



‘Keeping Them Safe’

Risky Business Conference

The Millennial Approach to Suicide Prevention

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**Kellie Danna Hurst
Health Teacher WHS**



Keeping Them Safe

- ▼ **What** does this mean?
- ▼ **How** do we help with issues facing our teens today that are sort of the typical “right of passage” as they move from adolescence to young adult-hood?



Keeping them Safe from:

- ▼ Cyber bullying / technology?
- ▼ Depression?
- ▼ Low Self-Esteem?
- ▼ Lack of Refusal Skills?
- ▼ Lack of Coping Skills?
- ▼ Lack of Good Communication?

All of which can lead to Suicidal thoughts...



All curriculums say pretty much the same...

- ▼ Awareness
- ▼ Identify warning signs
- ▼ Teens know before adults do



What does it mean to have good **Mental Health** ?

There are **three broad areas** which help to define good mental health:

The Mentally healthy person:

- ✔ feels comfortable with themselves. Self-Concept
- ✔ feels right about other people. Relationships
- ✔ is able to meet the demands of life. Coping



Sometimes problems of living become so difficult that normal responses to life situations are interrupted and a person is left with behaviors that are **not conducive to positive mental health**



Depression

Abuser

Bullies

Suicidal thoughts

Lack of Coping skills

Lack of Stress management





“Bullying Has Little Resonance with Teenagers”

Danah Boyd 11/15/2010

- ✓ Assemblies /interventions don't resonate with teens
- ✓ Adults and teens talk past one another

The way teens see it:

- social drama is NOT bullying
- neither are fight videos, rumors, gossip
- “starting drama”
- “getting into my business”
- “being mean”

Bullying =

Strong over weak

Only messin around
“don't be stupid”

Can't take it seriously



Actually...

- ▼ Kids **do** take it seriously and misinterpret
- ▼ Minor social infractions are **taken personally**
- ▼ Things escalate
- ▼ They're not at fault and a victim
- ▼ **Spiral affect** = out of control = no one knows where it all started



Lack of Empathy

- ▼ Girls
 - Ostracize one another b/c of personal collisions or in support of their friends dramas
 - Spread rumors/gossip
- ▼ Boys
 - Physical altercation
 - Intimidate / humiliate
- ▼ Technology
 - Humiliates and isolates
 - Verbal / emotional torment

SOCIAL POWER- creating and reinforcing hierarchies



Emulate **Learned** Behaviors...

- ▼ Mirroring “everyday” behaviors they see around them
 - Arguments
 - With parents, friends, family, colleagues
 - Ostracize over disagreements
 - Talk smack about work, colleagues and bosses
 - Backstabbing
 - Adult conversation

Only difference is teens are more direct and more explicit

They witness **ADULT DRAMA** all around them



MEDIA

- ▼ Sets social standards
- ▼ Glorifies celebrity fights / negative behaviors= legit and leads to **notoriety**
- ▼ MTV domestic abuse comments
- ▼ Jersey Shore and the Real World



Teens are **desperately** seeking attention

- ▼ Starting drama guarantees it
- ▼ It's entertainment
- ▼ It's fun
- ▼ They know it hurts, but it also feels good
- ▼ Eminem & Rihanna's *Love the Way You Lie*
 - “*drama half the fun, even when it hurts like hell*”

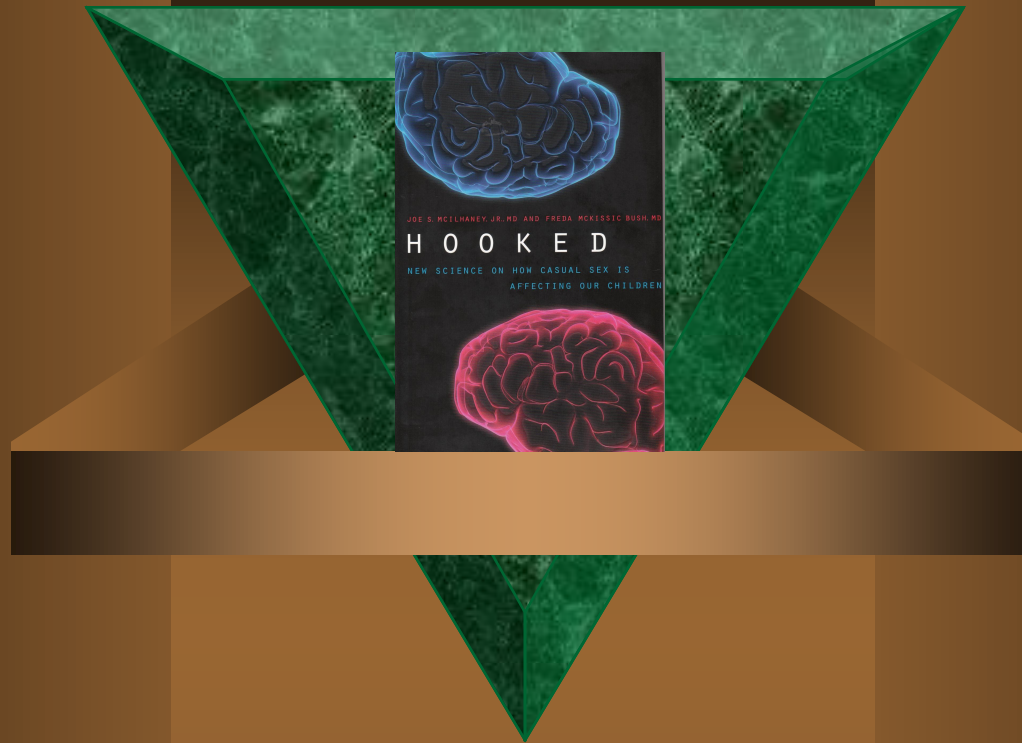
Leads to Depression





Bullying & Suicide are “*side-effects*”

- ✓ Lectures by un-cool old people
- ✓ The author of the Bullying article suggests we need to get to **the root of the problem** by focusing on:
 - Building empathy
 - Identifying escalation
 - Techniques for stopping cycles of abuse
 - **Create environments** where young people don't get validated for negative attention and where they don't see relationship drama as part of normal adult life



It is a critical human trait, one that has enormous implications for sex and relationships, is **the need to connect to other human beings.**

What happens to those who can't connect?



