Ejercicios de respiración](#)

Autocompasión

La autocompasión nos permite tratarnos a nosotros mismos con la misma amabilidad que damos a los demás.

- ♥ [Sé amable con tu mente: Cosas que puedes controlar](#)
- ♥ [Formas de demostrarte amor a ti mismo](#)
- ♥ [Ejercicio de autocompasión y compasión por los demás](#)
- ♥ [Ideas de autocuidado para ser feliz](#)
- ♥ [Se te quiere](#)
- ♥ [Herramientas para el autocuidado](#)
- ♥ [Hable consigo mismo con compasión](#)
- ♥ [Afirmaciones positivas](#)
- ♥ [Humor para alegrar el ánimo](#)
- ♥ [Estrategias: Lo que puedo hacer](#)

El Poder de la Gratitud

La gratitud nos ayuda a apreciar el presente, fomentando la alegría, la conexión y el bienestar general, al tiempo que alimenta la esperanza en el futuro.

- 😊 [¿Qué es la gratitud?](#)
- 😊 [La gratitud sana](#)
- 😊 [Tarro de gratitud](#)
- 😊 [Mi diario de la gratitud](#)
- 😊 [Practica la gratitud](#)
- 😊 [Notas de agradecimiento](#)

Código QR

Escanee el código QR para acceder a los recursos de bienestar familiar.



<https://bit.ly/4gM68q2>





SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING FOR FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS

2024-2025

SEL FAMILY

RESOURCES

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) starts at home. Families are key partners in supporting their child's SEL growth. Share these resources to guide SEL at home and foster meaningful connections.



[RethinkEd Family Monthly Workshops](#)



[Harmony Academy Family Toolkit](#)



[Second Step Family Resources](#)



[Inner Explorer Family Resources](#)

SCAN HERE



Scan QR Code to
access the
resources.



[Self Awareness](#)



[Self Efficacy](#)



[Growth Mindset](#)



[Self-Management](#)



[Responsible Decision-Making](#)



[Social Awareness](#)



APRENDIZAJE SOCIAL Y EMOCIONAL PARA FAMILIAS Y CUIDADORES

2024-2025

SEL FAMILIAS

RECURSOS

El Aprendizaje Socioemocional (SEL) comienza en casa. Las familias son socios clave en el apoyo al crecimiento de SEL de sus hijos. Comparta estos recursos para guiar el SEL en el hogar y fomentar conexiones significativas.



RethinkEd Talleres Virtuales para Familias



Harmony Academy Kit para Familias



Second Step Recursos para Familias



Inner Explorer práctica la atención plena

código QR

SCAN HERE



Escanea el código QR para acceder a los recursos.



Autoconciencia



Autoeficacia



Mentalidad de crecimiento



Autogestión



Tomar decisiones responsables



Conciencia social

What is Social Emotional Learning?

Families and Caregivers



Definition

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is **a process** of learning social and emotional skills, and it's just as important as academic skills, such as reading and math.

The learning process is most effective when it begins early in a child's life and continues into adulthood.

- Manage emotions and behaviors
- Have empathy and show care and concern for others
- Solve problems effectively
- Make responsible decisions
- Maintain healthy relationships

Essential Resources

- ☐ SEL Family Resources
- ☐ "I Can" Statements
- ☐ RethinkEd SEL Family Workshops
- ☐ SEL Strategies
- ☐ How Do I Help My Child Cope with Change?



Benefits

Research and experience show that Social Emotional Learning (SEL) promotes:

- Academic achievement and growth
- Positive self-awareness and social relationships
- Emotional regulation and effective communication
- A supportive and inclusive school culture
- Collaboration and teamwork skills
- Emotionally safe environments and protective factors that buffer against mental health risks

For more details on SEL and its benefits, we encourage you to visit CASEL's website.

How You Can Support

- Foster open communication by actively listening to your child, creating a safe space for dialogue and connection.
- Model SEL competencies such as kindness, patience, and empathy in everyday interactions with others.
- Share your emotions in a healthy way, acknowledging your child's feelings, and encouraging emotional awareness.
- Show resilience by approaching challenges with a growth mindset, demonstrating that setbacks are opportunities for growth.
- Support emotional well-being by introducing tools like daily affirmations and mindfulness practices to promote self-regulation.

Scan QR Code
to access SEL
resources



¿Qué es el aprendizaje socioemocional?

Familias y Cuidadores



Definición

El aprendizaje socioemocional (SEL) es **un proceso** de aprendizaje de habilidades sociales y emocionales, y es tan importante como las habilidades académicas, como la lectura y las matemáticas.

El proceso de aprendizaje es más eficaz cuando comienza pronto en la vida del niño y continúa hasta la edad adulta.

- Gestionar las emociones y los comportamientos
- Tener empatía y mostrar interés y preocupación por los demás
- Resolver problemas con eficacia
- Tomar decisiones responsables
- Mantener relaciones sanas

Recursos esenciales

- ☐ Recursos para Familias
- ☐ Declaraciones de "Yo Puedo"
- ☐ Talleres Virtuales para Familias de RethinkEd
- ☐ Estrategias para el Aprendizaje Socioemocional
- ☐ ¿Cómo puedo ayudar a mi hijo a afrontar el cambio?

Beneficios

La investigación y la experiencia demuestran que el Aprendizaje Socioemocional (SEL) fomenta:

- El rendimiento y el crecimiento académico
- El conocimiento positivo de uno mismo y las relaciones sociales
- La regulación emocional y la comunicación eficaz
- Una cultura escolar solidaria e integradora
- Habilidades de colaboración y trabajo en equipo
- Entornos emocionalmente seguros y factores de protección que amortigüen los riesgos para la salud mental

Para más detalles sobre SEL y sus beneficios, le animamos a visitar el sitio web de CASEL.

Cómo puede apoyar

- Fomente la comunicación abierta escuchando activamente a su hijo, creando un espacio seguro para el diálogo y la conexión.
- Modele competencias SEL como la amabilidad, la paciencia y la empatía en las interacciones cotidianas con los demás.
- Comparta sus emociones de forma saludable, reconociendo los sentimientos de su hijo y fomentando la conciencia emocional.
- Muestre resiliencia afrontando los retos con una mentalidad de crecimiento, demostrando que los contratiempos son oportunidades para crecer.
- Apoye el bienestar emocional introduciendo herramientas como las afirmaciones diarias y las prácticas de atención plena para fomentar la autorregulación.

Escanee el código QR para acceder a los Recursos Familiares SEL





SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING RESOURCES FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) of students starts at home. Families and caregivers are every school's most important partners in growing their child's SEL development. Share these SEL resources with our families to help guide their social emotional learning efforts at home.

- ✓ Self Awareness
- ✓ Self-Management
- ✓ Self-Efficacy
- ✓ Social-Awareness
- ✓ Growth Mindset
- ✓ Responsible Decision Making

✓ Additional SEL Resources



QR Code to access SEL Resources

SEL PROGRAMS



Harmony at Home Kit
Harmony Portal Job Aid

SECOND STEP®



Second Step for Families



Inner Explorer at Home
Job Aid



RECURSOS PARA EL APRENDIZAJE SOCIOEMOCIONAL PARA FAMILIAS Y CUIDADORES

El aprendizaje socioemocional de los alumnos empieza en casa. Las familias y los cuidadores son los socios más importantes de cada escuela en el crecimiento del desarrollo SEL de sus hijos. Comparta estos recursos SEL con nuestras familias para ayudar a guiar sus esfuerzos de aprendizaje emocional social en el hogar.

- ✓ Autoconciencia
- ✓ Autoeficacia
- ✓ Mentalidad de Crecimiento
- ✓ Autogestión
- ✓ Conciencia Social
- ✓ Tomar Decisiones Responsables

✓ Recursos SEL Adicionales



QR Code - acceso a
recursos SEL

PROGRAMAS SEL



- ✓ Harmony en Casa
Acceso al Portal Harmony

SECOND STEP®

- ✓ Second Step para Familias



- ✓ Inner Explorer para Familias



LAUSD
UNIFIED

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

SEL VIDEOS

Teachers, students, and families can view these SEL videos by clicking on the link corresponding to each SEL competency.

[What is SEL and Why It Matters](#)



[What is Responsible Decision-Making?](#)



[What is Self Awareness?](#)



[What is Social Awareness?](#)



[What is Self Efficacy?](#)



[The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#)



[What is Growth Mindset?](#)



[Committee for Children](#)



[What is Self Management?](#)



[Authentic Family Partnerships Schoolwide SEL](#)



LAUSD
UNIFIED

Aprendizaje socioemocional (SEL)

VIDEOS SEL

Los maestros, estudiantes y familias pueden ver estos videos SEL haciendo clic en el enlace correspondiente a cada competencia SEL.

¿Qué y porqué? El aprendizaje socioemocional



¿Qué es la toma de decisiones responsables?



¿Qué es la autoconciencia?



¿Qué es la Conciencia Social?



¿Qué es la autoeficacia?



The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)



¿Qué es la mentalidad de crecimiento?



PBS Aprendizaje Socioemocional



¿Qué es la autogestión?



SEL para Padres

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS For Families and Caregivers



Positive affirmations support Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies by helping build confidence, self-awareness, and emotional regulation. These affirmations were created for you and your family to help recognize your strengths, manage your emotions, and develop a positive mindset together.



Social Emotional Learning Unit

Defined

Positive affirmations are kind and encouraging words you say to yourself. They help replace negative thoughts with positive ones.

Why They Matter

Positive affirmations matter because they help build a strong, confident, mindset. When children and families use them regularly, they can reduce self-doubt, manage stress, and develop a more positive outlook on challenges.

Examples

Some **examples** include:

- I am loved and valued.
- I believe in myself.
- I am enough.
- I am strong.

Using **these** phrases daily can boost confidence and emotional well-being.

Research

Do Positive Affirmations Work? What Experts Say.



Steps

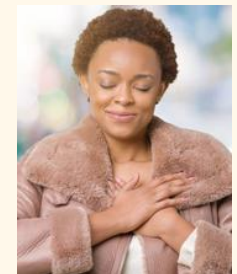
1. **Choose your affirmations.** Set a purpose, make it personal, and keep it authentic.
2. Say them out loud, **use present tense**, and believe in them.
3. **Repeat** them regularly.

Let's Get Started

Sometimes, before practicing positive affirmations, listening to mindfulness music can help calm the mind and make it more open to positive thinking. Click **here** for a calming mindfulness practice from **Inner Explorer**.

Affirmations for Growth and Strength

Click **here** to download Affirmations for Growth and Strength



Affirmations for Self-Care

Click [here](#) to download
Affirmations for Self-
Care



We Heal, We Rise: Empowering Affirmations



These affirmations remind you that through every storm, every obstacle, and every setback, you carry an unshakable power within. No matter what comes your way, remember—you are stronger, you are unstoppable, and you rise.

