

Adolescents As a Special Needs Group

Strategies for Teaching An "At Risk" Population

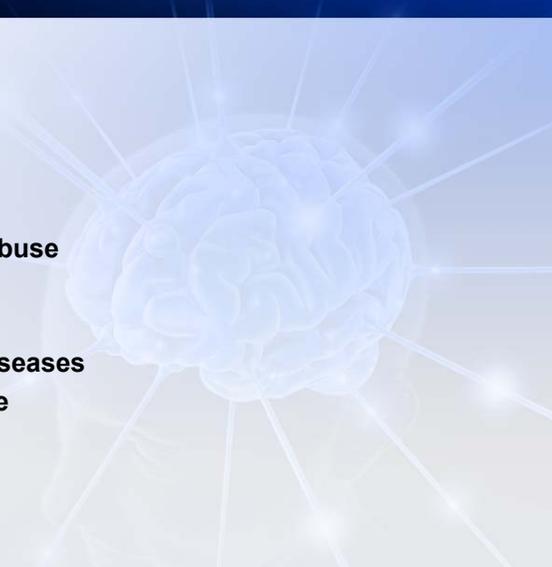
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The Risks of Adolescence

- Traffic Accidents
- Violence
- Suicide
- Alcohol Abuse
- Marijuana Abuse
- Tobacco and Nicotine Abuse
- Mental Illness
- Sleep Disorders
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Prescription Drug Abuse
- Media Addiction
- Bullying



8 Key Facts About Adolescent Brain

1. Gray Matter is Decreasing (Pruning)
2. White Matter is Increasing (Myelination)
3. Neurogenesis is Occurring (New Brain Cells)
4. Pruning Moves from Back to Front Over Time
5. Emotional Brain Develops Before Reasoning Brain
6. Process is Shaped by Environment (Neuroplasticity)
7. Evolutionary Advantages of Brain Changes
8. Extraordinarily Vulnerable to Environment

Adolescent Brain Friendly Practices

Adolescent Risk	Brain Friendly Practice
Poor Decision-Making	Opportunities To Choose
Identity Confusion	Self-Awareness Activities
Negative Peer Influence	Peer Learning Connections
Emotional Turmoil	Affective Learning
Body Image Disturbances	Learning through the Body
Uncritical Thinking	Metacognitive Strategies
Impulsivity	Expressive Arts Activities
Poor Reality Testing	Real World Experiences

Opportunities to Choose

- Provide Homework Options
- Use Student Polling
- Allow Students to Choose Their Own Projects
- Let Students Be Involved in School Policy

Self-Awareness Activities

- Use Self-Awareness Assessments
- Let Students Keep Personal Journals
- Connect Content to Students Personal Lives
- Teach Mindfulness Meditation

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Peer Learning Connections

- Set Up a Peer Teaching System
- Use Collaborative Learning Projects
- Establish Peer Mentoring
- Let Peers Critique Each Other's Work

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Affective Learning

- Be Emotionally Supportive of Students
- Express Emotion in Your Teaching
- Use Appropriate Humor
- Engage Your Students' Imaginations

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Learning Through the Body

- Provide Exercise Breaks in Class
- Integrate Role Play into the Curriculum
- Engage Students in Hands-On Activities
- Use Movement to Teach Concepts

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Metacognitive Strategies

- Engage Students in Critical Thinking
- Show Students How to Use Metacognitive Tools
- Teach Goal-Setting
- Instruct Students in How Their Brains Work

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Expressive Arts Activities

- Incorporate Creative Writing
- Encourage Students to Express Ideas Visually
- Let Students Be Creative with Media
- Allow Students to Show Learning Through Music

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Real World Experiences

- Have a Job Shadowing Day
- Create an Internship Program
- Use Community-Based and Service Learning
- Encourage Entrepreneurial Enterprises

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