

Talking to your teens...about emotional and mental health and well-being

May 2016



Brighton & Hove
City Council

Teenage development

Hormonal changes

Emotional regulation

Increasing importance of peer group

Disengagement from parents

Increasing sense of agency

Who am I: development of unique identity

Sexuality and gender

Risk taking increases

Brain changes

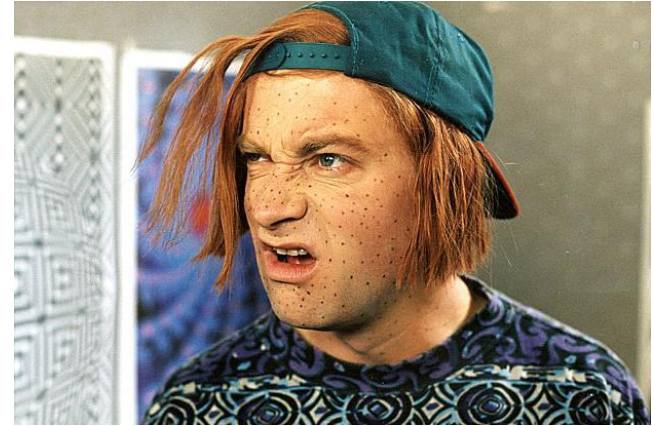
Shift of sleep pattern

Periods of egocentricity

Embarrassment!

SEND factors may complicate

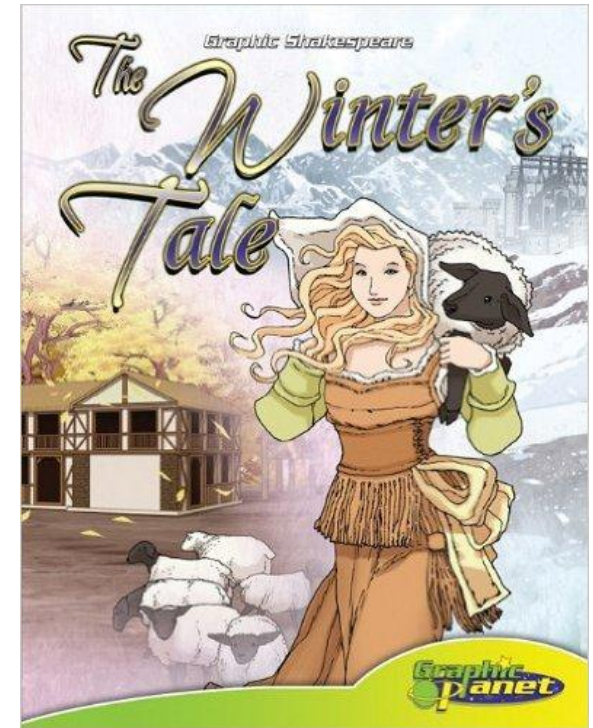
See: Sarah-Jayne Blakemore on TED.com



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Shakespeare: A Winters Tale

“Would there were no age between sixteen and three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the rest; for there is nothing in the between but getting wenches with child, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting—
Hark you now! Would any but these boiled brains of nineteen and two-and-twenty hunt this weather?”



New cultural phenomena

- Social media and the peer group
- Narcissistic culture? Me, me, me
- Consumerism
- Less independence and freedom
- Too much information
- Gaming and screens
- Less exercise
- Junk food



The 5 Fs

- Flight/flight
- also 5 fs: fight/flight/freeze/fluster/flock
- Evolutionary
- Planning for survival



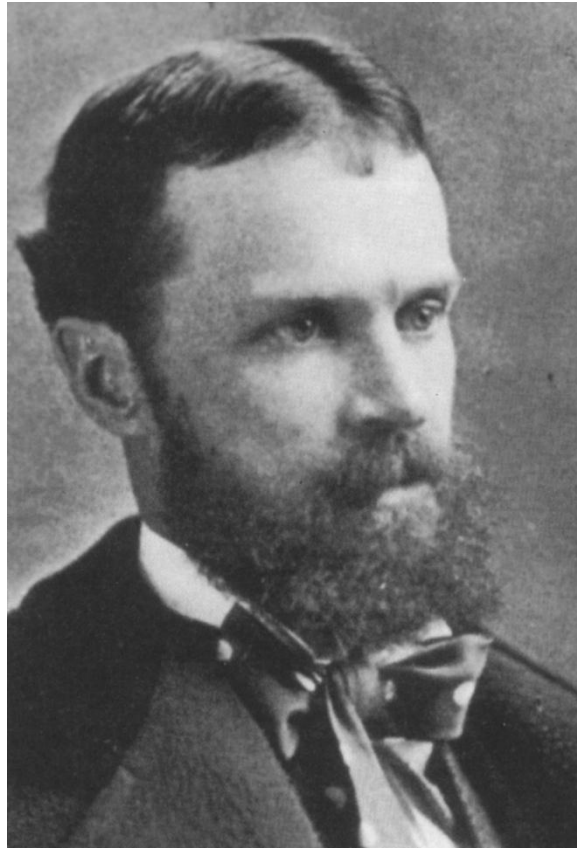
Top tips for talking to teens (1)