Affirmations for Kids: Growing Strong



Share **these** affirmations with your children to help them build confidence, resilience, and a strong mindset. Remind them they are supported, capable, and growing stronger every day. With your love and encouragement, they can face any challenge with courage and hope.

Mindset Matters: Affirmations for High Schoolers



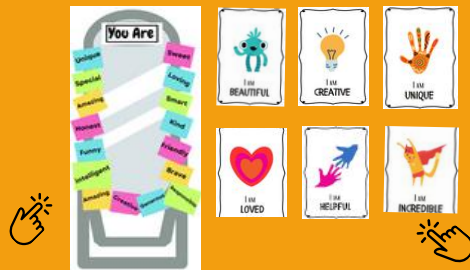
Share **these** affirmations with your high schooler to help them stay focused, motivated, and confident in their future. Remind them that with determination, **resilience**, and your support, they can achieve their goals and build the future they dream of.

Affirmations for a Growth Mindset



These affirmations are designed to help your whole family embrace challenges, learn from mistakes, and believe in the ability to grow and improve.

Mirror, Mirror On the Wall



Place **these** positive affirmations around your mirror at home. As you look into the mirror each day, repeat the words aloud to reinforce self-worth and strength.

Worth Sharing



Small steps taken
every day add up
to great
achievements.

These affirmations and quotes are valuable for fostering confidence, resilience, and positivity, making them worth sharing to uplift and empower.

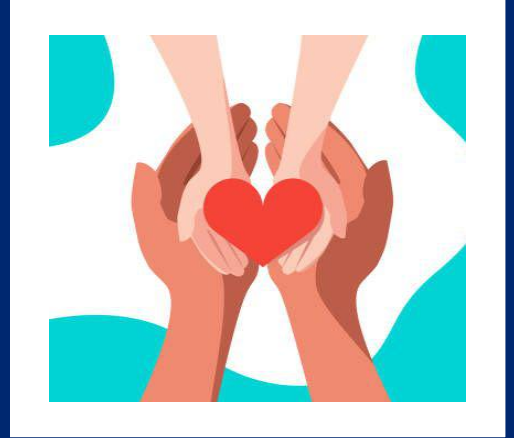


Scan QR Code
to Access the
Resources
<https://bit.ly/AffirmationsHandout>

Wellness for Families

This resource offers tools like Inner Explorer for mindfulness, self-care ideas for families and children, and strategies to foster gratitude and improve mental health. It also includes tips for helping children cope with change, activities to build resilience and a growth mindset, positive affirmations, and daily jokes for a touch of lighthearted fun.

Empower your family with these strategies for positivity, connection, and emotional growth.



Resources

- [Parent/Caregiver Roadmap for Social-Emotional Well-Being & Academic](#)
- [SEL Resources for Families and Caregivers](#)
- [Inner Explorer Family Resource](#)
- [Self-Care Ideas for Me and My Child](#)
- [5 Ways to Teach Children Gratitude](#)
- [How to Practice Gratitude & Improve Your Family's Mental Health](#)
- [How Do I Help My Child Cope with Change?](#)
- [What is Social Emotional Learning: Families Want to Know](#)
- [SEL Family Resources flyers](#)
- [Harmony Academy Toolkit](#)
- [Just for fun. A Joke-A-Day](#)
- [Positive Thinking and Affirmations](#)
- [Growth Mindset Action Steps](#)



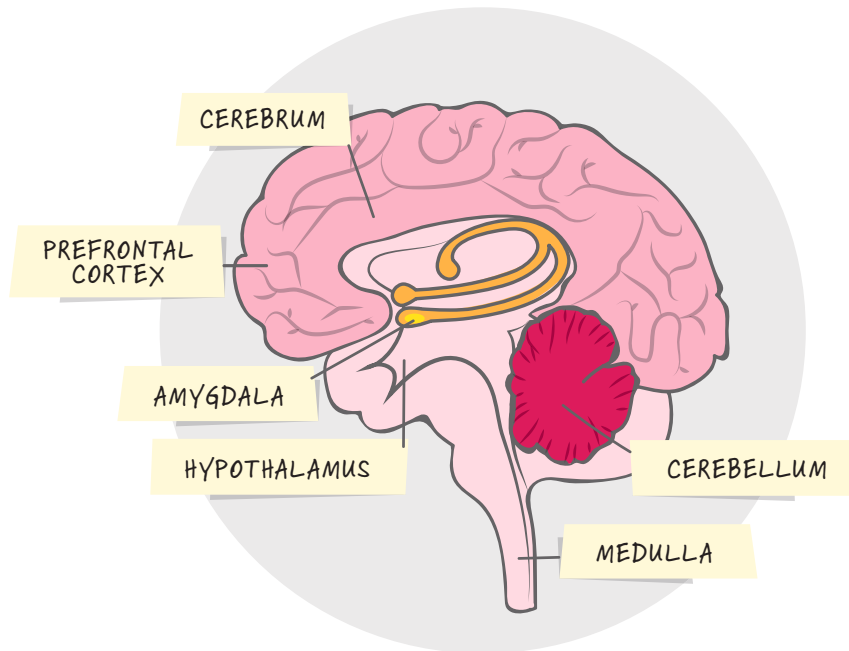
DID YOU KNOW?

The Teenage Brain



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

The Emotional Brain



The human brain is always growing and changing – especially during the teenage years. The amygdala and the prefrontal cortex parts of the brain are used to process, interpret, and react to emotional situations. The prefrontal cortex develops more slowly than the amygdala. In fact, scientists say that the prefrontal cortex is not completely developed until a person is about 25 years old.



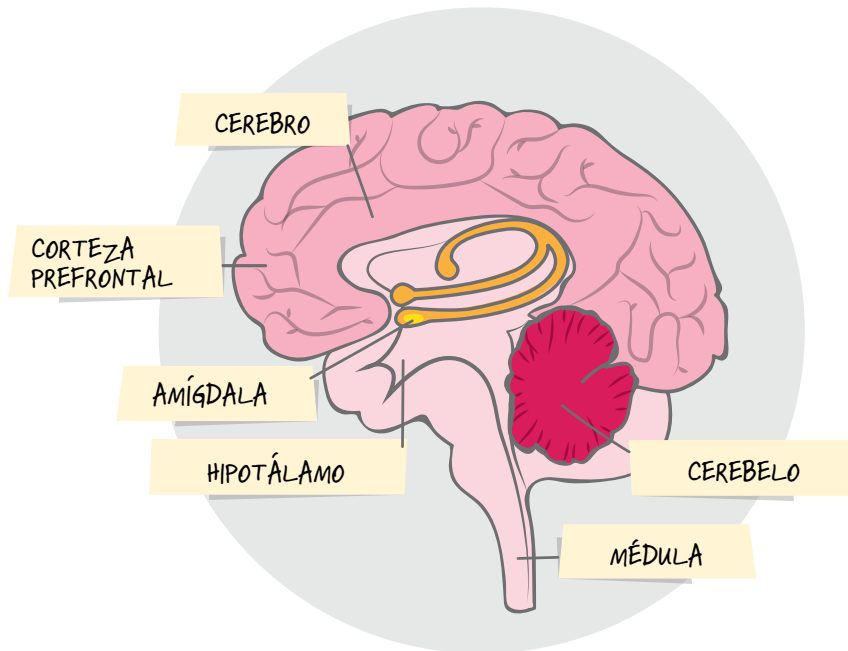
Your amygdala is located deep in your brain and is responsible for automatic responses to your environment. When you feel emotions, your amygdala decides how strongly to react.



Your prefrontal cortex responds logically to emotions and helps you to manage your behavior. It helps to regulate your actions and words, and to consider the consequences of your actions.



El cerebro emocional



El cerebro humano está en constante crecimiento y cambio, especialmente durante la adolescencia. La amígdala y la corteza prefrontal son partes del cerebro que se usan para procesar, interpretar y reaccionar ante situaciones emocionales. La corteza prefrontal se desarrolla más lentamente que la amígdala. De hecho, los científicos sostienen que la corteza prefrontal de una persona no se desarrolla por completo sino hasta que cumple alrededor de 25 años.



La amígdala está ubicada en lo profundo de tu cerebro y es responsable de las respuestas automáticas que brindas a tu entorno. Cuando sientes emociones, tu amígdala decide cuán fuerte reaccionará.



La corteza prefrontal responde lógicamente a las emociones y te ayuda a manejar tu comportamiento. Ayuda a regular tus acciones y palabras, y a considerar las consecuencias de tus acciones.



Understanding the Adolescent Brain: Implications for SEL



These videos explore how adolescent brain development shapes behavior, emotions, and learning. By aligning SEL practices with insights from neuroscience, educators and families can more effectively support adolescents during this pivotal stage of growth.

VIDEOS

- [UPSTAIRS BRAIN, DOWNSTAIRS BRAIN - SEL SKETCHES](#)
- [THE TEEN BRAIN BY MINDUP](#)
- [SMARTPHONES EFFECTS ON THE BRAIN IN CHILDREN TEENS](#)
- [THE TEENAGE BRAIN DEVELOPMENT](#)
- [CAN WE AUTO-CORRECT HUMANITY? \(2025\)](#)
- [MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ADOLESCENCE](#)

El cerebro de los adolescentes: 7 cosas que usted debe saber

Del INSTITUTO NACIONAL de la SALUD MENTAL

¿Sabía que hay **cambios grandes e importantes** que ocurren en el cerebro durante la adolescencia? A continuación, le indicamos **7 cosas que usted debe saber sobre el cerebro de los adolescentes**:

1 La adolescencia es un período importante para el desarrollo del cerebro.

Aunque el cerebro alcanza su mayor tamaño en la adolescencia temprana, los años de la adolescencia sirven para afinar su funcionamiento. El cerebro termina de desarrollarse y de madurar entre los 25 y los 30 años. La parte del cerebro detrás de la frente, que se llama corteza prefrontal, es una de las últimas partes en madurar. Esta área es responsable de habilidades como planificar, establecer prioridades y tomar buenas decisiones.



2 El desarrollo del cerebro está relacionado con las experiencias sociales durante la adolescencia.

Los cambios en las áreas del cerebro que son responsables de los procesos sociales pueden hacer que los adolescentes se concentren más en las relaciones con los compañeros y las experiencias sociales. El énfasis en las relaciones con los compañeros, junto con el desarrollo continuo de la corteza prefrontal, podría ocasionar que los jóvenes corran más riesgos, ya que para ellos los beneficios sociales superan las posibles consecuencias de una decisión. Estos riesgos pueden ser negativos o peligrosos, o pueden ser positivos, como hablar con un nuevo compañero de clase, unirse a un nuevo club o practicar un nuevo deporte.



