

# Opportunity to Share Strategies and Successes:

Fostering Positive Social Relations in Teens/Young  
Adults with 22q

Maura McClellan, M.S.W., R.S.W.

# Overview

- Developmental Tasks of Adolescence
- The Teen Brain
- Parenting Teens/Young Adults
- Breakout Groups
- Discussion/Wrap-up

## Developmental Tasks of Adolescence

- Achieving new and more mature relations with their peer group (dating!)
- Achieving emotional independence from parents and other adults
- Acquiring a set of values and an ethical system to guide behavior — developing an ideology and identity separate from family
- Body Image – can become preoccupied with looks/weight; exploring and understanding their sexuality

## Developmental Tasks of Adolescence

Some of these developmental tasks may be more challenging for teens/young adults with 22q:

- *Achieving new and more mature relations with peer group (dating!)*

## Developmental Tasks of Adolescence

Healthy relationships involve two people who:

- Care about each other.
- Understand and respect each other and are responsible for each other.
- Solve problems together and communicate with honesty.
- Share at least some of the same goals and values.

## Developmental Tasks of Adolescence

Destructive/unhealthy relationships involve :

- Manipulation and jealousy.
- Negative attitudes and dishonesty.
- Blaming each other for their problems.

## Developmental Tasks of Adolescence

Some of these developmental tasks may be more challenging for teens/young adults with 22q:

- *Achieving emotional independence from parents and other adults*

# Developmental Tasks of Adolescence

Assess your teen's readiness

- Can your teen keep track of time?
- How does your teen behave in emergencies?
- How impulsive is your teen?

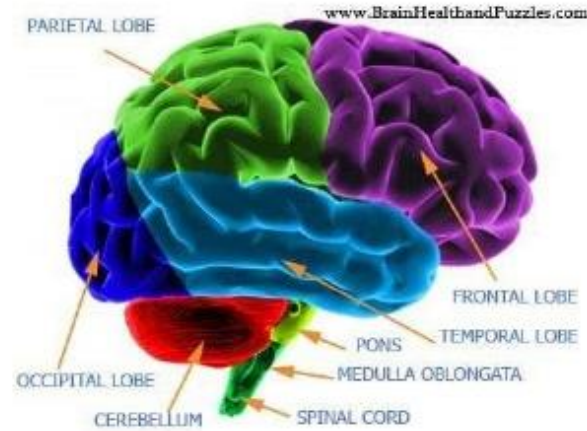


# Teen Brain



# Teen Brain

## Adult Vs. Teen Brain



- Most of the activity in the adult brain is in the frontal lobe
  - Thinking, reasoning, planning

- Most of the activity in the teen brain is focused in the center
  - Pleasure reward center

# Teen Brain

## Understanding the Teen Brain

- There are essentially two brains at work in a teenager/young adult, the emotional brain and the rational brain
- The emotional brain is excited by taking risks and seeking thrilling experiences

# Teen Brain

How can you help?

- Provide guidance, opportunities, and environments that promote the development of the rational or “thinking” brain
- Avoid conflict and stay calm
- Focus on important issues of health and safety

# Parenting Teens/Young Adults



# Parenting Teens/Young Adults



# Parenting Teens/Young Adults

## Parenting Goals

- Maintain a positive parent /teen relationship
- Prepare teen for self-reliant independent living

# Parenting Teens/Young Adults

- Validate their emotions....
- Create safety to make mistakes and talk to you about it
- Less advice giving and more shared problem solving
- Stand on the same side of problem...avoid putting problem between you and your child