Maslow's Hierarchy

Interfaces with

- Significance
- Self-worth
- Security



Life is driven by the desire for success. We reason if someone loves me, I must have significance... Then LIFE has meaning



Suicide --

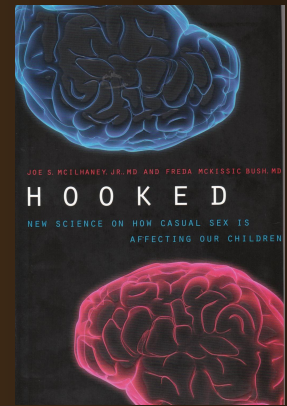
- ▼ attempts are 8x higher for boys
- ▼ 3 x higher for girls

--when **sexually active**

-W.A.I.T. Training



STATS



- ✔ Sexually active teen girls are three times more likely to report being **depressed** all, most of, or a lot of the time whereas sexually active teen boys were more than twice as likely
- ✔ 70% (females) and 55% (males) high school aged students who have had sex reported that they **wish they had waited**
- ✔ 30% of women of all ages report that the first sex they experienced was **not voluntary**
- ✔ More than 40% of girls who experience sex under the age of 15 describe it as involuntary or unwanted
- ✔ CDC found 20% of college women had **been forced** to have sex against their will at some time during their lives.
- ✔ 4 out of 7 girls have **sex early** due to some form of abuse. (rape, incest, molestation)
- ✔ 1 in 7 boys have had sex early due to some form of abuse. (rape, incest, molestation)



“SIDE EFFECTS?!”

The root of the problem:



▼ I think stems from lack of **Foundational Human Needs** which encompasses...

▼ Mental Wellness ~

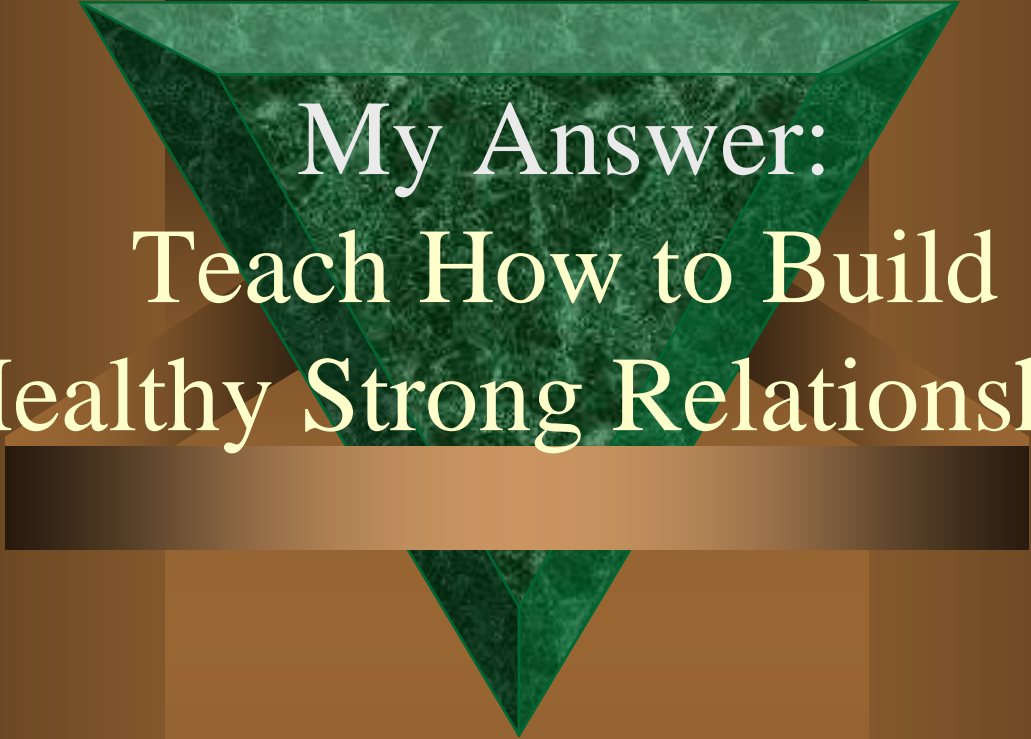
▼ the heart of wellness

▼ which evolves from an individual's self-concept.

[Safety-security]

with self & others





My Answer:
Teach How to Build
Healthy Strong Relationships

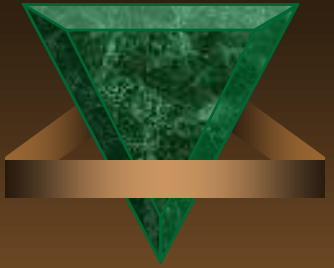
▼ On daily basis, what determines a teen's **mood**? (besides their hormones)

▼ Story of Kyle

Our Culture

Focuses on what?