3 El cerebro adolescente está listo para aprender y adaptarse.

El cerebro adolescente tiene una capacidad asombrosa para adaptarse y responder a nuevas experiencias y situaciones. Tomar clases desafiantes, hacer ejercicio y participar en actividades creativas, como el arte o la música, pueden fortalecer los circuitos cerebrales y ayudar al cerebro a madurar.



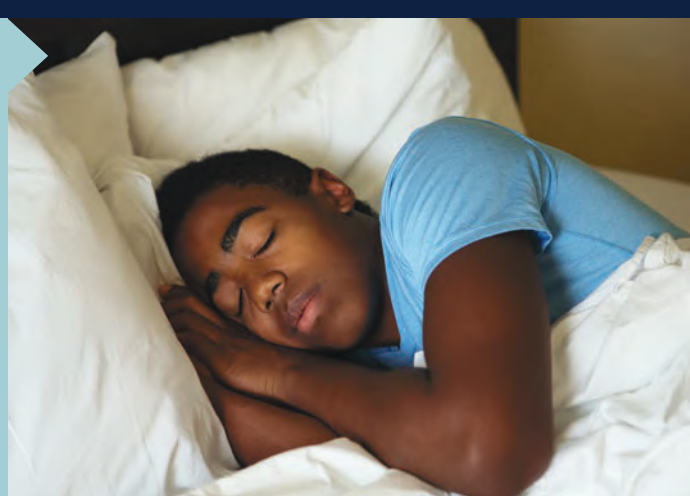
4 El cerebro adolescente puede responder de manera diferente al estrés.

Debido a que el cerebro de los adolescentes aún se está desarrollando, ellos pueden responder al estrés de manera diferente a los adultos. Esto podría aumentar la posibilidad de que los adolescentes desarrollen enfermedades mentales relacionadas con el estrés, como la ansiedad y la depresión. Reconocer los posibles factores desencadenantes y practicar técnicas eficaces de afrontamiento puede ayudar a los adolescentes a sobrellevar el estrés. Puede encontrar más información sobre el control del estrés en www.nimh.nih.gov/estres.



5 La mayoría de los adolescentes no duermen lo suficiente.

Diversas investigaciones muestran que la hormona del sueño llamada melatonina funciona de forma diferente en los adolescentes que en los niños y los adultos. En la adolescencia, los niveles de melatonina permanecen altos hasta más tarde en la noche y no bajan sino hasta más tarde en la mañana, lo que puede explicar por qué los adolescentes pueden quedarse despiertos hasta tarde y tener dificultades para despertarse temprano. Muchos adolescentes no duermen lo suficiente, lo que les dificulta prestar atención, controlar sus impulsos y desempeñarse bien en la escuela. Dormir bien por la noche puede ayudar a la salud mental.



6 Las enfermedades mentales pueden comenzar a aparecer durante la adolescencia.

Los cambios continuos en el cerebro, junto con los cambios físicos, emocionales y sociales, pueden hacer que los adolescentes sean más propensos a tener problemas de salud mental. El hecho de que todos estos cambios ocurren al mismo tiempo puede explicar por qué muchas enfermedades mentales, como la esquizofrenia, la ansiedad, la depresión, el trastorno bipolar y los trastornos alimentarios, surgen durante la adolescencia.

7 El cerebro adolescente es resistente.

A pesar del estrés y los desafíos propios de la adolescencia, la mayoría de los adolescentes llegan a ser adultos sanos. Incluso, algunos cambios en el cerebro durante esta fase fundamental del desarrollo en realidad ayudan a mantener la resiliencia y la salud mental a largo plazo.



Cómo encontrar ayuda

Si usted o alguien que conoce tiene una enfermedad mental, dificultades emocionales o está preocupado por su salud mental, hay maneras de obtener ayuda. Para obtener más información, visite la página de ayuda del NIMH para enfermedades mentales: www.nimh.nih.gov/busqueayuda.

Una buena comunicación entre usted y el médico u otro proveedor de atención médica de su hijo puede mejorar los cuidados que recibe y ayudar a ambos a tomar decisiones adecuadas sobre su salud. Encuentre consejos que le ayudarán a prepararse para su consulta y aprovecharla al máximo en www.nimh.nih.gov/consejosparahablar.

Si usted o alguien que conoce está pasando dificultades o tiene pensamientos suicidas, llame en español o en inglés al **988**, la Línea de Prevención del Suicidio y Crisis. Si habla inglés, también puede enviar un mensaje de texto al **988** o puede chatear en 988lifeline.org. En situaciones potencialmente mortales, llame al **911**.



www.nimh.nih.gov

Publicación de NIH Núm. 23-MH-8078S
Revisada en 2023

The Teen Brain: 7 Things to Know

From the **NATIONAL INSTITUTE of MENTAL HEALTH**

Did you know that **big** and **important changes** happen in the brain during adolescence? Here are **seven things to know about the teen brain**:

1 Adolescence is an important time for brain development.

Although the brain stops growing in size by early adolescence, the teen years are all about fine-tuning how the brain works. The brain finishes developing and maturing in the mid-to-late 20s. The part of the brain behind the forehead, called the prefrontal cortex, is one of the last parts to mature. This area is responsible for skills like planning, prioritizing, and making good decisions.



2 Brain development is related to social experiences during adolescence.

Changes to the areas of the brain responsible for social processes can lead teens to focus more on peer relationships and social experiences. The emphasis on peer relationships, along with ongoing prefrontal cortex development, might lead teens to take more risks because the social benefits outweigh the possible consequences of a decision. These risks could be negative or dangerous, or they could be positive, such as talking to a new classmate or joining a new club or sport.

3 The teen brain is ready to learn and adapt.

The teen brain has an amazing ability to adapt and respond to new experiences and situations. Taking challenging classes, exercising, and engaging in creative activities like art or music can strengthen brain circuits and help the brain mature.



4 Teen brains may respond differently to stress.

Because the teen brain is still developing, teens may respond to stress differently than adults. This could increase teens' chances of developing stress-related mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression. Recognizing possible triggers and practicing effective coping techniques can help teens deal with stress. More information on managing stress is available at www.nimh.nih.gov/stress.

5 Most teens do not get enough sleep.

Research shows that the sleep hormone melatonin works differently in teens than in children and adults. In adolescence, melatonin levels stay high later at night and drop later in the morning, which may explain why teens may stay up late and struggle with waking up early. Many teens do not get enough sleep, making it harder to pay attention, control impulses, and do well at school. Getting good sleep at night can help support mental health.



6 Mental illnesses may begin to appear during adolescence.

Ongoing changes in the brain, along with physical, emotional, and social changes, can make teens more likely to experience mental health problems. The fact that all these changes happen at one time may explain why many mental illnesses—such as schizophrenia, anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, and eating disorders—emerge during adolescence.

7 The teen brain is resilient.

Despite the stresses and challenges that come with adolescence, most teens go on to become healthy adults. Some changes in the brain during this critical phase of development actually help support resilience and mental health over the long term.



Finding help

If you or someone you know has a mental illness, is struggling emotionally, or has concerns about their mental health, there are ways to get help. Find more information at www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp.

Talking openly with your doctor or other health care provider can improve your care and help you both make good choices about your health. Find tips to help prepare for and get the most out of your visit at www.nimh.nih.gov/talkingtips.

If you or someone you know is struggling or having thoughts of suicide, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at **988** or chat at **988lifeline.org**. In life-threatening situations, call **911**.



www.nimh.nih.gov

NIH Publication No. 23-MH-8078
Revised 2023



Dear Families/Caregivers,

As humans, we have the capacity to feel a myriad of emotions. They drive our feelings, thoughts, and behaviors and impact our self-esteem and social interactions. As teens mature, they become more aware of how emotions impact their behavior and affect their bodies and their relationships.

We are learning about the connection between emotions and the brain. We're learning that adolescent brains are more sensitive to emotional stress, that the amygdala is the part of the brain that responds to emotional situations, and that teen brains are still developing the prefrontal cortex, which is the part of the brain that helps manage emotions and helps us make choices. This means that your teen experiencing stronger emotions is a normal part of development.

Supporting Your Teen in Identifying, Accepting, and Managing Their Emotions

- Support your teen in naming and accepting strong emotions when they come up. Then, encourage them to engage the prefrontal cortex to make thoughtful decisions based on the facts.
- Talk with your teen about strategies they could use to manage their emotions, like taking deep breaths, exercising, journaling, etc. Help your teen explore strategies that work well for them.
- Help your teen to understand, accept, and regulate their emotions by providing a model of emotional maturity.

Emotions are an important part of understanding ourselves and others. The more your teen knows about emotions, the easier it is to manage their emotions and make decisions that are kind, respectful, and responsible.

Thank you for your support.



Estimadas Familias/Guardianes:

Como seres humanos, tenemos la capacidad de sentir un sinnúmero de emociones. Impulsan nuestros sentimientos, pensamientos y comportamientos. También impactan nuestra autoestima e interacciones sociales. A medida que los adolescentes maduran, se vuelven más conscientes de cómo las emociones impactan su comportamiento y afectan sus cuerpos y sus relaciones.

Estamos aprendiendo sobre la conexión entre las emociones y el cerebro. Estamos aprendiendo que los cerebros de los adolescentes son más sensibles al estrés emocional, que la amígdala es la parte del cerebro que responde a las situaciones emocionales y que los cerebros de los adolescentes todavía están desarrollando la corteza prefrontal. Esta es la parte del cerebro que ayuda a manejar las emociones y nos ayuda a tomar decisiones. Esto significa que el hecho de que su hijo adolescente experimente emociones más fuertes es una parte normal del desarrollo.

Apoyando a su estudiante adolescente a identificar, aceptar y controlar sus emociones

- Apoye a su estudiante adolescente para que nombre y acepte las emociones fuertes cuando surjan. Luego, anímelos a emplear la corteza prefrontal para tomar decisiones razonadas y basadas en los hechos.
- Hable con su estudiante adolescente sobre las estrategias que podría usar para manejar sus emociones, como respirar profundamente, hacer ejercicio, escribir en un diario, etc. Ayude a su estudiante adolescente a explorar estrategias que mejor funcionen para ellos.
- Ayude a su hijo adolescente a entender, aceptar y regular sus emociones brindándole un modelo de madurez emocional.

Las emociones son importantes para comprendernos a nosotros mismos y a los demás. Cuanto más sepa su estudiante adolescente sobre las emociones, más fácil será manejar sus emociones y tomar decisiones que sean amables, respetuosas y responsables.

Gracias por su apoyo.

Getting to Know and Love Your Brain

There are three big helpers in your brain.
One helps you make smart choices. One helps protect you from
danger. And one saves your favorite memories and your ABCs.
Can you name the three helpers?

Prefrontal Cortex

(pree-FRUN-tuhl KOR-teks)

I'm prefrontal cortex—PFC, for short. I help you solve math problems and get to know your favorite book and TV characters. Give me time to work, and I can help you make friends, or make the best decision in a tough situation.

