

Brain development

0 to 19
TORBAY
for you

Teenage Years

Teenagers are risk takers - it's in their nature. The teenage years are the biggest period of brain development for your child since the Early Years.

Understanding the changes in teenage brains during adolescence can help you and them understand their sometimes difficult behaviour.

To access Solihull online courses for understanding the teenage brain, visit:

 solihullapproachparenting.com/teenagers-brains





Things to know

- The brain has to become more efficient and begin its journey to adult-functioning.
- The well-used brain connections (synapses) become stronger. The ones that are not needed are 'pruned'.
- The changes begin during puberty and continue until the mid-twenties.
- As with all body changes and stages of development, the pace is different for everyone.
- It is often not an easy time and it can be hard for parents and carers to know what support to offer.



Changes in behaviour

Whilst these physiological changes are happening, you are likely to notice other changes such as:

- **Sleep patterns:** Regulation of sleep is different. Often staying up later and not wanting to surface in the mornings.
- **Emotional outbursts:** Hormonal changes can lead to extreme emotions and intense reactions.
- **Social changes:** Boundaries are pushed and authority challenged. Peer influence is greater.
- **Risk-taking:** Controlling impulses are amongst the last parts of the brain to mature and this can lead to risk overriding logic during this development period.
- **Intellectual changes:** The brain of an adolescent is a match for an adult and can lead to a sense of superiority.
- **Physical changes:** Changes with the sex organs and growth spurts can lead to awkwardness. Puberty increases susceptibility to stress.