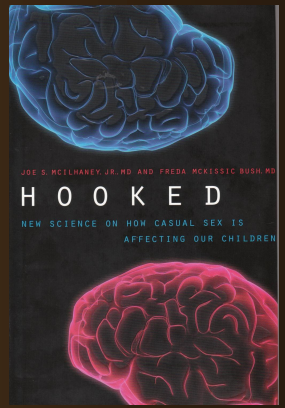


The Dove Self-Esteem Fund



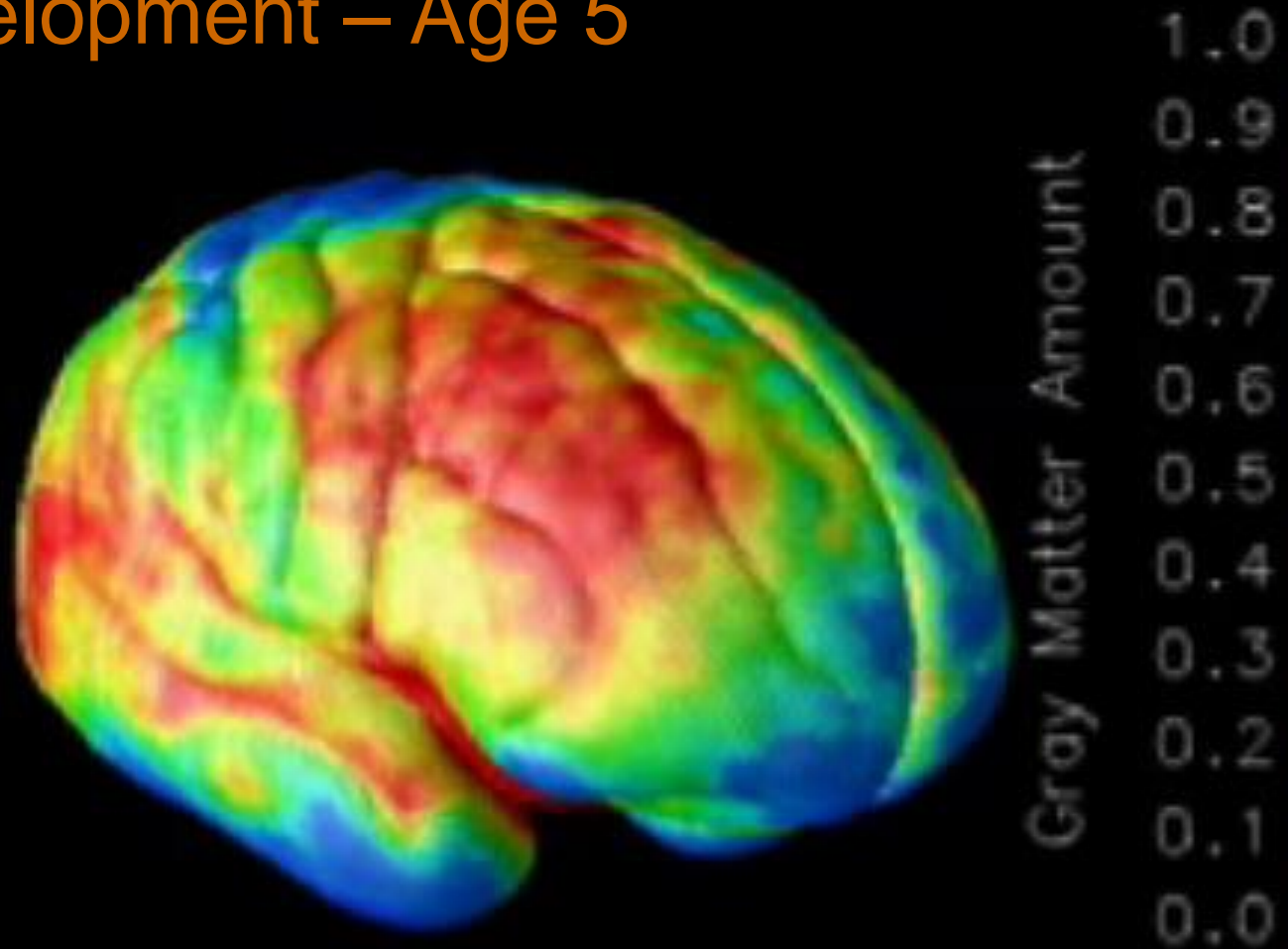


Ever wonder why...

