

The Teenage Brain

A good metaphor for puberty and the teen years is:
“starting the engine of a racecar with an unskilled driver”

The natural tendency of the teenage brain is to explore, take risks, and socialize. The parent’s role is mediation. Manage the risks, stay highly involved in their lives, ask questions, and reduce opportunities for dangerous activities. Ideally, parents will offer safer alternatives to teens for risk taking, such as camping, sports, theater, wilderness treks, the use of helmets, and padding for activities such as skateboarding. Remember, their brains are not adult yet, and they will not make mature, measured decisions. For the teenage brain to be maximized, it should be guided carefully through this dangerous time with focus, love, and involvement.

-From *Enriching the Brain* by Eric Jensen 2006.