



Speaking to the emotional brain

Why showing your teen you understand can help connect.



The teenage years can be hard and your teen is bound to feel stressed and moody. If your teen is feeling this way and you want to connect with them, speak to their emotional brain first. As neuroscience educator Nathan Wallis discusses in this video, speaking to your teen's emotional brain means showing them that you understand how they are feeling. Using your thinking brain to problem-solve with your teen can come later.

Learn why routine and balance are important for your teen and read more about how to understand the teenage brain.

[Music]

Nathan: Let's say my 15-year-old comes home from school slumps himself down on the couch clearly distressed and starts complaining 'Oh it sucks! I'm never going to pass those exams. It's too hard. I can't do it. I'm too far behind!' So he's in a really emotive state. As the parent, if you just go straight to your thinking brain and say 'Don't be silly you felt that way last time and you did fine' the child's not going to feel like you're listening to them.

In order to get more compliance from the teenager, you speak to the emotional brain first. 'Oh I know it feels really hard. I know it can be really overwhelming and I know it's really scary...' Then give your thinking strategy. '...but if you remember last exams you felt exactly the same way and you ended up doing quite well.' The key really to communicating with the teenager is to make sure you speak to that emotional brain before you give your thinking strategy.

Narrator: You can discover more on the Spark Their Future website.

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