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# Parents and Teens Training Together: A Powerful Force for Risk-Prevention

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# Parents and Teens Training Together: A Powerful Force for Risk-Prevention

**Dr. Michael Popkin**

Founder and President,  
Active Parenting  
Publishers

National Youth  
At Risk Conference

Savannah, GA  
2015



# A little history

- 1997 AuSable Valley MHC in Tawas city, MI selects AP of Teens...
- 1997-2000 Families in Action field tested
- 2000 APP publishes 1<sup>st</sup> Families in Action
- 2009 Active Parenting of Teens, 3d Ed.
- July, 2012 Families in Action (revised)



# Active Parenting of Teens: Families in Action



# Three Programs in One:

1. For parents alone: **AP of Teens +**
2. For teens alone: **Teens in Action =**
3. For both together: **Families in Action**



# The Goals of Families in Action

1. Family Enrichment
2. Parent Education
3. School Success
4. Life Success



# Published Research Results

- greater family cohesion
- less family fighting
- greater school attachment
- more involvement in school activities
- greater peer attachment
- more involvement in family counseling
- more opposition to adolescent alcohol use
- Greater Self-esteem



## Evidence of Effectiveness Lists: *(Active Parenting of Teens: Families in Action)*

- NREPP (SAMHSA) [w.nrepp.samhsa.gov](http://w.nrepp.samhsa.gov)
- OJJDP Model Program
- Crimesolutions.gov
- OASIS NY
- PA State Clearinghouse for Military Fam.
- The CA EBC for Child Welfare



# How FIA Works

- Six, 2 1/2 Hour Sessions
- Most separate, but all end together
- Separate group leaders
- Use video (Two young adult narrators), discussion, experiential activity, reading in guides and home assignments



# *Teens in Action*

- Session 1. To survive and thrive
- Session 2. Winning cooperation
- Session 3. Responsibility and Discipline
- Session 4. Building Courage and Self-Esteem
- Ses 5 & 6. Drugs, Sexuality and Violence, Reducing the Risks



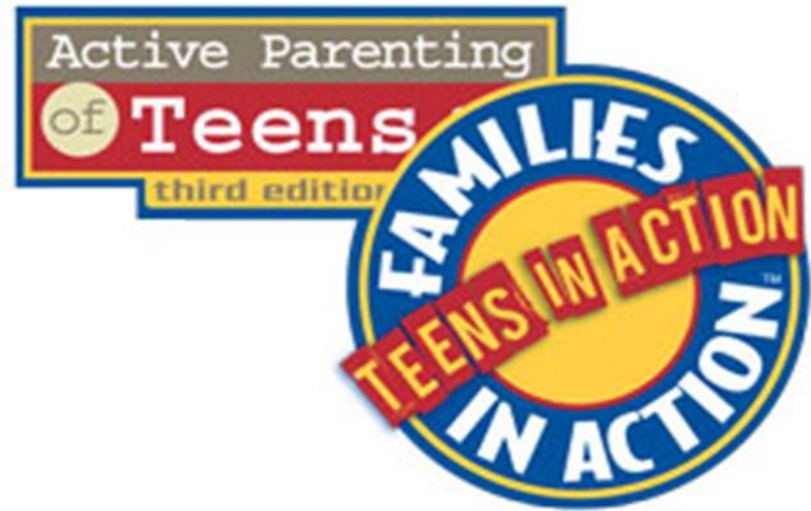
**Ballast:** *That which gives stability to character:*

- **Responsibility**
- **Cooperation**
- **Respect**
- **Courage**
- **Self-Esteem**