- ***Talk less, listen more***
- Blame less, ask more
- Judge less, assume positive intent
- Be present, mindful and attentive
- Allow silence
- Watch you body language
- Use open questions
- Criticise less - use problem solving strategies
- Coach, don't rescue
- Nurture agency, self-efficacy and resilience



“The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook”

William James



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Top tips for talking to teens (2)

- Choose your time and place
- Walk the talk as an adult
- Emotions: ignore the froth
- Adults can apologise
- Allow face saving, don't back into a corner
- There are still rules and boundaries: these can be agreed sometimes but not always
- You are still the adult, they the child



Anxiety: What not to do

- Give excessive reassurance
- Minimise child's fears
- Share adult concerns with your child
- Protect from failure
- Protect from all stressful situations
- Let your own anxiety spill over



What helps at home

- Clear routines: predictability
- Order
- Calm (ish) environment
- Consistent approaches from adults
- Nurturing relationships
- Open conversations about feelings (but keep in proportion)
- Humour and playfulness
- Adults as good role models
- Appropriate boundaries around adult concerns
- Food and sleep patterns
- Digital hygiene



Listen and communicate

- Worrying is normal
- Worry is there for a reason
- Its good to talk/communicate about our feelings
- Share your own childhood fears
- Paraphrase your child's worries
- Be present

Ways of helping with worry (1)

- Relaxation
- Exercise
- Identify bodily reactions
- Catch the worry early before it spirals
- Identify anxiety producing situations
- Name your worries
- Write them down
- Talk them out/draw them
- Talk sense to yourself
- Problem-solve and make an action plan

Ways of helping with worry (2)

- Break down scary tasks into small steps
- Stories, metaphors, films
- Allot 5 minutes a day for worrying
- Exaggerate and catastrophise:
 - Use humour and absurdity
- Build person's resources, resilience and coping by referring to past successes



Relaxation and mindfulness

- Use of guided relaxation CD
- White noise
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Mindfulness, especially body scan
 - Use CD
 - learn the technique
- <http://mindfulnessforstudents.co.uk/resources/mindfulness-audio-guided-practices/>



Wellbeing in school.....

- National pilot for CAMHS Primary Mental Workers
- Joining Dorothy Stringer wellbeing team...in school services for students:
- Counselling
- Coaching
- Groups
- Workshops
- Signposting to outside services.....



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- Providing brief interventions in school to students, parents and staff
 - Parents support groups, book-ins, workshops
 - Sharing information across the school...
 - Linking to outside services.....for counselling, groups, family help....
 - More information.....
 - Contact us.....

Wellbeing Team at Dorothy Stringer:

Louise Kempt.... kmt@dorothstringer.co.uk

Jaki Watkins.... jcw@dorothy-stringer.co.uk

Counselling/Coaching Team:

Annette Bento and Sam Taylor

Contact us or make a referral through your head of year....



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Student support at Varndean School

Ellis	Angelou	Turing	Russell
Fiona Hall Caroline Ball	Nicky Robins Claire Webber	Jenny Pearce Kerry Tester	Donna Peters- Lamb Maggie Joint

School counsellor

Farah Collins

farahcollins@varndean.co.uk

Both Schools have pages on their website with signposts to many different services and support for students and parents/carers.

Thank you for coming

Please leave feedback on post it notes

Any questions please ask or email:

Tim Clarke - timclarke@varndean.co.uk

Tweet@VarndeanSchool

Helen Emerson – EMR@dorothy-stringer.co.uk

Tweet@StringerPSHE



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