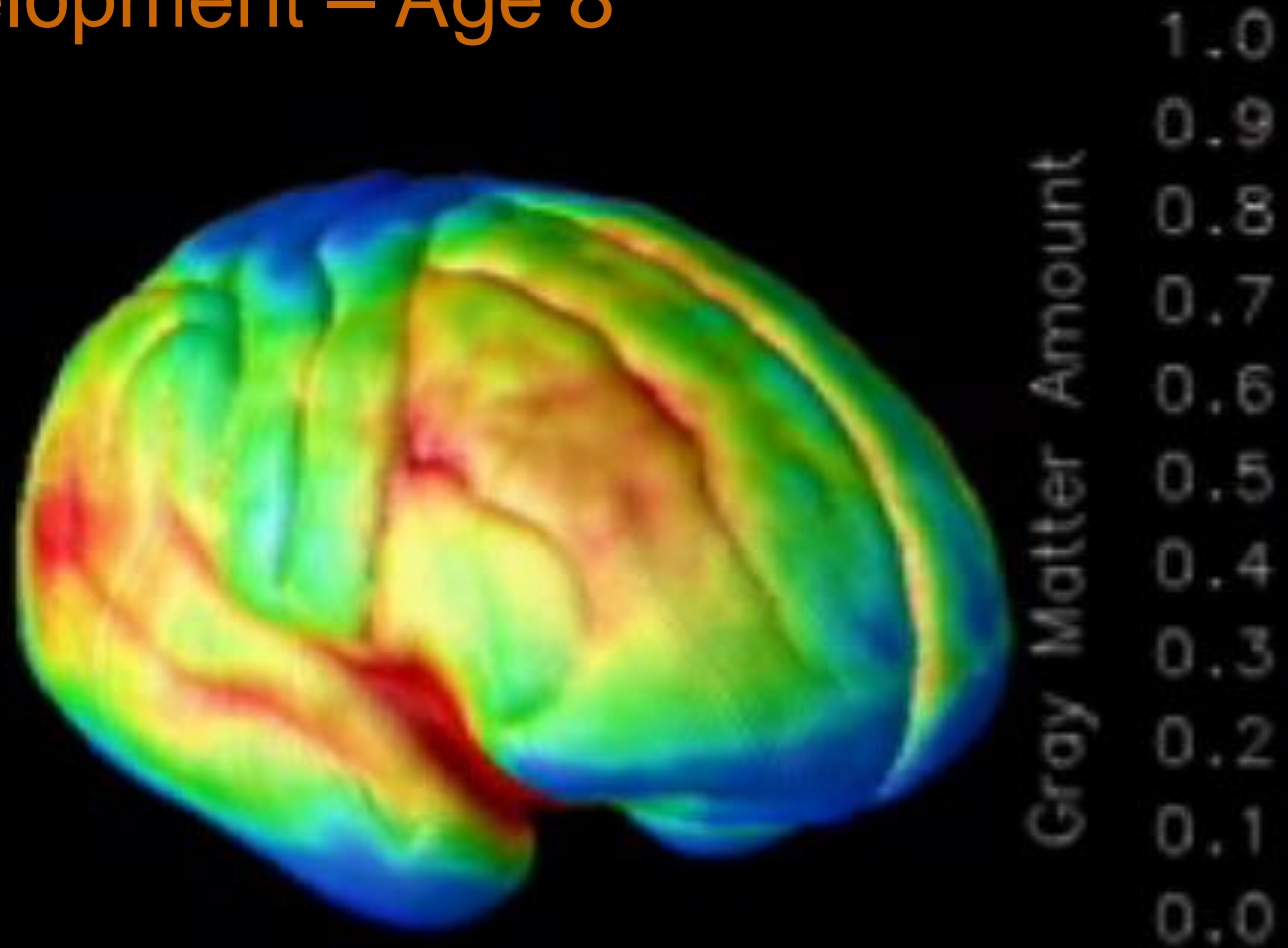


- ✔ You yawn when someone else does?
- ✔ Why you **feel pain** of someone you love when they are experiencing devastation?
- ✔ You can almost predict what your friend will say?
- ✔ Because, scientifically, it's been validated that emotionally healthy humans **connect** to one another.
- ✔ This connectedness comes directly from the way our brains are formed and functioned even before birth.