Amygdala

(uh-MIG-duh-luh)

I'm amygdala and I'm here to keep you safe! I react FAST. If there's serious danger, I'll help you run, freeze, or fight back.

Hippocampus

(hih-puh-KAM-puhs)

I'm hippocampus and I'm like a scrapbook in your brain! I save everything important that you want to remember—from your ABCs to the names of all the people in your family. When something happens to make you smile, I'll save that as a happy memory!

Breathing to the rescue!

Breathe deep into your belly to stay calm and help your PFC think clearly.

Sweet dreams!

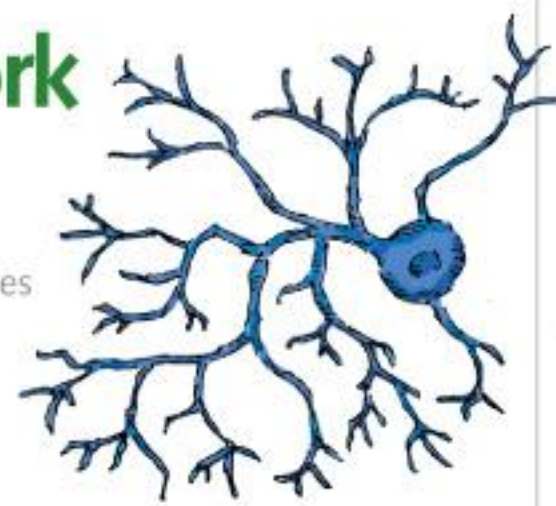
What's your bedtime? What time do you wake up? Count the hours between to find out how long you sleep.

If you counted 9, 10, or 11 hours, your brain is getting enough sleep to help it think and grow. If you counted fewer, you need to get more rest to help your brain do its job.

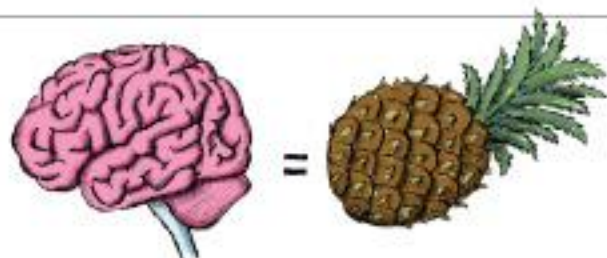


A neuron at work

Your brain has 100 billion—that's 100,000,000,000—brain cells, called **neurons**. Neurons pass along messages in a web, like the Internet! Those messages to help you think, feel, and remember.



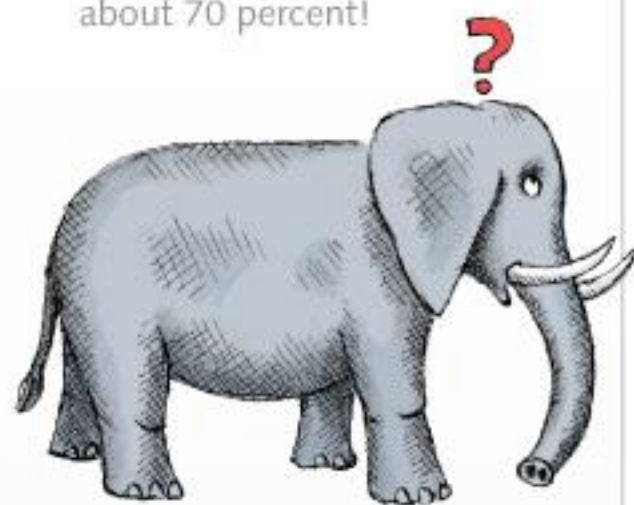
neuron



Food for thought

Here's a fun way to get to know your brain: Compare it to foods you eat!

- How is my brain like a pineapple?
It weighs about 3 pounds.
- How is my brain like bowl of spaghetti?
The surface of your brain has many folds, turns, and tunnel shapes.
- How is my brain like a grape?
It's mostly made of water—about 70 percent!



Is a bigger brain a smarter brain? Look at these brain weights to help you decide:

Dog brain: less than 1 pound
Human brain: about 3 pounds
Elephant brain: 13 pounds

Sure, elephant brains are big, but they can't solve math problems!

What really makes a brain smart is the parts it has and the way those parts work. Human brains have a large prefrontal cortex (PFC). Our PFC helps us think carefully, problem solve, and plan.

 SCHOLASTIC

Amazing Facts About Your Brain

What kind of storm does your mind like best? . . . A brainstorm, of course! See if you can feel your brain growing as you learn about how it works!



Read-aloud reference poster

Do you have an adult-size brain?

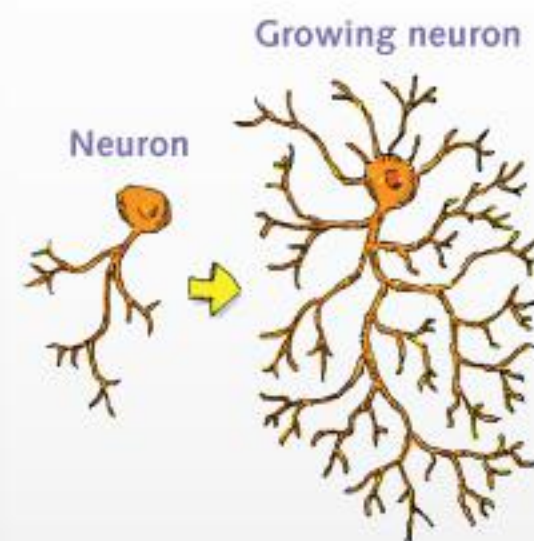
Just about! Your brain is almost the same size now as it will be when you are 50 years old. But as you think and learn more, your neurons will grow bigger and thicker, filling in the space.



Help your brain cells grow!

What do you get when you cross a family's vehicle with a family's animal?

Did you guess the answer to this riddle? Just puzzling over it can make your neurons stronger and thicker!



Your brain adds new information pathways each time you solve problems or learn something new.

Answer: carpet

Getting to Know and Love Your Brain

Three important parts of your brain help you think and react to everything that happens around you: the prefrontal cortex, the amygdala, and the hippocampus. Learn how to help these parts work together to become a happier, healthier, brighter you!

Prefrontal Cortex

(pree-FRUN-tuhl KOR-teks)

The prefrontal cortex (PFC, for short) uses important information to focus, decide, compute, analyze, and reason. Here's the catch: the PFC gets information only when the amygdala is calm. Then it passes on to the hippocampus any info worth remembering.

Amygdala

(uh-MIG-duh-luh)

Feeling frightened? Upset? Your amygdala is on alert! It regulates and blocks information from going to your prefrontal cortex (PFC), so you can react in a flash. When you feel safe and happy, the amygdala will pass information on to the PFC so you can think.

Hippocampus

(hih-puh-KAM-puhs)

The hippocampus creates, stores, and processes all important facts and memories the PFC passes on to it—such as birthdays, your friends' e-mail addresses, and the brisk, salty smell of the ocean.

Breathing

Anytime you're stressed out, breathing can come to the rescue. Deep, full breathing calms your amygdala and helps you think and remember clearly.

How big is a brain?

Make two fists and put them together. That's about the size of your brain. Your skull—a thick, protective “helmet” of 22 bones—surrounds your brain.



Brains can change.

Your brain is more like plastic than cement. It will change with each experience you have—and it will grow! That's called neuroplasticity (nur-oh-pla-STIH-city).

How does your brain get smarter?

With practice! When you learn something new, like the words to a song, you make new connections between the message-carrying cells of your brain, or neurons. As you practice, the neurons carrying that message grow branch-like structures (dendrites) that act like antennae. They pick up the message more quickly and clearly each time. With enough practice, those song-learning neurons help you remember the words without even hearing the music!

Before practice



After practice



Give it a rest!

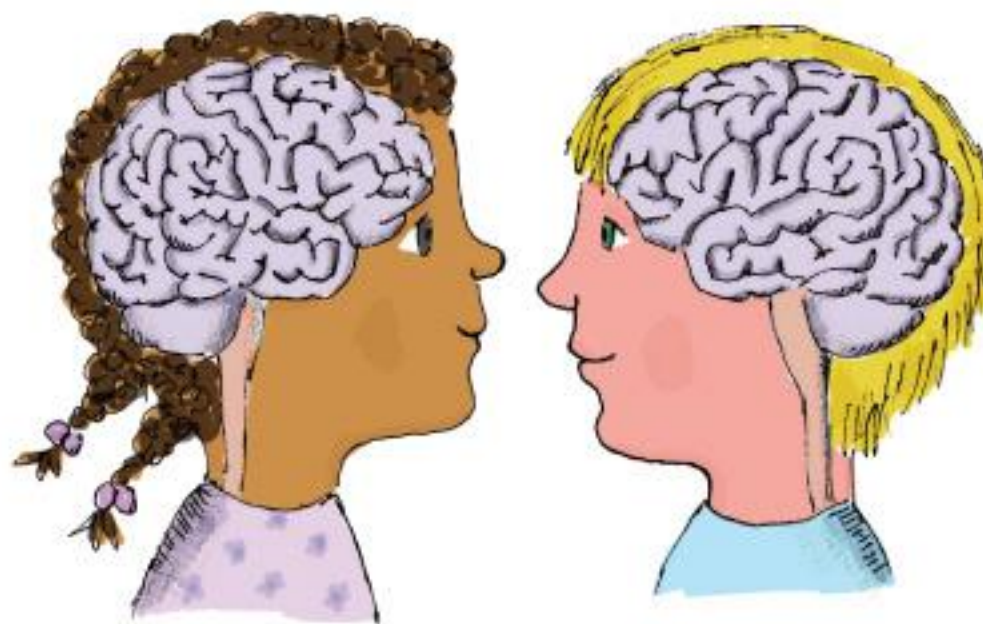
Your brain never stops thinking, even when you sleep. In fact, you need sleep so that your brain can process all the information it has collected during the day. To help your brain do this, you need about 9 or 10 hours of sleep each night!



