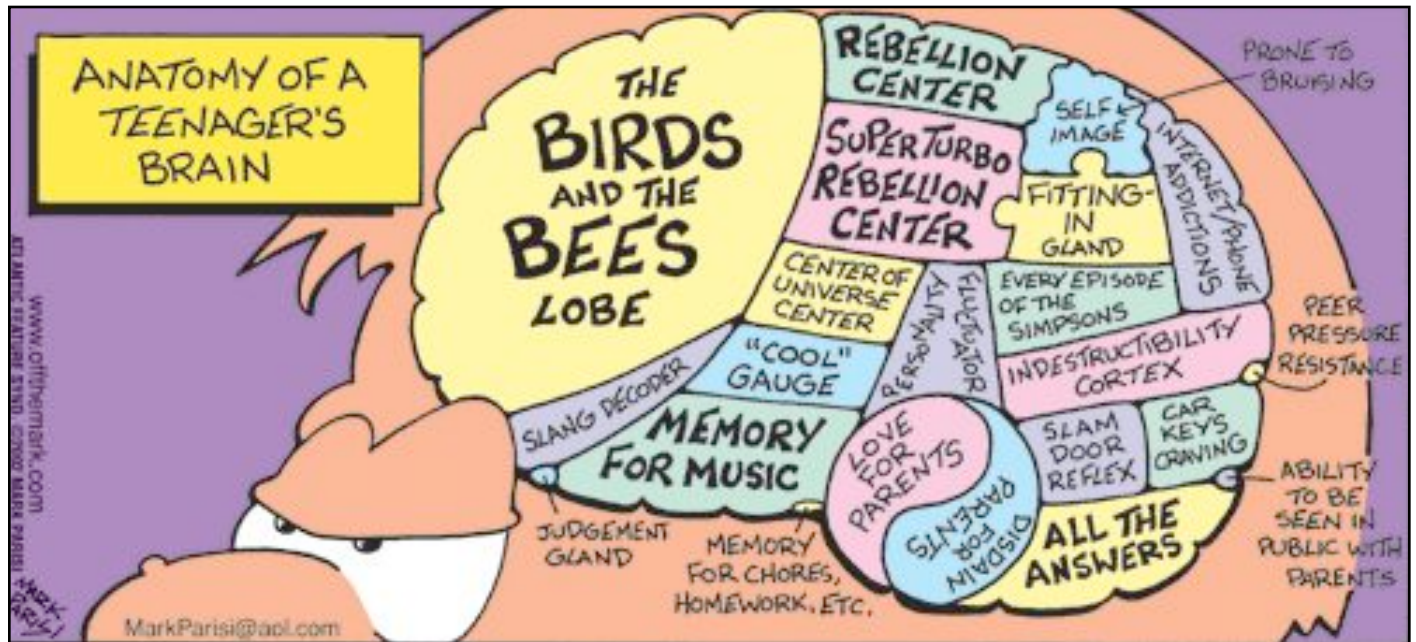


NEW DAY NEWS



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WWW.STARTINGPLACE.ORG



A Teenager's Brain

- Teenagers are known to be moody, insecure, argumentative, impulsive, impressionable, reckless, and rebellious as well as having odd sleep patterns, awkward growth spurts, and various unhealthy habits.
- Scientists once thought that the brain's development stopped at the end of childhood and teenage behavior was blamed on hormones and lack of experience.
- It is now known that the brain undergoes significant development during adolescence and does not stop developing till the mid twenties. A crucial part of the brain, the frontal lobes, are not fully connected during teenage years.
- The frontal lobes are the part of the brain that says, "Is this a good idea?", "What is the consequence of this action?". Its not that they don't have a frontal lobe; they are going to access it more slowly.
- Insight requires a fully connected frontal lobe. Teenagers are not necessarily capable of thinking about the effects of their behavior on other people. This is why they often seem so self-centered.
- The teenage brain also has a much more robust habit forming ability than the adult brain and thus is much more vulnerable to addiction. Novel experiences are also motivating to teenagers and this coupled with challenges with impulse control also makes them more vulnerable to addiction.

The mission of The Starting Place is to improve lives through education, treatment and support services related to substance abuse, mental illness and co-occurring disorders



Joel Kaufman, Ph.D.
CEO

Responding to the Brain Under Construction

This newsletter is repeating the topic of teenage brain development because it is an extremely important topic in understanding and working effectively with teenagers. Having an understanding and a context for someone's behavior may not necessarily make it any easier to deal with but it may facilitate responding in a more constructive and appropriate manner.

Having an understanding of teenage brain development can help parents and professionals understand why teens at times take risks, are self-centered, lack sensitivity and insight, are emotionally volatile, impulsive, and seek new and novel stimuli.

Adults sincere desire to protect youth from harm and bad decisions can easily transfer into control battles. Adults legitimate need to hold teenagers accountable for their actions may turn into overly severe and unconstructive punishment.

Professionals recommend that adults caring for teenagers recognize the appropriate limits of their influence while helping teenagers to develop decision making skills, responsibility for their own actions, and accountability to others. No one advocates that adults be permissive or allow teenagers to become destructive to themselves or others.

Teenagers need to have some say in their own lives and repeated constructive opportunities to learn to make decisions and express their individuality in healthy ways.

Save the Date for our Annual Breakfast Fundraiser

On Friday morning, September 9, 2011 from 8AM till 10AM Starting Place's Annual Breakfast Fundraiser entitled, Unleashing Your Potential, will take place at the Riverside Hotel. We will be honoring former Senator Dave Aronberg and also celebrating the 20th Anniversary of Drug Courts in Broward County. The cost for the breakfast is \$70/person. Sponsorships are available as well as ads in the program journal. For more information contact Dr. Kaufman at 954-327-4090 or go to the Starting Place Website- www.startingplace.org

Club Infinity

One of the needs in our community has been for a place where young people can gather on the weekends and have fun in a safe and alcohol and drug free environment. Matt Brown is a recent graduate of Fort Lauderdale High School and came up with this idea on his own. With the assistance of two caring and supportive parents Matt created Club Infinity. One night on the weekends will be a movie night and another night will be a music/dance night. The Starting Place agreed to be the fiscal agent for Club Infinity. For more information and possible sponsorship of this needed community resource, check out the Club Infinity website- www.clubinfinityevents.com

Our Services and How to Contact Us

The Starting Place provides outpatient substance abuse and mental health services to children, teens, young adults and their families. Our services include assessments, individual counseling, family counseling, case management, psycho-educational and therapy groups, psychiatric services, school based services, and aftercare/continuing care. Services are office-based and in-home and school-based. Our hours are tailored to meet the needs of our clients. Fees are based on a sliding scale and we also accept a few different insurances.

If you would like to set up an appointment or speak to someone further about our services, please contact us at (954) 327-4060. You can also check us out at our website at www.startingplace.org

<http://www.facebook.com/thestartingplace>