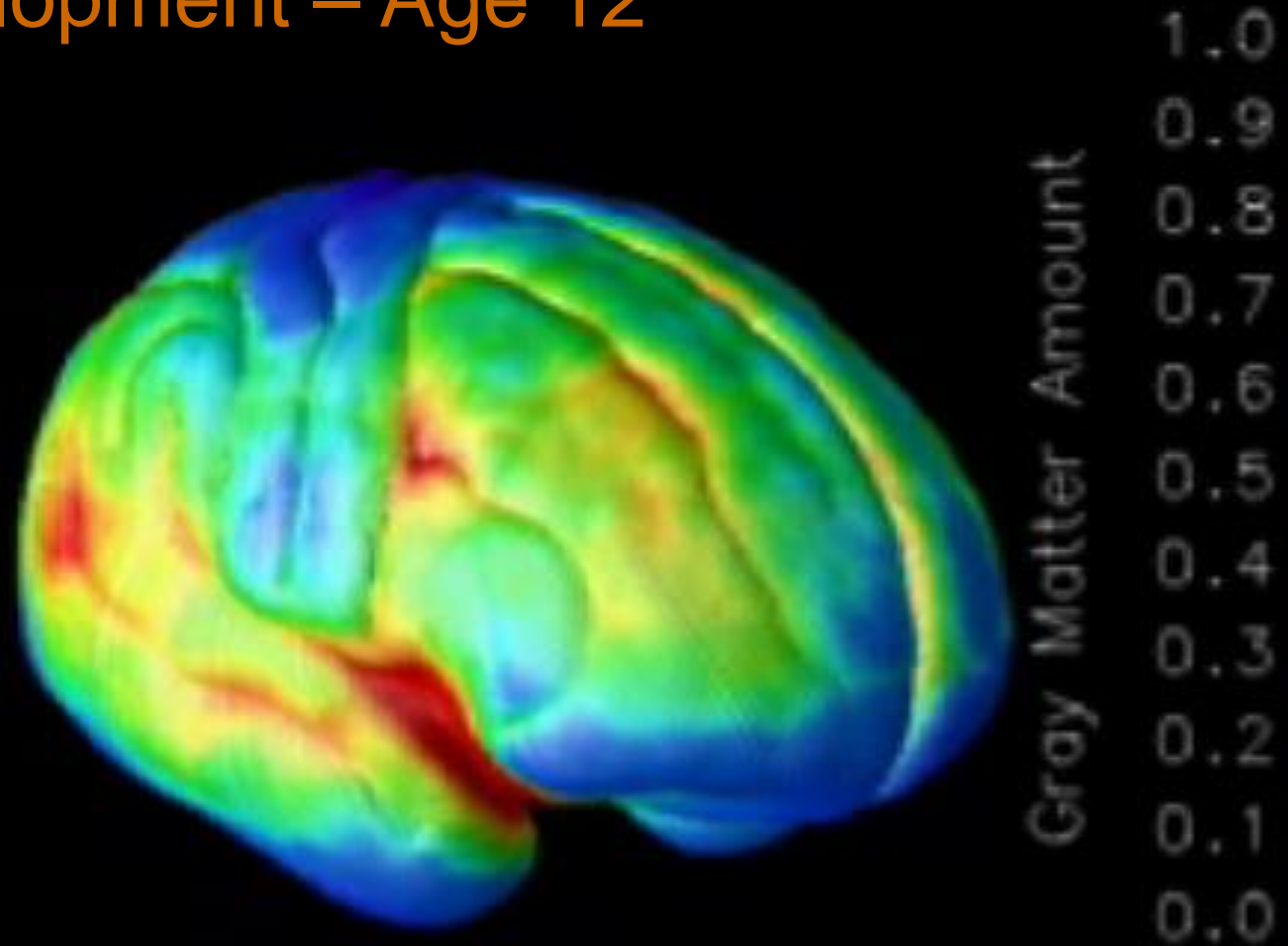
Brain Development – Age 5



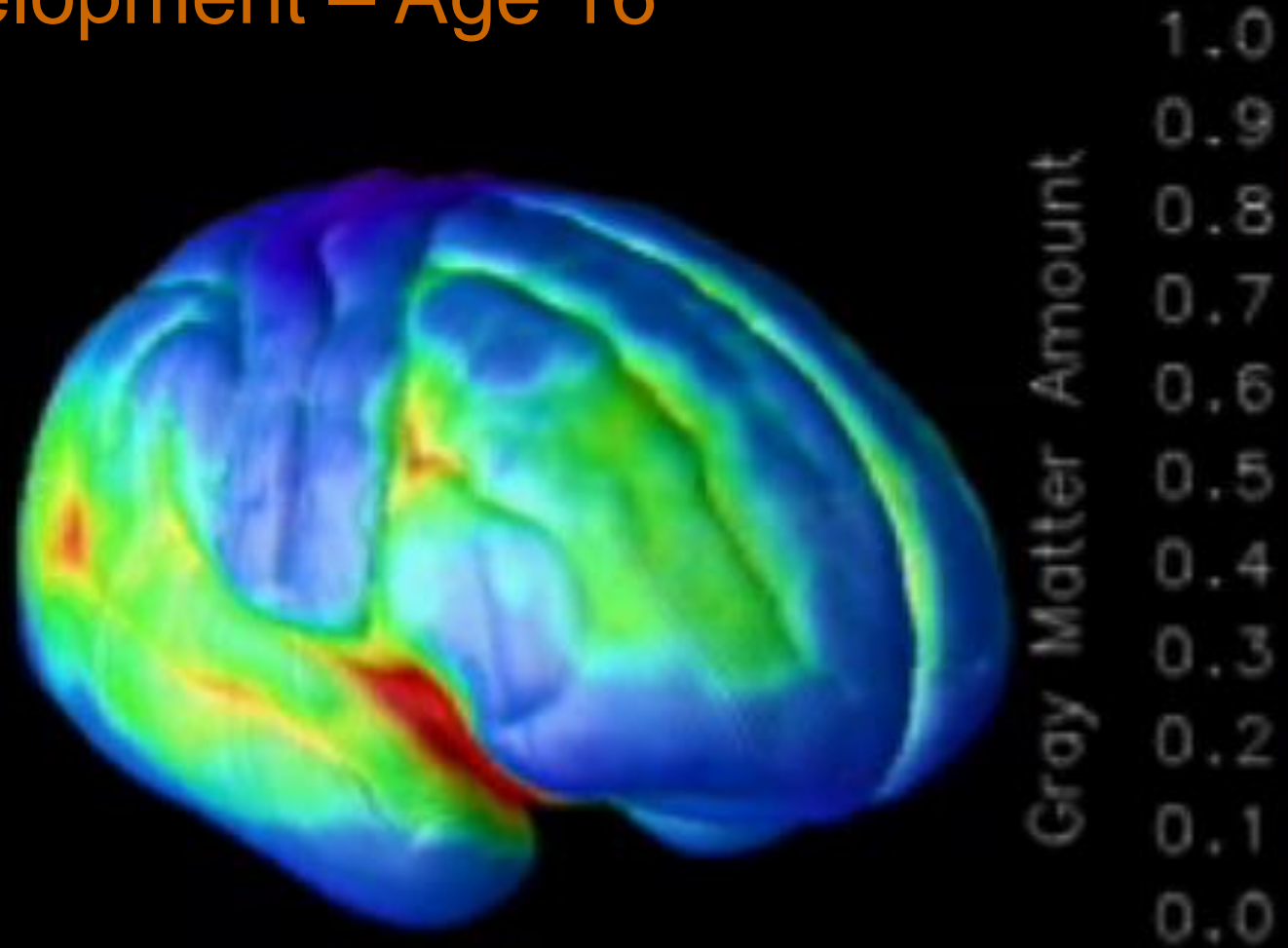
Brain Development – Age 8



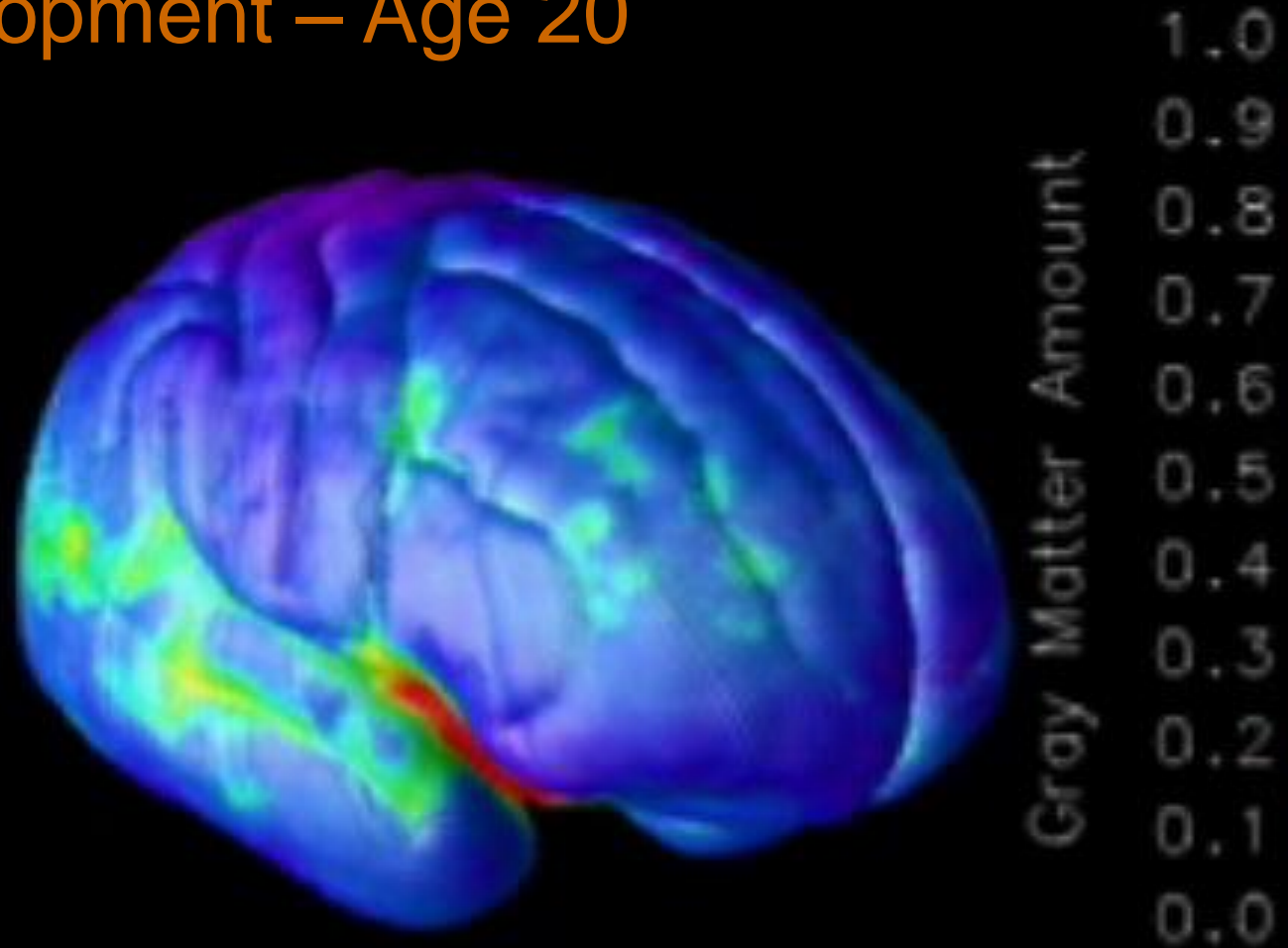
Brain Development – Age 12



Brain Development – Age 16