 SCHOLASTIC

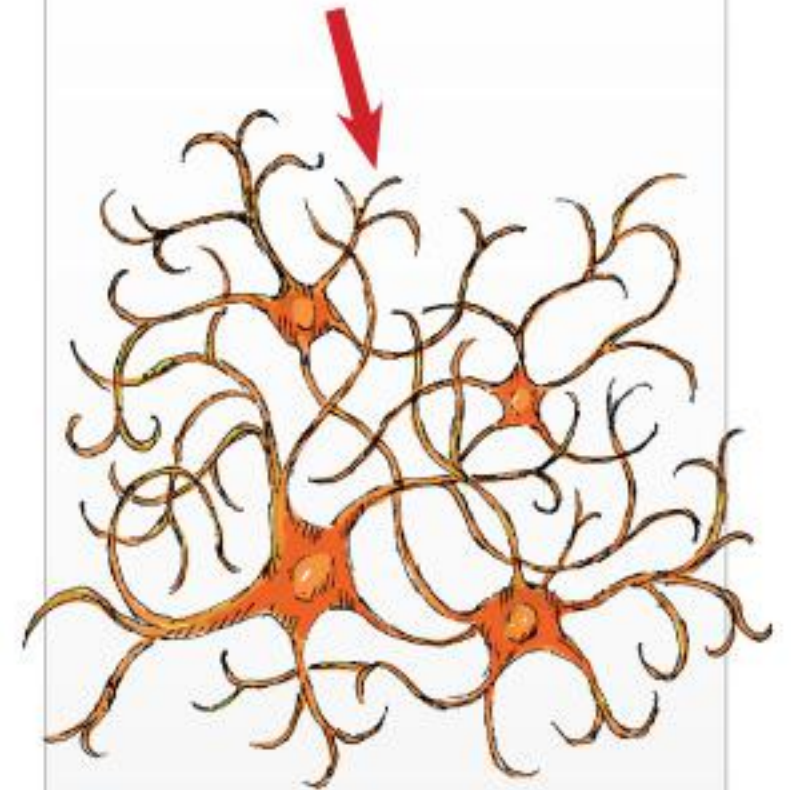
Amazing Facts About Your Brain

How is your brain like mine?
Our brains are the same color, no matter how different we look on the outside. Our brains are also about the same size if we're the same age. In what other ways do you think all of our brains are similar?



These webs weren't spun by a spider!

Does your brain really have webs inside of it? Yes, but not spider webs! These webs are too tiny for even the smallest spider. Each thought you think goes through a web, or network, of brain cells (neurons). It looks something like this.



Think fast!

In only a fraction of a second we can recognize a friend's face or recall a math fact. The fastest thoughts racing through our neural network travel at about the same speed as the wind inside a tornado!



Getting to Know and Love Your Brain

To react or to think it out ... that is the question. The way you use three key players in your brain determines how you'll respond to everything that happens around you. As you learn how to help your brain tell the difference between true emergencies and stressful situations, you'll get better at handling every situation and have more time to enjoy life!

Prefrontal Cortex

(pree-FRUN-tuhl KOR-teks)

The prefrontal cortex, or PFC, is your ace for making thoughtful decisions, doing careful calculations, talking through a problem, and staying focused on what you're doing. Here's the catch: the PFC gets information only when the amygdala is calm. The PFC passes on to the hippocampus anything that is worth remembering.

Amygdala

(uh-MIG-duh-luh)

The amygdala is programmed to keep you safe at all costs. It regulates and blocks information from going to your prefrontal cortex (PFC), so you can react in a flash. The problem is, it can't tell a stressful situation from a true emergency and it can cause you to react without thinking. Mindful practice can help keep the amygdala in check so that you can think clearly.

Hippocampus

(hih-puh-KAM-puhs)

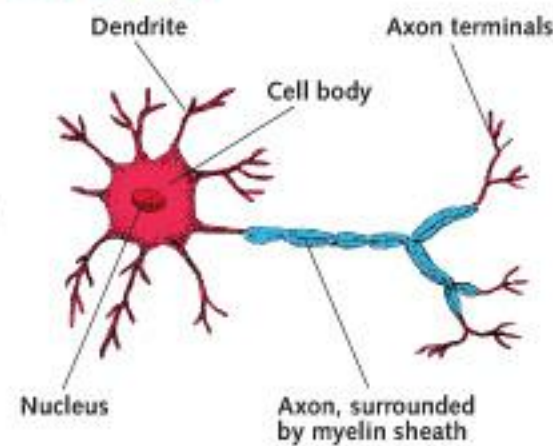
What are your favorite memories? The most useful facts you know? The hippocampus creates, stores, and processes all important facts and memories the PFC passes on to it—such as texting shortcuts, your class schedule, and the deep, warm smell of freshly baked biscuits or bread.

Breathing

Want to keep your amygdala in check when you get stressed out? Breathe deeply. Deep, full breathing calms your amygdala and helps you think and remember clearly.

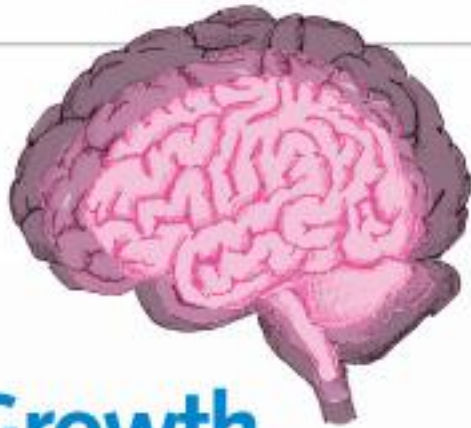
A neuron at work

Your brain has a network of neurons, or brain cells, 100 billion strong to help you think, feel, and remember. Each neuron has three important parts. Dendrites receive information—everything you sense and perceive. The nucleus regulates information signals that are sent or received. The axon sends information to other nerve cells through its terminals. Myelin is the protective coating around the axon.



The green brain?

Your brain has a special energy-efficient feature: myelin. Myelin is to an axon what plastic coating is to electrical wires. Like insulation on a wire, myelin helps the electrical impulses travel quickly and directly through the axon without losing any energy.



Growth spurts!

The brain grows rapidly at two times in our lives:

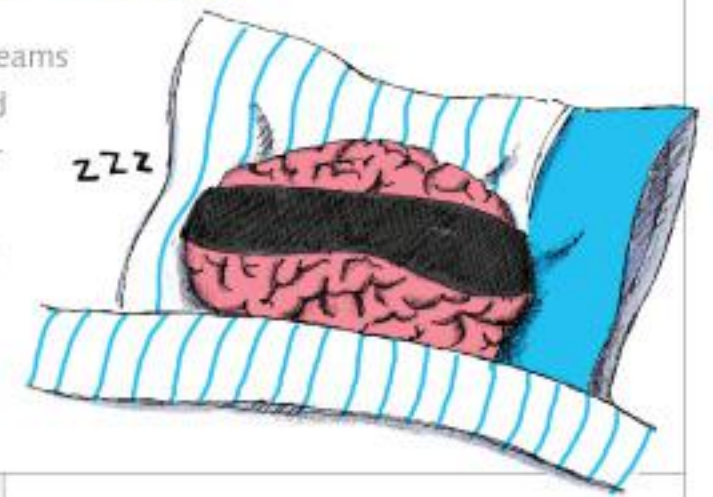
1. From before birth to 3 years old, all the neurons are rapidly growing and creating a network.
2. You're living through the second growth spurt, which peaks at 11 years old in girls and 12 years old in boys. This is when neurons are branching out and making connections.

"Use it or lose it!"

At about age 12, our brains start pruning away all the unused branches to make our brains more efficient.

Sleep and freeze!

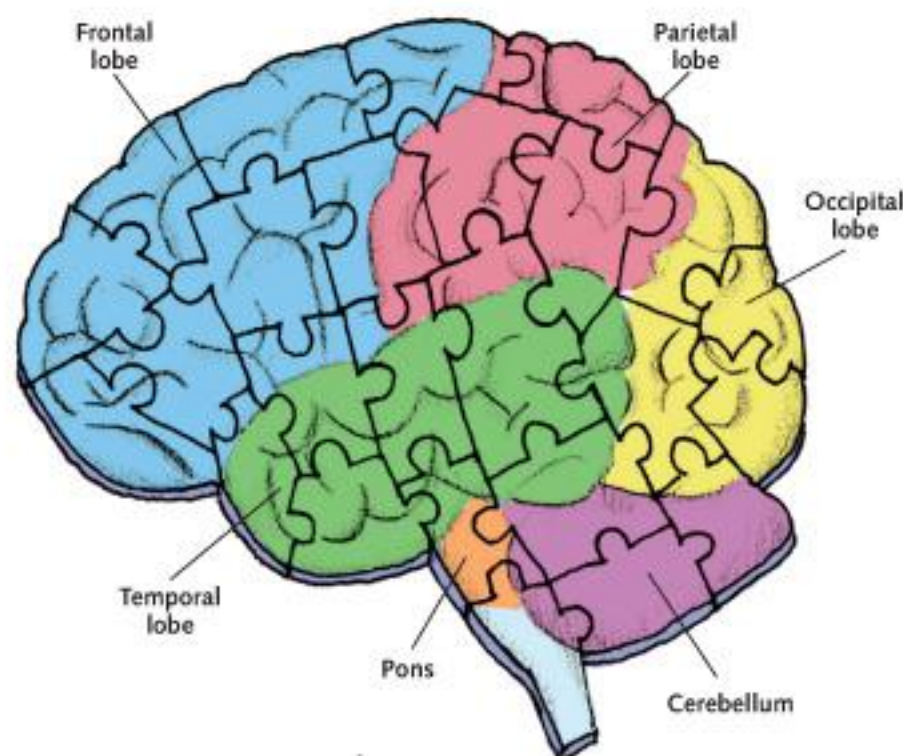
Do you have action-packed dreams or nightmares? Aren't you glad you don't act them out in your sleep? When you fall asleep, your brain releases a hormone that paralyzes you so that you don't move around a lot and hurt yourself.



SCHOLASTIC

Amazing Facts About Your Brain

Do you enjoy collecting facts to store in your hippocampus? Here's more brain food for that spongy, wrinkly organ inside your skull that loves to solve riddles, puzzles, and problems.



Powering your brain

Each day your brain generates enough energy to light a light bulb—between 10 and 23 watts! How do you keep it powered up to do all that work?

- **Get your Z's.** Getting between 8.5 and 11 hours of sleep each night helps your PFC absorb information and send it to the hippocampus. Being well rested helps your amygdala, too—studies show that alert people have fewer accidents.



- **Eat brain food.** Fuel for thinking includes food high in protein (meat, eggs, beans), omega-3 fatty acids (fish, nuts), antioxidants (berries, broccoli, spinach, whole grains), and vitamin B (clams, lamb, beef), and low in trans fats—so, limit fried foods and fatty sweets!
- **Chat it up.** Staying socially connected with friends and volunteering or playing sports are ways to keep your brain engaged and happy.
- **Protect it.** Brains are hard to fix. To dramatically reduce your chances of concussions or brain injury, wear a seatbelt whenever you ride in a car and a helmet in any high-speed or impact sports. Why take the risk?



Brain Power Strategy Card

ZONE 3

Frustration Zone

My brain has frozen.

- I feel lost. I do not know what the expectations are. *I think I have to...*
- I can't explain the steps to someone else. I do not yet know step 1.
- I do not have a plan. I do not know how to start X. My brain is overloaded and frozen. *I feel...*



If this happens, I need to...

Take 5 deep belly breaths.

Identify one thing I know I need to do or can do! *I can...*

Work with someone or by myself, to make a plan. *How can I break this BIG thing up into smaller parts?*

ZONE 2

Growth Zone

My brain is working hard.

