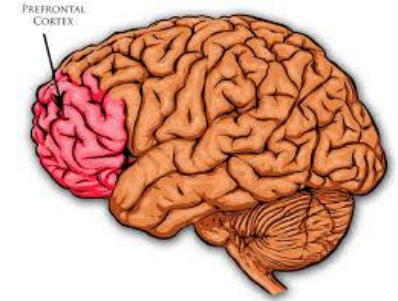


Emotion-focused Parent-Teen Communication

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Brain Development in Teens

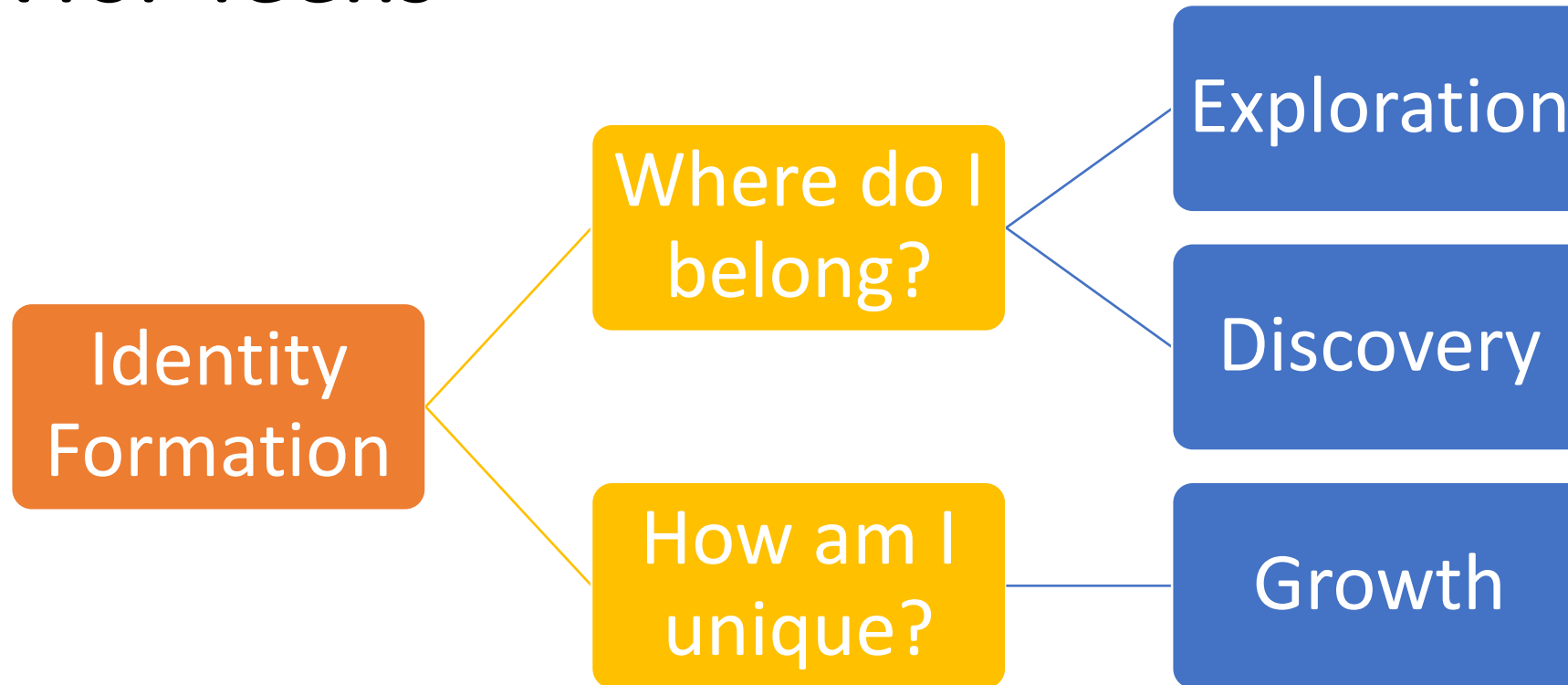


- Significant remodelling happens in teen brains (continues until people are in their mid-20s)
- The brain goes through changes and growth to be more efficient
- Remodelling starts from the back, and eventually reaches the front of the brain (the front part of the brain is responsible for decision making and risk management)

