

OCTOBER 18, 2016



GROWING PAINS IN THE TEENAGE BRAIN

By Dora Calott Wang, M.D.

Why are teenagers so much more impulsive and more emotional, than adults?

"It's all about the brain," said Chandler Todd, MD, Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the University of New Mexico, to an audience of parents at the Albuquerque Academy preparatory school in New Mexico.

Teens undergo growing pains in their brains, more than their bodies. Understanding these changes can help parents be more patient with their teens, and more helpful. Todd, the mother of two said, "I am seriously outgunned by my teenaged daughter."

Nerve cells in the teenaged brain grow four to five times faster than in the adult brain. Unused nerve cells are "pruned," so that in some parts of the teenage brain, 50 percent of neurons die, thus rapidly changing the brain. Thoughts travel faster, because myelin, an insulating material that increases the speed of nerve impulses, proliferates rapidly. Todd's 12-year-old son can suddenly read more quickly, and she knows this is because of changes in his brain.

"Be affectionate," said Todd. "Recognize their emotional reactions as authentic." It's not just "drama club," Todd emphasized.

[CONTINUE READING](#)

IFAPA'S FALL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 28 & 29
MARRIOTT HOTEL - CORALVILLE

C4 (Saturday Workshop - 8am to 12:15pm)

CPR AND FIRST AID*

IFAPA's CPR and First Aid class is designed to give you the confidence to respond in an emergency situation with skills that can save a life.

* This class is not a certified course, but does meet the requirements for foster care licensing. It may not be appropriate for other licensing situations (i.e. childcare, nursing, EMT, etc.).

Trainer: Karla Thompson

D1 (Saturday Workshop - 1:15pm to 4:30pm)

THE BENEFIT TO "BEING WITH" A CHILD

Too often we "parent" or educate children. We forget the need and the how to of simply being with a child. We forget how "being with" a child allows them to be seen and heard. This will grow into the child feeling valued and important. As a child feels that they are worth "being with", they grow a stronger sense of self, internal motivation and self-responsibility. This is the key to successful and healthy relationships. **Presented by: Kate Haberman, LISW, MFT, RPT** (Social Work CEUs)

LEARN MORE AT THE FOLLOWING LINKS:

[VIEW CONFERENCE BROCHURE](#) [REGISTER ONLINE](#)

Registrations due Thursday, October 20





Northern Service Area Peer Liaisons (from left to right):
Gwen Timmerman, John Smith, Jessica Leal & Christie McGuire

PEER LIAISONS NAVIGATE THE WORLD OF FOSTER PARENTING BOTH PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY

Peer Liaisons are living the life of fostering just like you! So what can you really expect from your Peer Liaison? IFAPA Peer Liaisons will be in touch with foster parents via phone, mail, e-mail or in person at least once each fiscal quarter (Jan-Mar, April-June, July-Sept, Oct-Dec), they can help you navigate the world of confidentiality, provide information and resources on trainings, support groups, foster home licensing regulations, offer contacts for DHS chain of command and offer assistance with communication needs. Connect with your Peer Liaison, you will probably be correct in assuming they've dealt with whatever it may be! School needs-guess what? Some of our Peer Liaisons are educators and have backgrounds in childhood development. Many Peer Liaisons care for older youth and have a vast knowledge of needs a child has when aging out of foster care. If they do not know the answer to a question, they will help find the needed information. IFAPA Peer Liaisons will maintain confidentiality at all times.

The Northern Service Area (SA #2) Peer Liaisons are John Smith, Christie McGuire, Gwen Timmerman and Jessica Leal:

- John Smith has been a foster/adoptive parent for 27 years and a Peer Liaison for seven years. John serves families in Buena Vista, Calhoun, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Humboldt, Ida, Pocahontas, Sac, Webster & Woodbury counties.
- Christie has been a foster/adoptive parent for 25 years and a Peer Liaison for 19 years. Christie serves families in Boone, Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Floyd, Franklin, Hamilton, Hancock, Hardin, Mitchell, Story, Winnebago, Worth and Wright counties.
- Gwen has been a foster/adoptive parent for seven years and a Peer Liaison for over a year. She serves families in Benton, Black Hawk, Bremer, Butler, Grundy, Marshall and Tama counties.
- Jessica has been a foster/adoptive parent for five years and recently joined IFAPA as a new Peer Liaison. Jessica serves families in Allamakee, Buchanan, Clayton, Clinton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Howard, Jackson & Winneshiek counties.

CONTACT MY PEER LIAISON

IFAPA Staff in the Spotlight:
Biology Unimportant to This Mom

WEIGHTED BLANKETS ARE A NEW WAY TO EASE SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY

By Jessica Suss

If you've ever suffered from stress, anxiety or insomnia, you know how frustrating those feelings of helplessness and panic can be.

Millions of people around the world suffer from stress and anxiety, and in the United States, anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness, affecting 40 million adults age 18 and older, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Now, instead of turning to pharmaceuticals as a remedy, sufferers can try a gentler form of relief: weighted blankets.

It sounds laughably simplistic, but the act of sleeping with a weighted blanket encourages something called Deep Touch Pressure Stimulation (DTPS), a sensation similar to getting a massage. DTPS, according to Temple Grandin, Ph.D., "is the type of surface pressure that is exerted in most types of firm touching, holding, stroking, petting of animals, or swaddling."

Though DTPS is relatively new on the therapeutic scene, it is an age-old practice, lending legitimacy to the weighted blanket practice. In an article from Collective Evolution, occupational therapist Karen Moore says in psychiatric care, "weighted blankets are one of our most powerful tools for helping people who are anxious, upset, and possibly on the verge of losing control."

CONTINUE READING