# What's the best kind of ship?

## A ...RelationShip



# Your brain on Adolescence

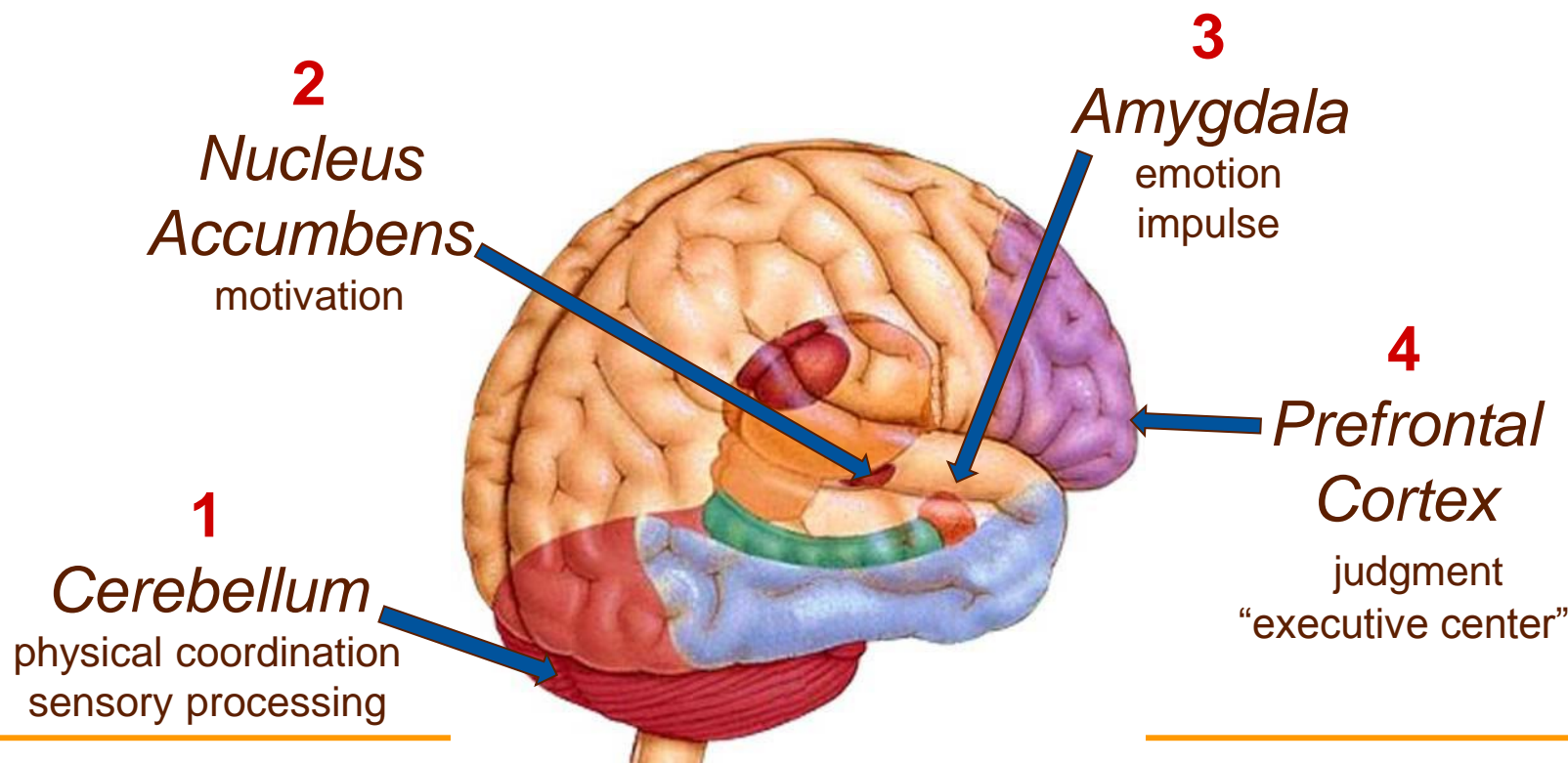
- **Rapidly changing**
- **From age 11 to 14, most growth of gray matter since infancy**
- **Followed by pruning (age 11-24+)**
- **Unused areas get cut back.**

***Use it or lose it!***



# Teen Brain Development

Brain growth and development occurs from back to front:



# Teen Brain Development

**What does the prefrontal cortex (the “Executive Center”) control?**

- Sound decision making
- Empathy
- Considering consequences
- Regulating emotions
- Self-awareness
- Morality



# Teen Brain Development

## How Parents Can Help:

- Support: *Build the relationship.*
- Discipline: *Set limits on behavior.*
- Problem solving: *Involve the teen.*
- Character: *Build it ...and they will come out better*





# The Purpose of Parenting

**To protect and prepare children and teens  
to survive and thrive  
in the kind of society in which they'll live.**

## **Our Society:**

- Democratic
- High tech
- Multi-cultural, Diverse
- Free market economy
- \_\_\_\_\_



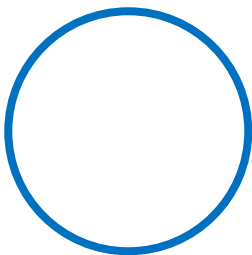
# PARENT'S & TEEN'S ROLES

- **Teen's role → Learner and active participant**
- **Teen's Purpose:**  
*To protect and prepare themselves  
To survive and to thrive  
in the kind of society in which they  
will live.*



# Styles of Parenting

Dictator



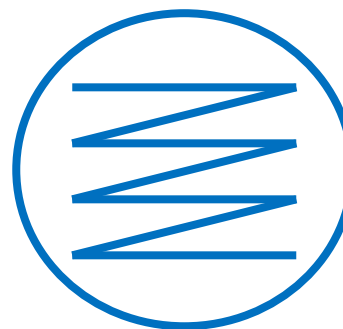
Doormat



Active Parent



Freedom within **E X P A N D I N G** Limits



# The Power of Choice

- *It's your life. Your choices matter.*
- *Who want more freedom? Here's a way to get it...*

*"The FREEDOM COIN"*



# Prevention: Drugs, Sexuality, and Violence

Introduced in Session I

Character building, skills development, and  
family strengthening in Session 2-4

Ten specific prevention strategies  
Sessions 5-4



# Puppet Master says

- Study hard and do well in school.
- Don't get involved with tobacco, alcohol or other drugs.
- Do what you say you're going to do.
- Follow the rules.
- Do everything we expect you to do.
- Don't think for yourself: Let others pull your strings.



# What is Responsibility?

- **Accepting our obligations**
- **Doing the right thing as the situation calls for it**
- **Accepting accountability for our actions**

$$R = C + C$$

**Responsibility = Choice + Consequences**



# Why we do it?

- Thurgood Marshall: Leave the door open
- *I love and really enjoy FIA. I believe in it! (I even use it on my own teens! ) At first the teens are pretty reserved but by the end on the class they are always engaged and participating. I think the greatest feeling is when you see past participants out in the community who thank you! I've had previous participants come up to me and say that they used one of our techniques and it solved a problem or got them out of one. If even one family out of two class said thank you and that they are glad they took the class then it was all worth it!*

*Josie Castaneda  
Pocatello, ID*





# For more information...

- Fill out coupon for FREE *Parent Guide* or *Teens Guide* and bring it to our booth.
- [www.activeparenting.com](http://www.activeparenting.com)
- [800-825-0060](tel:800-825-0060)