- I think I know what the expectations are and what to do. *I think I have to...*
- I can explain some steps/tasks to someone else. *I am confused with...*
- I know part of my plan to complete this task. *These are my steps so far...I do not know how to do X.*
- I know this is using a lot of brain power. My brain is working hard. *I can use my strategy of X. If I am stuck for more than 2 minutes, I WILL ask for help.*

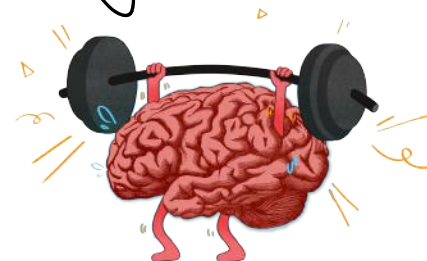
ZONE 1

Independent Growth Zone

My brain is working.

- I know what the expectations are and what to do. *I have to...*
- I can explain the steps and tasks to someone else. *The steps are...*
- I have a plan to complete this task. *My plan is...*
- I am confident *I can do this independently because...*

Which zone am I in?



Brain Power Strategy Card

ZONE 3

ZONE 2

ZONE 1

Frustration Zone
My brain has frozen.

Growth Zone
My brain is working hard.

Independent Growth Zone
My brain is working.

Zone 3 Work:

Zone 2 Work:

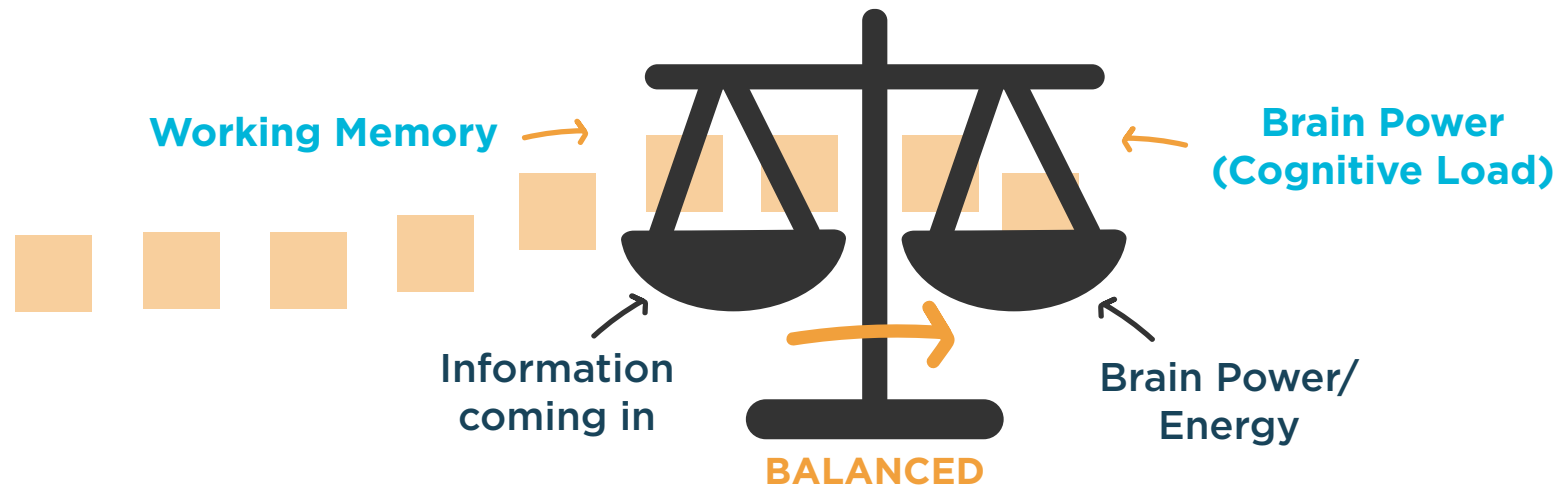
Zone 1 Work:

My Plan:

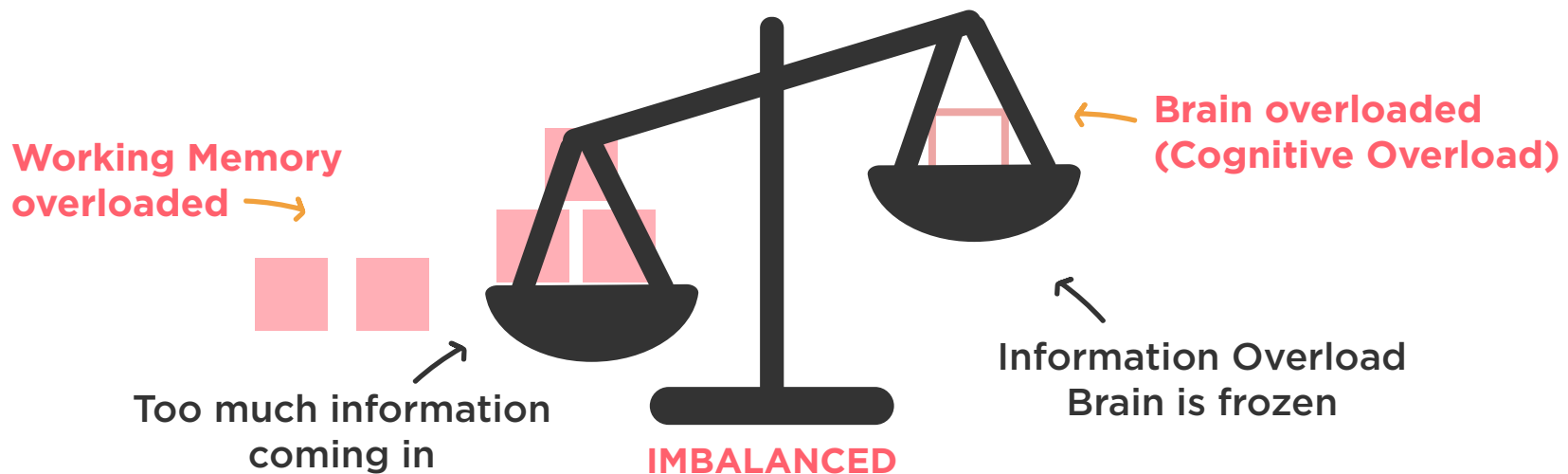
Let's make a plan!



Brain Power in **Zone 1** & **Zone 2**: Growth Zone



Cognitive Overload **Zone 3**: Brain is Frozen



COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Practice these strategies for collaboration in group relationships.

BE FLEXIBLE

Be open to exploring new ideas, combining ideas to create something more effective, or changing roles for the good of the group.

COMMUNICATE RESPECTFULLY

Speak to others in ways you want to be spoken to. Practice active listening in your body language and ask clarifying questions.

CLEARLY DEFINE GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

Spend time clarifying group goals, agree on expectations, and designate roles to reach the goal.

BE INCLUSIVE

Be sure that each person feels seen and heard. Involve everyone in decision-making, show fairness, and consider and value the opinions of others.

PRACTICE NON-JUDGMENT

Focus on the positive and value the contributions of each group member toward your collective goals.

COLABORATIVOS

Pon en práctica estas estrategias para colaborar en los vínculos grupales.

SER FLEXIBLE

Anímate a explorar nuevas ideas y combinarlas para arribar a una solución más eficiente o para cambiar los roles por el bien del grupo.

COMUNICARSE CON RESPETO

Comunícate con las demás personas como deseas que te hablen a ti. Practica la escucha activa con lenguaje corporal y haz preguntas para aclarar dudas.

DEFINIR OBJETIVOS Y EXPECTATIVAS CON CLARIDAD

Dedica tiempo a definir los objetivos grupales, a consensuar expectativas y a designar funciones en pos del objetivo.

TENER PRÁCTICAS INCLUSIVAS

Asegúrate de que todas las personas se sientan vistas y escuchadas. Haz partícipe a todas las personas en la toma de decisiones. Actúa con justicia. Considera y aprecia las opiniones de todas las personas.

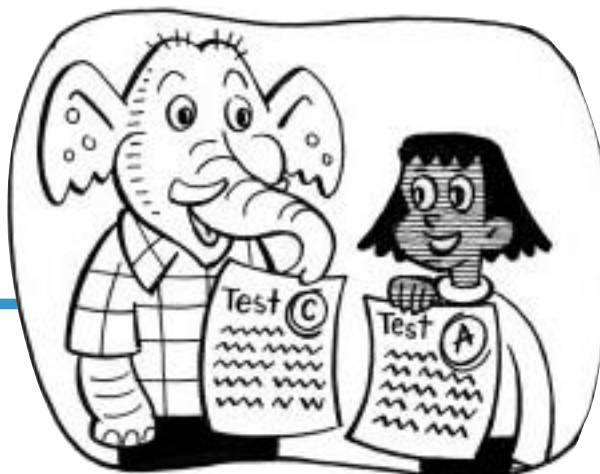
ABANDONAR LOS JUICIOS DE VALOR

Enfócate en los aspectos positivos y aprecia las contribuciones de cada miembro del equipo en pos del objetivo colectivo.

FACT SHEET

Brain Myths

by Eric H. Chudler, Ph.D.



Myth

People with larger brains are smarter than people with smaller brains.

Fact

There is no correlation between brain size and intelligence. Although whales, dolphins and elephants have brains that are larger than those of humans, they are not necessarily more intelligent than humans. Also, on average, men have larger brains than women. However, men are not smarter than women.

Myth

We use only ten percent of our brain.

Fact

We use all of our brain. Brain imaging methods, such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and positron emission tomography (PET), show that the entire brain is active, although not at the same time. The amount of brain activity depends on what the brain is doing. Certainly all 100 billion nerve cells (neurons) of the brain are not firing impulses at the same time, but all of the brain is used at one time or another. Damage to far less than 90 percent of the brain can cause devastating changes in the ability to talk, move, think and remember.

Myth

When we sleep our bodies and brains are at rest.

Fact

The brain is active 24 hours a day. Although our bodies are at rest when we sleep, recordings of brain activity show that the brain goes through different stages when we sleep. One stage, called rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, is accompanied by brainwave patterns and levels of cellular electrical activity that are similar to those seen when a person is awake. REM sleep is also the stage when most dreams occur.

Myth

When we learn something new, we get a new "wrinkle" in our brain.

Fact

Although brain changes, such as strengthening of the connections between neurons, do occur when new things are learned, new wrinkles in the brain are not formed. The "wrinkles" that are seen on the outside of the brain are formed by folds in the cerebral cortex. These folds allow the large surface area of the cerebral cortex to fit into the limited volume of the skull.

Myth

Humans have right-brain or left-brain personalities.

Fact

Personality is not a right- or left-brained function. Rather, personality and other complex higher functions depend on both the right and left sides of the brain. Although one side of the brain may be "dominant" for some behaviors, especially language, both sides of the brain play a role in most tasks.