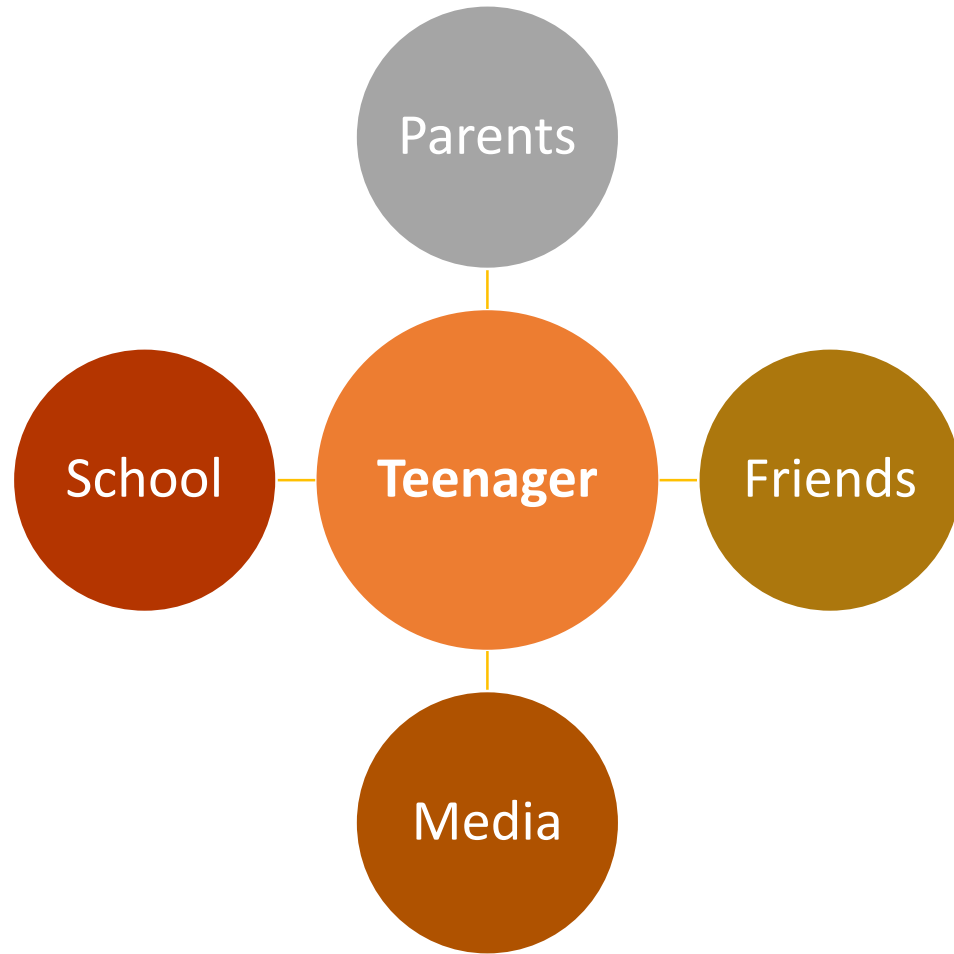
Emotional Processing in Teens

- The brain connections between the emotional centre and decision-making are still developing (not at the same rate, always)
- Teens may need support to regulate and work through their emotions

Identity Formation: A Critical Developmental Task for Teens



Factors Influencing Teen Identity



Understanding Emotions

Why are Emotions Important?

1. Motivate us to take action
2. Help us make decisions
3. Allow others to understand us (vice versa)
4. Help us survive, thrive and avoid danger



Primary Emotions

Situation	Emotion	Helpful Actions
Attack on self, family, friends, or possessions	Anger	Protect or defend self
Loss, separation, mental injury	Sadness	Seek support or spend time with oneself
Danger	Fear	Freeze, run, monitor
Achieving a goal, task, social connection	Happy	Friendly interaction, seeking out similar situation
Others highly valuing us or we highly value others	Love, affection	Express positive regard, strengthen attachment bond
Acted inappropriately	Shame	Correct or hide the action to protect social status or relationship with others

How does your teen express their emotion?

Emotion	Expression
Anger	
Sadness	
Fear	
Happy	
Love, affection	
Shame	

Our Goal: Becoming Emotional Coaches for our Teens

Step 1: Becoming aware of our own emotions and managing them

Step 2: Learning how to help teens deal with their emotions

Responding

Emotion Coaching

- Viewing your child's negative emotions as opportunities for connecting and teaching
- Empathizing and validating your child's emotions
- Helping your child label emotions
- Problem-solving, discussing goals, and offering strategies

Emotion Dismissing

- Viewing your child's negative emotions as potentially harmful to them
- Needing to change the negative emotional experience immediately
- Assuming that negative emotions will disappear if you just quickly move away from them

Benefits of Emotion Coaching

- Helps to regulate your child's emotional and physiological states
- Avoid escalation of problems
- Opens up opportunities for conversations and connecting
- Increase cooperation between parents and teens

Parent-Child Communication

Reciprocal

Parent learns
something about
the child

Child learns
something about
the parent

Repeated
Interaction