

GPS Presentation (10/10/16)

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Motivating Teens

<http://collegetransitioncollaborative.org/>

<http://mindsetscholarsnetwork.org/>

- Stereotypes about Adolescents
 - o They don't learn from their mistakes; don't listen; can't be motivated; don't think about the future; no self-control
- Walter Mischel (a personality psychologist)
 - o Put a marshmallow in front of kids and promised them 2 if they wait and leave it (delay of gratification for the sake of a matter); "the big wait;" this is much like adolescence
- Testosterone
 - o The increase in testosterone during adolescence (for both males and females) impacts how teens perceive their status; if you're associated by leaders, you'll want to be like them; but if you're around delinquents, you'll want to be like them
- Social Emotions
 - o Shame, envy, pride, humility, embarrassment
 - o Failing socially is a teen's greatest fear
- Dr. Yeager's theoretical paradigm
 - o Teens want status and respect from both peers and authorities; they want to matter
- Anti-smoking campaigns from the 90s
 - o "Think, don't smoke"; "Tobacco is whacko... if you're a teen"
 - These imply that you can't make your own choice, they are demeaning (implying teens can't think) → as such, these campaigns actually increased teens desire to smoke
 - o Compared to the "Truth" campaigns
 - No words, teens quietly fall to ground outside tobacco executive office with poster that says, "Smoking kills 1,200 a day. Ever think of taking a day off?" → Implies, be a rebel and don't smoke

Teen Value	Disrespectful Implication	Respectful Implication
Autonomy	You're not an adult who can make choices for yourself	You are developing abilities to choose your path
Belonging	You are not part of a group	You are part of a group who cares about you
Competence	You do not have the skills	You can acquire the skills
Meaning / Purpose	Your life does not count/matter	You matter, your choices matter

- Simulation of med student saying the same thing in 2 different ways (disrespectful and respectful) to a teen
- The disrespectful way: (30% response rate by teens)
 - o *You should* take...
 - o *You may not be prepared* to make healthy choices
 - o Based on *what I know*
 - o *So take this*
- The respectful way: (60% response rate by teens)
 - o I'm here to ask *whether you might consider*
 - o *I should note* that
 - o *I hope you'd be willing* to
 - o *I should explain* the scientific reason (implies the listener has the rationale to understand)
 - o *The slight discomfort is doing your part to help others*
 - o *Have you thought* about
 - Telling (demeaning) vs. asking (invites the listener to be an active participant)
- Adolescents are deeply social; they just want to matter to others

Applying the model

- **Healthy eating**
 - Autonomy: frame intervention as an expose of manipulative food marketing practices
 - Purpose: Make the world a fairer place; teens can make a stand
 - → We must never make teens passive recipients
 - → People persuade themselves about a truth of a matter IF they are trying to convince someone else (like a friend)
 - o Learning "The Boring Math Task"
 - You can work hard in school to help yourself and those in the world around you
 - When students were told how their learning makes the world around them better, they were less likely to watch internet videos
- **Learning from critical feedback**
 - *Compliment sandwich* (positive- criticism- positive)
- "Wise critical feedback" incorporates two elements:
 - Appeal to the standard
 - Assurance that recipient can reach that standard
 - o The difference between a teacher grading an essay and saying:
 - "I'm giving you these comments because I have standards and I know you can reach them" VS.
 - "I'm giving you these comments so you can make revisions"
 - o The impact was that 80% of the kids who rec'd the 1st comment made the revisions, and only 40% in the control group
- **Bullying**
 - o Mindset and social conflicts

- Teens overact when they feel their social life is “over”
- Carol Dweck (growth mindset)
 - (Incremental) Malleable → you can grow it
 - People have the potential to change
 - (Entity) Fixed → you either have it or you don’t
 - Some people are mean because they didn’t learn how to be nice
- Phineas Gage
 - Had a spike in his brain which changed his personality
- Students in a study who were put under social stress (giving speech in front of three upper classmen and also counting backward by 17 from 778)
 - The participants demonstrated heightened anxiety during the activity and up to 30 minutes after the event

Takeaways

Teen motivation is thwarted when adults:

- Are **controlling** personal choices
- Imply the teen is **incompetent**
- Assume the adolescent does not have a **meaningful** life
- Force adolescents to sacrifice social **belonging** for the sake of adult requests

Teen motivation is captured when adults:

- Support teens **autonomy** and personal choices
- Imply adolescences have unique wisdom or **competence**
- Creates chances to “matter” and find **meaning purpose**
- Allow adolescents opportunities to **belong** and gain admiration