Myth

Touching the brain will hurt.

Fact

The brain is not sensitive to touch. Poke it, pull it, prod it... the brain won't feel a thing. Although the brain receives and interprets information from the senses, it doesn't have the ability to detect anything itself. Unlike the skin, eyes and other sense organs, the brain has no specialized receptors to detect light, pressure, heat or cold.

Reading for Activity Option 1 or 2

You Can Grow Your Intelligence

New Research Shows the Brain Can Be Developed Like a Muscle

Many people think of the brain as a mystery. They don't know much about intelligence and how it works. When they do think about what intelligence is, many people believe that a person is born either smart, average, or dumb—and stays that way for life.

But new research shows that the brain is more like a muscle—it changes and gets stronger when you use it. And scientists have been able to show just how the brain grows and gets stronger when you learn.

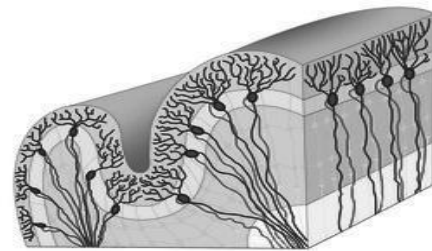
Everyone knows that when you lift weights, your muscles get bigger and you get stronger. A person who can't lift 20 pounds when they start exercising can get strong enough to lift 100 pounds after working out for a long time. That's because the muscles become larger and stronger with exercise. And when you stop exercising, the muscles shrink and you get weaker. That's why people say "Use it or lose it!"



© 2010 Mindset Works

But most people don't know that when they practice and learn new things, parts of their brain change and get larger a lot like muscles do when they exercise.

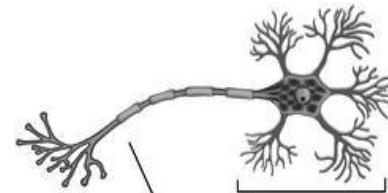
HEALTH & SCIENCE News You Can Use
Page 1 of 3



© Fotosearch

A section of the cerebral cortex

Inside the cortex of the brain are billions of tiny nerve cells, called neurons. The nerve cells have branches connecting them to other cells in a complicated network. Communication between these brain cells is what allows us to think and solve problems.



Axon

Dendrites

© Fotosearch

A typical nerve cell

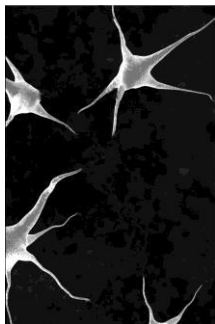
When you learn new things, these tiny connections in the brain actually multiply and get stronger. The more that you challenge your mind to learn, the more your brain cells grow. Then, things that you once found very hard or even impossible to do—like speaking a foreign language or doing algebra—seem to become easy. The result is a stronger, smarter brain.

How Do We Know the Brain Can Grow Stronger?

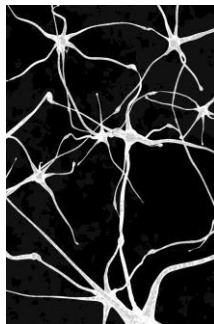
Scientists started thinking that the human brain could develop and change when they studied animals' brains. They found out that animals who lived in a challenging environment, with other animals and toys to play with, were different from animals who lived alone in bare cages.

While the animals who lived alone just ate and slept all the time, the ones who lived with different toys and other animals were always active. They spent a lot of time figuring out how to use the toys and how to get along with the other animals.

Effect of an Enriched Environment



Nerves in brain of animal living in bare cage



Brain of animal living with other animals and toys

© 2010 Mindset Works

These animals had more connections between the nerve cells in their brains. The connections were bigger and stronger, too. In fact, their whole brains were about 10% heavier than the brains of the animals who lived alone without toys.

The animals who were exercising their brains by playing with toys and each other were also "smarter"—they were better at solving problems and learning new things.

HEALTH & SCIENCE News You Can Use
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Even old animals got smarter and developed more connections in their brains when they got the chance to play with new toys and other animals. When scientists put very old animals in the cage with younger animals and new toys to explore, their brains also grew by about 10%!

Children's Brain Growth

Another thing that got scientists thinking about the brain growing and changing was babies. Everyone knows that babies are born without being able to talk or understand language. But somehow, almost all babies learn to speak their parents' language in the first few years of life. How do they do this?

The Key to Growing the Brain: Practice!

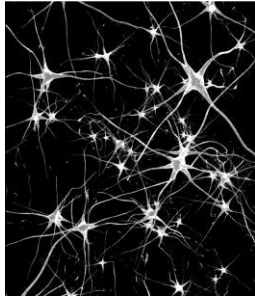
From the first day they are born, babies are hearing people around them talk—all day, every day, to the baby and to each other. They have to try to make sense of these strange sounds and figure out what they mean. In a way, babies are exercising their brains by listening hard.

Later, when they need to tell their parents what they want, they start practicing talking themselves. At first, they just make goo-goo sounds. Then, words start coming. And by the time they are three years old, most can say whole sentences almost perfectly.

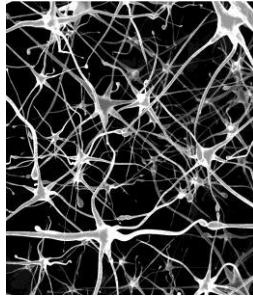
Once children learn a language, they don't forget it. The child's brain has changed—it has actually gotten smarter.

This can happen because learning causes permanent changes in the brain. The babies' brain cells get larger and grow new connections between them. These new, stronger connections make the child's brain stronger and smarter, just like a weightlifter's big muscles make them strong.

Growth of neuron connections in a child from birth to 6 years old



At birth



At age 6

© 2010 Mindset Works

The Real Truth About "Smart" and "Dumb"

No one thinks babies are stupid because they can't talk. They just haven't learned how to yet. But some people will call a person dumb if they can't solve math problems, or spell a word right, or read fast—even though all these things are learned with practice.

At first, no one can read or solve equations. But with practice, they can learn to do it. And the more a person learns, the easier it gets to learn new things—because their brain "muscles" have gotten stronger!

The students everyone thinks as the "smartest" may not have been born any different from anyone else. But before they started school, they may have started to practice reading. They had already started to build up their "reading muscles." Then, in the classroom, everyone said, "That's the smartest student in the class."

They don't realize that any of the other students could learn to do as well if they exercised and practiced reading as much. Remember, all of those other students learned to speak at least one whole language already—something that grownups find very hard to do. They just need to build up their "reading muscles" too.

5

What Can You Do to Get Smarter?

Just like a weightlifter or a basketball player, to be a brain athlete, you have to exercise and practice. By practicing, you make your brain stronger. You also learn skills that let you use your brain in a smarter way—just like a basketball player learns new moves.

But many people miss out on the chance to grow a stronger brain because they think they can't do it, or that it's too hard. It does take work, just like becoming stronger physically or becoming a better ball player does. Sometimes it even hurts! But when you feel yourself get better and stronger, all the work is worth it!

6

Knowledge of How Children, Adolescents, or Adults Learn

Why These Resources Matter

These videos and SEL programs support a deeper understanding of how children, adolescents, and adults learn by addressing the emotional, social, and cognitive factors that influence development. They highlight the importance of relationships, empathy, mindfulness, and trauma-informed practices—essential elements that create safe, supportive learning environments where all individuals can thrive.

SEL Programs	
Inner Explorer Mindfulness Program Inner Explorer (TK-12) Inner Explorer Job Aid Inner Explorer YouTube Channel There are lots of great testimonials from teachers, administrators, and students here. YouTube Channels NPTA- Mindfulness at School Discovery Ed Family resource page for LAUSD https://innerexplorer.org/lausd_parents.html	Harmony SEL (TK-6) Harmony SEL (TK-6) Harmony SEL Job Aid Family Harmony Toolkit (English and Spanish) Harmony is a comprehensive social-emotional learning program designed to foster a positive classroom environment, enhance student well-being, and promote effective interpersonal skills among students.
Second Step Curriculum Second Step Job Aid Second Step Middle School flyer 2024-25 The Second Step curriculum is a research-based program aimed at promoting social-emotional skills, conflict resolution, and safety awareness in students from preschool through middle school, fostering a positive school climate and enhancing academic success.	RethinkEd Restorative Activity Plan Rethink Ed's are strategies that help schools build strong, respectful relationships and resolve conflicts by focusing on healing and accountability instead of punishment. These practices matter because they create a more supportive and inclusive school environment where students feel connected, leading to better behavior and stronger communities. For information and resources, please join the SEL Restorative Activity Plan Schoology Group (BNJK-FVGG-6PDTC)
Websites	
LAUSD SEL Competencies The six LAUSD SEL competencies—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making, and emotional regulation—are important because they equip	Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) An Introduction to SEL by CASEL CASEL, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and

Knowledge of How Children, Adolescents, or Adults Learn

students with the essential skills to navigate social interactions, manage their emotions, and make positive choices, ultimately fostering their academic and personal success.	Emotional Learning, is a leading organization dedicated to advancing social-emotional learning (SEL) by providing research, resources, and guidance to help educators implement effective SEL practices in schools, as highlighted in their introduction to SEL.
Website California Transformative SEL Competencies The California Transformative SEL Competencies outline a set of skills and mindsets that promote students' social-emotional development while encouraging them to engage in critical thinking and advocacy for social justice in their communities.	Website Transformative SEL Transformative SEL is an approach that seeks to integrate social-emotional learning with social justice principles, empowering students to develop critical consciousness and take action against inequities while fostering their emotional and relational skills.
Website California Educators Together https://www.caeducatorstogether.org/ California Educators Together is a collaborative platform designed to support educators by providing access to high-quality professional learning resources, lesson plans, and opportunities for communication and collaboration among teachers and administrators across the state 1. Create an account. 2. Type in the search bar <u>Social Emotional Learning</u> to find a plethora of SEL resources.	Website CASEL'S 3 Signature Practices CASEL's 3 Signature Practices are a framework designed to integrate social-emotional learning into classroom practices, focusing on engaging students through activities that promote self-awareness, relationship-building, and effective decision-making, ultimately enhancing their emotional and social development.
Student Health and Human Services Wellness Programs Wellness Programs and Resources Everyday Fitness Videos for Educators Practice self-care.	Inclusive Environment Belonging Strategies Inclusive Environment Belonging Strategies Trauma -Informed Strategies Trauma-Informed Strategies.pdf
Calm Area Guidebook: Calming Areas Guidebook The <i>Calm Areas Guidebook</i> provides guidance on creating and managing spaces that support students' emotional regulation and well-being.	Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports and Restorative Practices (PBIS/RP) https://www.lausd.org/pbis_rp - Community building practices - Check-ins/outs - Thematic Days