Brain Development – Age 20

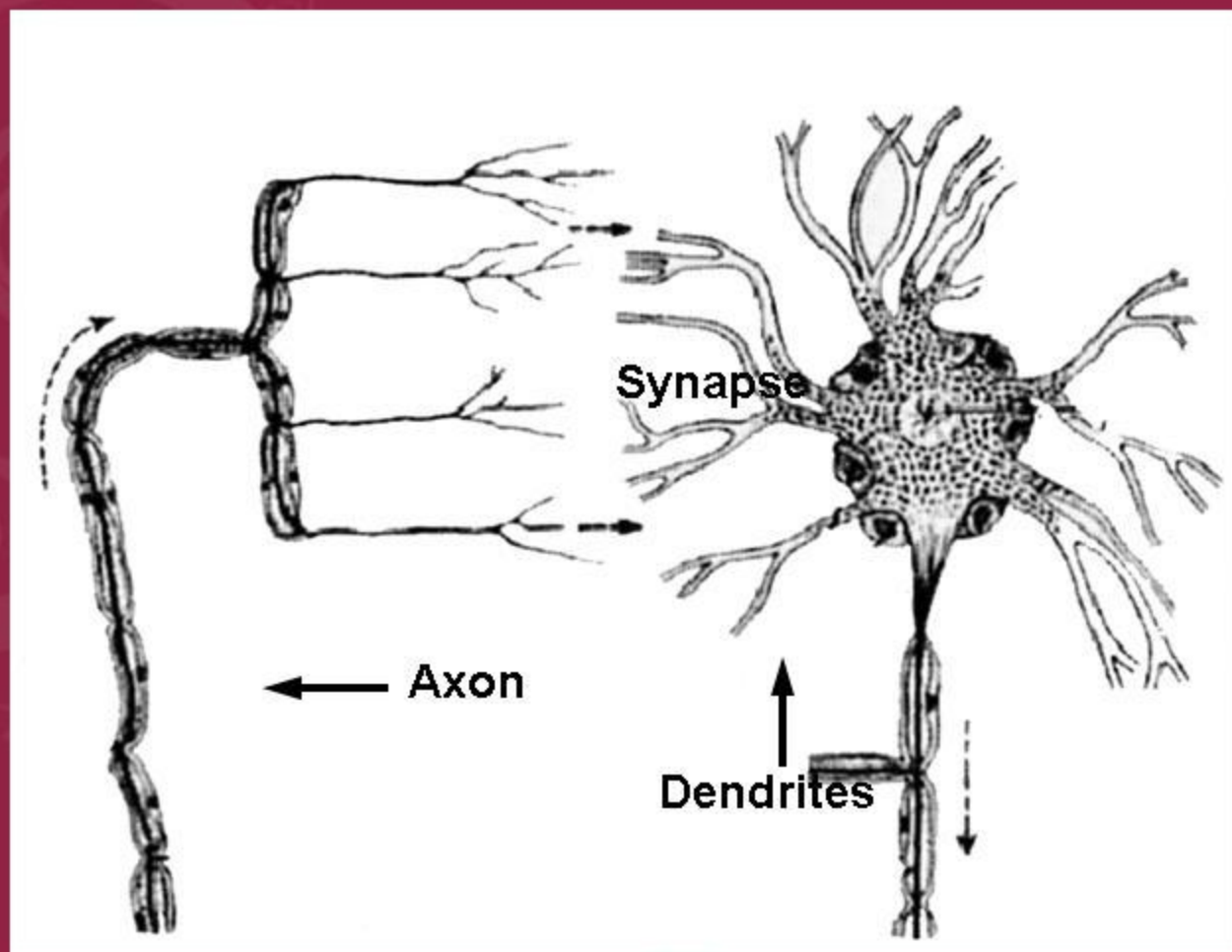


The Synapse

This is where “pruning” takes place.

It’s the cell connections that hard wire your brain.

It’s pertains to the “use it or lose it theory.”