# Parenting Teens/Young Adults

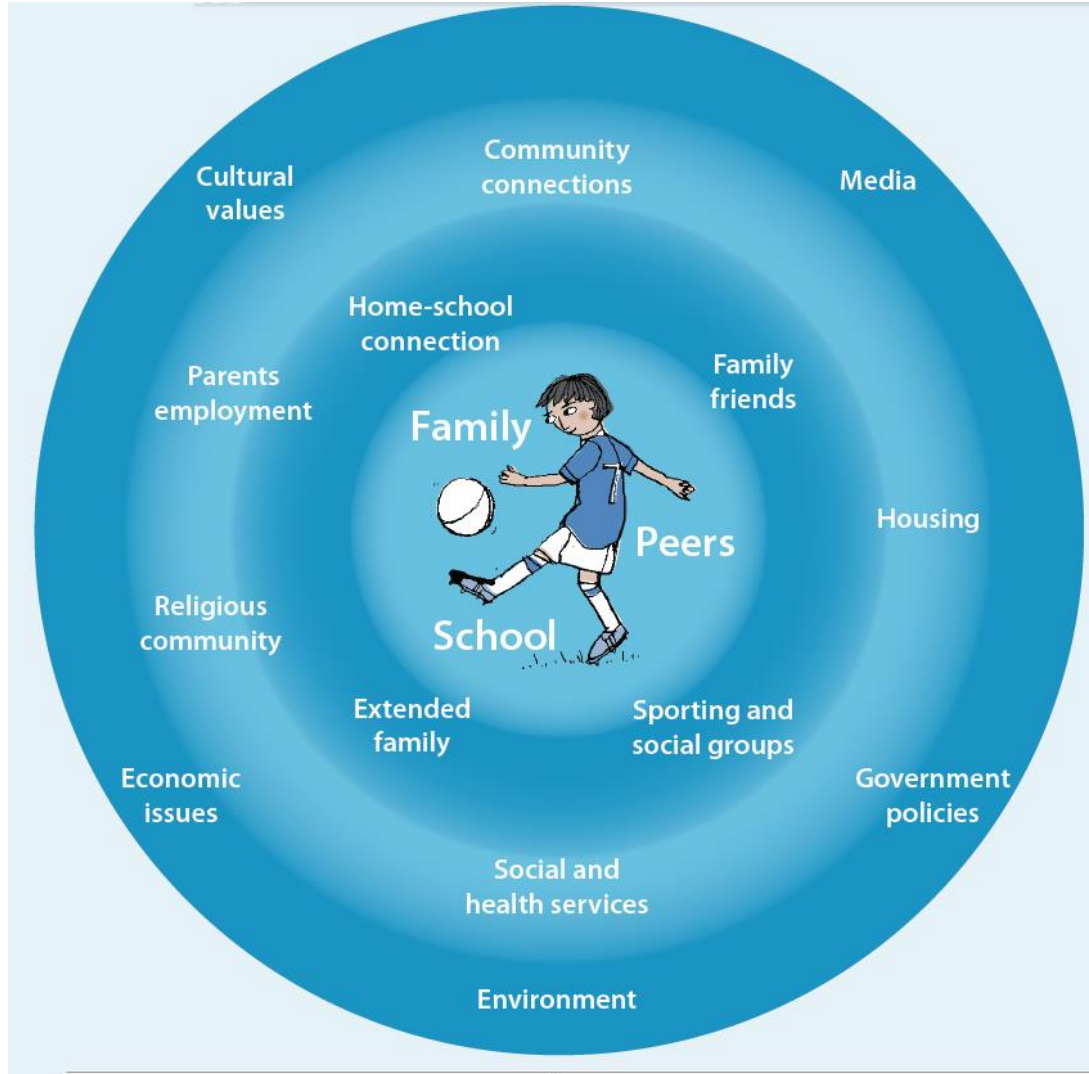
## Enabling

- Waking teens in the morning, doing their laundry, picking out their clothes
- Typing papers, delivering forgotten homework to school
- Feeling sorry for teens, excusing them from helping the family with household chores
- Giving them everything they want “because everyone has one”

## Empowering

- Listening and giving emotional support and validation without fixing or discounting
- Teaching life skills
- Letting go (without abandoning)
- Sharing what you think, how you feel and what you want without lecturing, insisting on agreement

# Sharing Strategies and Successes



# Sharing Strategies and Successes

1. Online World
2. School Community
3. Peer Friendships
4. Dating Relationships
5. Social and Health Services
6. Employment/Volunteer Community

# Discussion

- How do we build up a network of people we trust who understand my child's support needs?
- Where are places in our community that my child can be included and start to have relationships with people outside of our family?
- What are the risks of not engaging socially and the risks of engaging socially for our children in different settings?
- What can we do to help make social situations more supportive, accessible and inclusive?

# Secure Attachment