Knowledge of How Children, Adolescents, or Adults Learn

Videos and Reading	
Video Dr. Bruce Perry on Trauma, Resilience, and Healing Offers valuable insights into how understanding trauma and nurturing resilience can lead to profound healing and recovery.	Video How Childhood Trauma Affects Health Across a Lifetime Dr. Nadine Burke Harris Dr. Nadine Burke Harris reveals the profound, lasting impact of early adversity on physical and mental health, emphasizing the need for trauma-informed care and early intervention.
Video Brain vs Survival Brain: Dr. Jacob Ham on Understanding Trauma: Learning Explores the difference between our logical thinking processes and the instinctual, protective responses triggered in survival mode, shedding light on how stress impacts decision-making and behavior.	Video Every Kid Needs a Champion by Rita Pierson Rita Pierson delivers an inspiring message on the transformative power of teachers who believe in, connect with, and champion every child's potential.
Video Explaining the Brain to Children and Adolescents Makes complex neuroscience accessible, helping young people understand how their brains work and empowering them to manage emotions, behaviors, and learning with greater awareness.	Video In Brief – How Resilience is Built Succinctly explores the foundational practices and support systems that help individuals develop the strength to overcome challenges and thrive.
Video Students React to Hearing 'I Believe in You' Realizing the power of intentionally speaking life into young people, we wanted to give some of our teachers and students the same experience. We want to challenge educators everywhere to take time today to do the same thing. Start a movement. Tell a young person that you BELIEVE in them!	Website with Videos and Reading Materials Thich Nhat Hanh Foundation Planting Seeds of Compassion Showcases the transformative impact of nurturing mindfulness and kindness in communities, fostering a world grounded in compassion and peaceful coexistence.
Video Every Opportunity Every Opportunity is a powerful video campaign that highlights the importance of belonging and connection for students, showcasing the impact of social isolation and the need for inclusive school	Video Teachers and Students Fostering a Sense of Belonging Highlights the powerful role of educators and students working together to create a supportive, inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and

Knowledge of How Children, Adolescents, or Adults Learn

environments.	connected.
Video Dear Teacher: Heartfelt Advice for Teachers from Students Beautifully conveys students' hopes and desires for connection, understanding, and encouragement, inspiring educators to support their students' growth and well-being with empathy and care.	Video World Without Teachers World Without Teachers is a thought-provoking initiative that emphasizes the vital role educators play in shaping society, illustrating the profound impact of their absence on students and communities.
Video and Article "The Power of Relationships in Schools" by Edutopia "The Power of Relationships in Schools" by Edutopia highlights how strong, caring relationships between educators and students can positively impact learning, behavior, and overall school culture.	Video "Under the Surface- Empathy" The video helps us understand what empathy is and how it can reduce judgment and prejudice, ultimately leading to deeper connections and lasting friendships.
Flyer Creating a Sense of Belonging in Our School 2024-2025 National SEL Campaigns Program The National SEL Campaigns Program promotes widespread awareness and implementation of social-emotional learning initiatives, equipping educators and communities with the resources necessary to foster emotional intelligence and resilience in students nationwide.	Video and Research (Edutopia) A New Theory on the Teen Mental Health Crisis While rising rates of teen mental health issues can't be pinned to a single root cause, a 2023 study surfaced a compelling connection to the decline in childhood independence.
Handouts How to Promote Agency, Identity, and Belonging How to Promote Agency, Identity, and Belonging is a guide that provides educators with strategies to empower students, celebrate their unique identities, and create an inclusive environment where every student feels valued and connected.	Article Mental Health and Social Emotional Learning by Clark McKown Mental Health and Social Emotional Learning by Clark McKown explores the critical intersection between mental health and social-emotional learning, providing insights and strategies for integrating mental health support into educational practices to enhance student well-being.
Handouts Trauma-informed Strategies Handouts (merged) Trauma-informed strategies handouts provide essential resources and techniques for educators to support students affected by trauma.	Posters SEL Strategy Poster LAUSD 6 SEL Competencies "I Can" Statement SEL Six Competency Posters

Knowledge of How Children, Adolescents, or Adults Learn

Article and Handouts Article: A Crisis of Student Belonging Crisis Student Belonging Handouts The Crisis Student Belonging Handouts offer educators practical strategies and resources to address students' feelings of isolation and enhance their sense of belonging within the school community.	Lessons SEL / DOI Advisory Lessons Use our teacher-created and customizable SEL Google Slide lessons for Secondary teachers (grades 6-12), curated by the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Unit, which has been developed in collaboration with School Mental Health, Student Health and Human Services, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, Human Relations, Equity and Diversity, A-G Linked Learning, and the SEL Unit. These lessons are available in a suggested monthly sequence or organized by SEL competency.
Flyers SEL Family and Caregiver Resources SEL Family Resources 2024-25 ENG&SPA.pdf Wellness for Families These SEL Family resources are essential as they empower families with tools and strategies to support their children's social-emotional development, fostering stronger connections between home and school. Inner Explorer Mindfulness app: Family resource page for LAUSD • https://innerexplorer.org/lausd_parents.html	Handouts Gholdy Muhammad The Five Pursuits framework. Gholdy Muhammad's Five Pursuits framework is significant in social-emotional learning as it provides a comprehensive approach to cultivating identity, skills, and critical consciousness in students, empowering them to thrive academically and socially.
	Thank you! Social Emotional Learning Unit

Inner Explorer para FAMILIAS

¡APRENDIZAJE SOCIOEMOCIONAL BASADA EN LA ATENCIÓN PLENA PARA LOS ESTUDIANTES, EL PERSONAL, Y LOS FAMILIAS!

¡Nuestro Distrito continúa nuestra asociación con Inner Explorer, una plataforma de aprendizaje socioemocional basada en la atención plena este año! Este sencillo programa ayudará a mejorar la salud mental y el bienestar de toda nuestra comunidad escolar y desarrolla habilidades para la vida como un mejor enfoque, compasión, gratitud y autorregulación como elementos clave en el crecimiento continuo de un estudiante. También puede mejorar su estrés y bienestar mental cuando hace una pausa y respira junto con sus estudiantes.

COMO FUNCIONA

1. PADRES o CUIDADORES se registran para obtener una cuenta de padres gratuita
<https://web.innerexplorer.org/compass/portals/lausd>
2. DESCARGAR el HOME App
<https://innerexplorer.org/homeapp/>
3. HABLAR DEL TEMA- Pregúntele a su hijo todos los días si practicó y qué aprendió.
4. PRACTICAR con su hijo- Pídale a su estudiante que le muestre cómo practicar con ellos usando el HOME App.
5. SINTONICE las prácticas en clase de su hijo- Pídale al maestro de su hijo que lo invite a Sintonizar a través de su cuenta. Luego recibirá una notificación cada vez que la clase de su hijo juegue una práctica.
(NOTA: no todos los maestros tendrán práctica en clase)
6. APRENDER más sobre la atención plena y la programa de Inner Explorer:
¡Vea los videos de bienvenida!
Inglés: <https://youtu.be/7pljVvqxt3A>
Español: <https://youtu.be/P9IKBrZMfmo>

El programa de Inner Explorer es una serie de prácticas de atención plena audioguiadas que son 5-10 minutos diarias.

El programa se enfoca en áreas clave para ayudarlo a usted y a sus estudiantes a prepararse para el aprendizaje, proporcionando técnicas para procesar adecuadamente el estrés, la ansiedad, las emociones difíciles, la ira y más.

- ✓ Ejercicios de respirar/relajar
- ✓ Conciencia de los sentidos, pensamientos y emociones
- ✓ Compasión y conexión a todos

PARA OBTENER MÁS INFORMACIÓN, POR FAVOR VISITE [INNEREXPLORER.ORG](https://innerexplorer.org)



Inner Explorer for FAMILIES

MINDFULNESS-BASED SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING FOR STUDENTS, STAFF, AND FAMILIES!

Our District is continuing our partnership with Inner Explorer, a Mindfulness-Based Social Emotional Learning platform this year! This simple program will help improve the mental health and wellbeing of our entire school community and builds life skills such as improved focus, compassion, gratitude, and self-regulation as key elements in a student's continuous growth. It can also improve **your** stress and mental wellness when you pause and breathe along with your students.

HOW IT WORKS

- 1. PARENTS or CAREGIVERS REGISTER for a FREE PARENT account**
<https://web.innerexplorer.org/compass/lausd>
- 2. DOWNLOAD the HOME App**
<https://innerexplorer.org/homeapp/>
- 3. TALK ABOUT IT-** Ask your child every day if they practiced and what they learned.
- 4. PRACTICE with your child-** Ask your student to show you how to practice with them using the Home App.
- 5. TUNE IN to your child's in-class practices-** Ask your child's teacher to invite you to Tune In through their account. You will then receive a notification every time your child's class plays a practice.
(NOTE: not all teachers will have in-class practice)
- 6. LEARN more about mindfulness and the Inner Explorer program:**
watch the welcome videos!
English: <https://youtu.be/7pljVvqxt3A>
Spanish: <https://youtu.be/P9IKBrZMfmo>

The Inner Explorer program is a series of **daily 5-10-minute audio-guided mindfulness** practices. The program focuses on key areas to help you and your students prepare for learning, providing techniques to appropriately process stress, anxiety, difficult emotions, anger and more.

- ✓ Breathing/relaxation exercises
- ✓ Awareness of senses, thoughts and emotions
- ✓ Compassion and connection to all

TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE VISIT [INNEREXPLORER.ORG](https://innerexplorer.org)

THANK YOU!

**WITH DEEP GRATITUDE TO ALL WHO
CHAMPION, UPLIFT, AND WALK ALONGSIDE
OUR FAMILIES AND STUDENTS—YOUR CARE
MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE.**

The SEL Family Resources were created with one purpose at heart: to strengthen the bridge between home and school so every child feels seen, supported, and empowered. We believe families are our children's first teachers—and when families are equipped with tools to nurture emotional well-being, resilience, and connection, our students thrive not just in the classroom, but in life. These resources honor the incredible role caregivers play in shaping the hearts and minds of the next generation.



Website and Contact Information

Social Emotional Learning
Unit

¡GRACIAS!

CON PROFUNDA GRATITUD A TODOS LOS QUE DEFIENDEN, ELEVAN Y CAMINAN JUNTO A NUESTRAS FAMILIAS Y ESTUDIANTES: SU ATENCIÓN MARCA LA DIFERENCIA.

Los Recursos Familiares SEL fueron creados con un propósito en el corazón: fortalecer el puente entre el hogar y la escuela para que cada niño se sienta visto, apoyado y empoderado. Creemos que las familias son los primeros maestros de nuestros hijos, y cuando las familias están equipadas con herramientas para fomentar el bienestar emocional, la resiliencia y la conexión, nuestros estudiantes prosperan no sólo en el aula, sino en la vida. Estos recursos honran el increíble papel que desempeñan los cuidadores en la formación de los corazones y las mentes de la próxima generación.



Website and Contact Information

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