No
significance
in Life:

Depression

Bullying

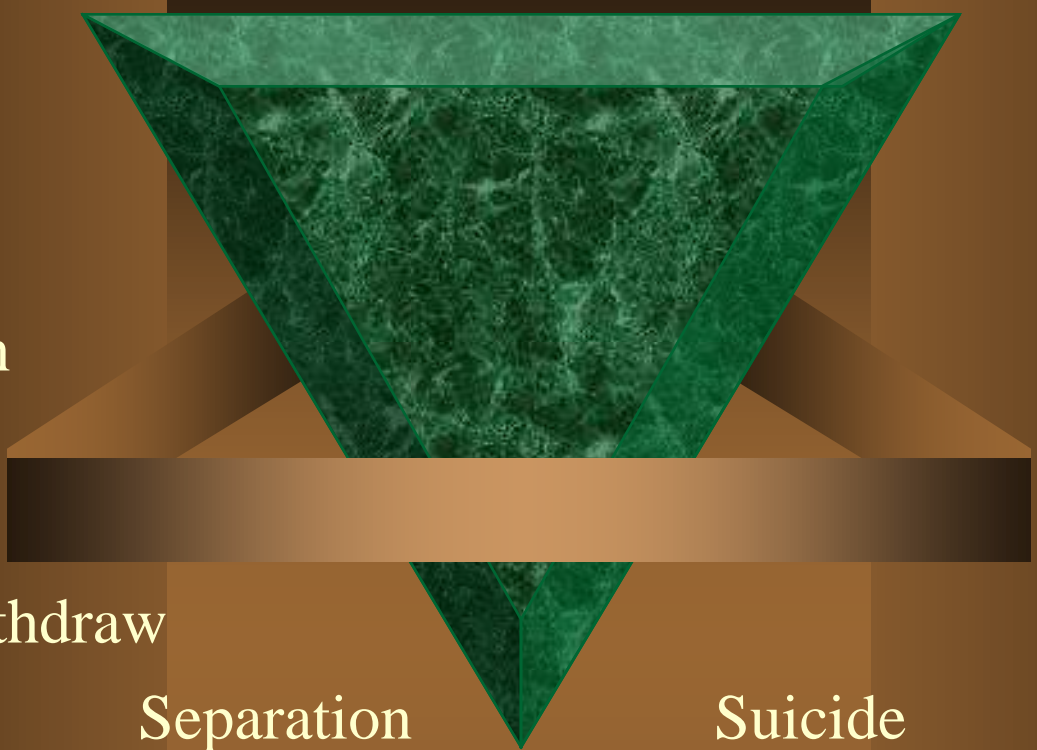
Withdraw

Separation

Suicide

Reality of Human Nature

We are egocentric





Teen Girls initiate sex b/c it makes them feel loved...

Divorce:

1st: 40%

2nd: 60%

3rd: 75%

- ✓ But it's **a mirage** b/c emotionally sex does not fill that void
- ✓ Medicating with sex/ alcohol/ high/ cutting
- ✓ Does anybody **care about me?**
 - Gateway behaviors
- ✓ Desperate generation of girls
 - seeking Daddy Love
 - This generation has been rejected in this culture of divorce
 - **Where do they see healthy relationships modeled?**



5 LOVE Languages

- ✓ QT
- ✓ Words of Affirmation
- ✓ Physical Touch
- ✓ Gifts
- ✓ Acts of Service

Full Love Tank

- Friendliness
- Understanding
- Allow differences
- Negotiate problems

Empty Love Tank

- Argue
- Withdraw
- Verbal violence
- Physical violence

True Love

Can not begin
until the
“in love experience”
has run it’s course



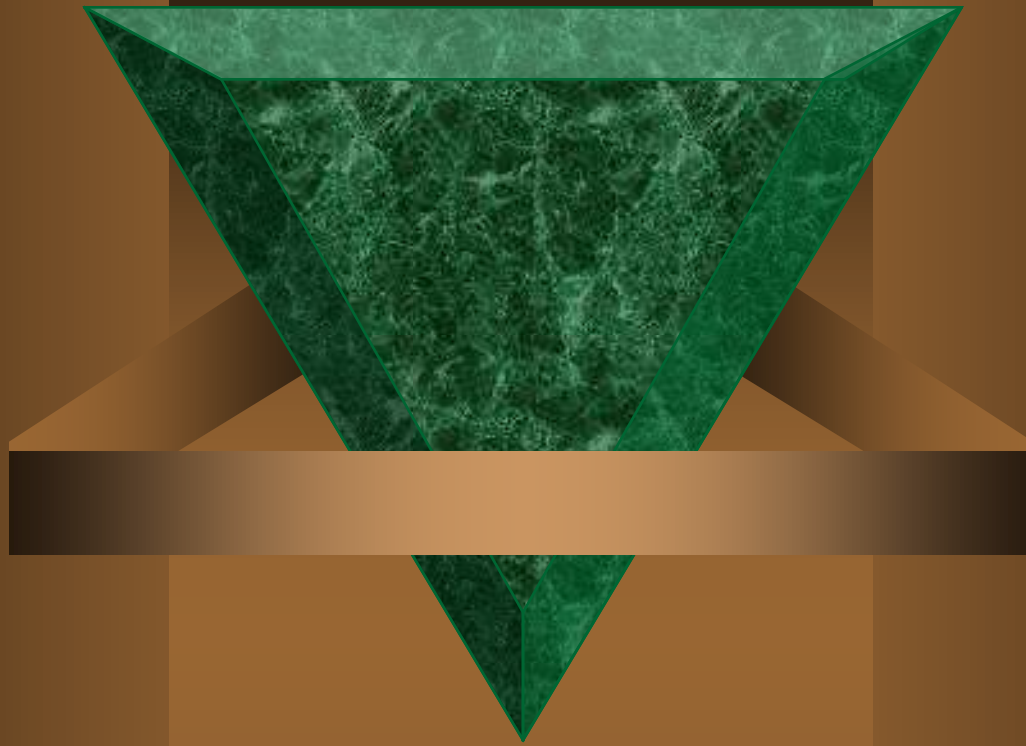
Love is *NOT*...

