5 Great Challenges for Parents in 2012

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Millenial parents must have a ‘developmental’ perspective

Stages of Adolescence

“...It is sort of unfair to expect teens to have adult levels of organizational skills or decision-making before their brains are finished being built...”

Jay Giedd, M.D. Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Chief of Brain Imaging at the Child Psychiatry Branch of the National Institute

A beautiful work in progress
The human brain is only fully formed at 20+ years of age.

**Prefrontal Cortex**

- Called the “Voice of Reason”
- Is the last bit to mature
- Responsible for such things as:
  - Impulse control
  - Emotional regulation
  - Strategic planning (anticipating the likely consequences of one’s actions)
- Continues maturing through the teenage years

**Parents need to be aware**

- The surrogate voice of reason
- The frontal lobes of teenagers are located in their parents’ brains
- Asking an adolescent to plan ahead is like asking a dog to study physics
- Too much freedom is not good
- Just as the early teen has not grown into their body, we know they have not yet grown into their brain either

**Challenge 2**

**Alcohol**
Teenage drug use dropping

The good news

Alcohol

Alcohol time bomb set to explode

5th May 2007

Alcohol research

- 47% of those who begin drinking before 14 become alcohol dependent compared with 9% who wait until 21 (Hingson 2006)
- 50% of Grade 5 children have had alcohol given to them by their parents (Toumbourou 2006)


a series of large international studies have uncovered a clear link

- the earlier you start drinking, the greater the chance of problem drinking later in life.
- if you start drinking before 14 years of age, you double the risk of alcohol dependence at age 21.

Alcohol consumption in adolescence can permanently damages the wiring of the brain

Booze harms brain

Professor John Toumbourou:

- Set a rule that says 18 is the legal drinking age in Australia and lets try not to drink until age 18.
- If they start to drink then change pace and try to discourage frequent use.
- But really it would be better if the drinking age was 21.
- We need to make alcohol less available.
- There needs to be more regulation of licensing.
- We need to make sure its not possible to buy cheap drinks or drinks that are targeting children.
Geoff Munro

- Australian Drug Foundation has changed its advice to parents.
- They now say delay alcohol introduction as long as possible, preferably until 15.

the term ‘digital native’ is misleading

Young people may have been born in the technological age but they aren’t born computer literate or well-versed in digital citizenship skills

*Marc Prensky Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants 2001

How is it changing relationships?

- Over analysing girl/boy friends updates
- Obsess over what their ex is up to
- Relationship break ups are public
- It’s a Record of Every Relationship Mistake You’ve Made

www.facebook.com/help/contact/?id=210036389087590

Report an Underage Child

If you believe there is a child under the age of 13 using Facebook, please use this form to file a report.

- URL of the profile
- Full name of the person you’d like to report
- Email address listed on the profile
- Networks the person belongs to (Ex: San Francisco, CA)
- Actual age of the child

Should under 13 year olds be on Facebook?
Kids are at risk online

Kids are at risk IRL

Kids lack judgement & are impulsive

Low parent involvement

Brain development

Parents ignorant of dangers

Any 12 yr old can bypass an filter

Inadequate technical protection

Slow, blunt legal controls

Anonymity = disinhibition

Cyberbullying etc...

Use activity reports to monitor your kids' computer activity

Choose websites, games, and programs they can access

Set time periods when they can use the computer

What it does...

Windows Live Family Safety 2011

The 5 key top tips for Parents

1. computer in bedroom
2. Negotiate an online contract
3.  
4. Monitor & supervise
5. No Facebook under 13


Windows Live Family Safety 2011

Cybersafety Help Button

www.dfcde.gov.au

Challenge 4
How much sleep do 10-18 year olds need?

8.5 to 9.25 hours

How much sleep are they actually getting?

- Research says students are getting about 7.5 hours a night’s sleep on school nights.
- 25% of the students are getting 6.5 hours or less sleep on school nights.

Professor Mary Carskadon - Professor of psychiatry and human behavior at Brown University and director of chronobiology and sleep research

All mammals need sleep. Human beings can go:

- Human beings can go: 36 days without food before death
- But only...

Without sleep

Sleep e book - Professor Dorothy Bruck

- Implement a routine
- Don’t exercise before bed
- Cool down
- Avoid cat naps
- Minimise anxiety
- Avoid stimulants
- Warm & soothing drinks

Challenge 5

Building Resilience

Central to all the research on resilience
- Is the sense of belonging a person has
- Most powerful protective factor

Three types of belonging
- Belonging to and feeling loved by your family
- Belonging to a diversity of friendship groups
- Belonging and fitting into a school

Charismatic adult
Social emotional competencies

Sense of meaning, purpose and belonging

Positive Self Talk

Islands of competence

The End

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