- ✔ Teen Sex
 - Health teacher calls it unhealthy behavior

- ✔ Adultery
 - A preacher calls it sin

- ✔ Wife picking up pieces after husband's last alcoholic episode
 - A psychologist calls it codependency

- ✔ Parent indulging every wish of their child
 - A family therapist calls it irresponsible parenting and / or enabling



So **WHERE** do we start with this
Millennial Approach to Suicide
Prevention?



We **START** by understanding...

- ✔ **Oxytocin/Vasopressin**
 - Neurochemicals released by our brains
- ✔ **Dopamine**
 - Neurochemical that's lacking when we are depressed
- ✔ **Emotional Needs**
 - Different for female and males
- ✔ **Communication**
 - Gender differentiation
- ✔ **Abstinence**
 - Which has been “under fire” until recently and affirmed now by the CDC



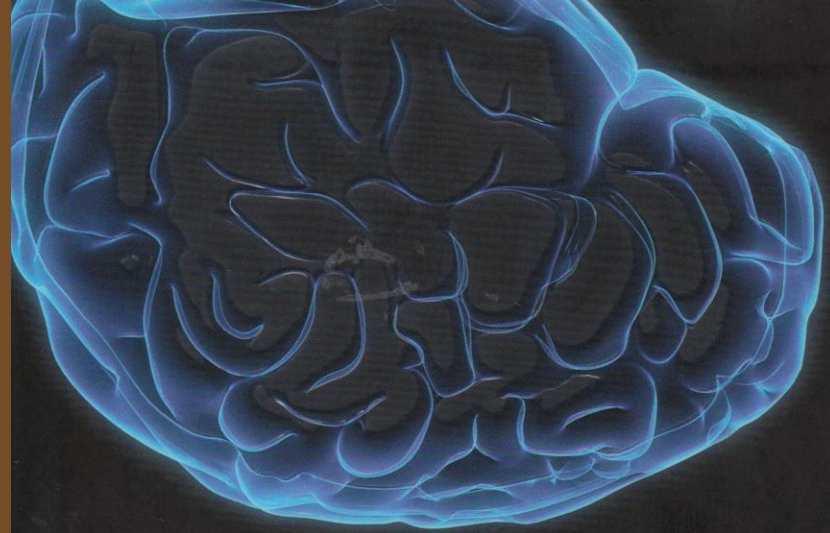
Which will lead to...

- ▼ Building stronger, healthier relationships
 - Through
 - Modeling
 - Encouraging
 - Supporting
 - Reinforcing
 - Infusing
 - Integrating



Oxytocin & Vasopressin

- Love influenced
- Brain structure and behavior
- Chemical bond **[TAPE DEMO]**
- A 20 second hug triggers the brain's 'trust circuits'
- Incredible emotions after a break up after sex
- Brain center that feels physical pain
- Molds the brain [like hard drive]



JOE S. MCILHANEY, JR., MD AND FREDA MCKISSIC BUSH, MD

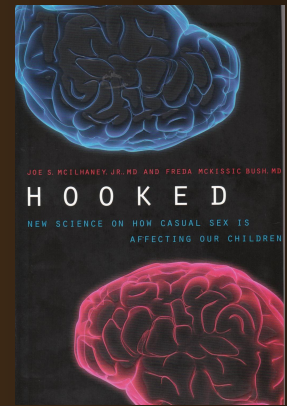
H O O K E D

NEW SCIENCE ON HOW CASUAL SEX IS
AFFECTING OUR CHILDREN





Dopamine



- ▼ “right one”
- ▼ “high”
- ▼ Blinded by love
- ▼ Dopamine reward (desire again and again)
- ▼ Love on a biochemical level is a lot like addiction
- ▼ Reinforces family structure vital to survival



Emotional Needs

Male

Female

Trust



Caring

Acceptance



Understanding

Appreciation



Respect

Admiration



Devotion

Approval



Validation

Encouragement



Reassurance

MEN ARE
FROM MARS,
Women Are
from Venus

A Practical Guide for
Improving Communication and
Getting What You Want in Your Relationships

JOHN GRAY, Ph.D.

Once teen sex starts, talking stops

Side - Side



Face - Face

Communication

Crossing the line, “you win if...”

Donkey analogy









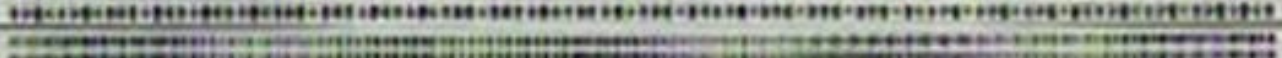
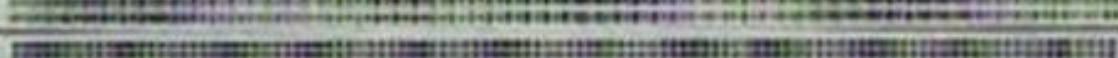




Abstinence – Effective or Ineffective?

- ✔ According to CDC = just as valuable as drug prevention programs
- ✔ Hypocritical Parents
- ✔ STDs Today [28]
 - The 4 Viral H's
 - HPV
 - HEPT C
 - HIV
 - HERPES
 - three out of four of will cause DEATH, CANCER, INFERTILITY
- ✔ 1960s 1 in 50
- ✔ Today 1 in 4



Sexual Exposure Chart

1		1
2		3
3		7
4		15
5		31
6		63
7		127
8		255
9		511
10		1023
11		2047
12		4095

Fire Analogy





‘Keeping Them Safe?’

- ▼ Detract from focusing on *‘side-effects’*

- ▼ Spend more time focusing on the root of the problem
 - Relationship Education [K-12](#)

- ▼ Kellie Danna Hurst
 - kdhurst@carrollk12.org

