

# Working Together, Achieving Together

Aim : To help better equip parents/carers to support their child in achieving their targets and goals.



# This evening aims to ensure that you:

- To have a better understanding of the teenage brain and how it affects learning.
- Have explored some motivating and demotivating factors associated with revision.
- Have thought about how to best support your child and have some practical strategies you can try out.

# Staff Introductions

1. Introduction

*Carol McDonald*

2. The Teenage Brain

*Andrew Henshaw*

3. Motivators and De motivators

*Barry Speedie*

4. Revision Habits

*Alison Lewis*

5. Planning for Effective Revision. What Can I Do?

*Carol McDonald*

# UFA

TRANSFORMING  
LEARNING

Supporting My



TEEN

To Learn

# SO WHAT IS THE TEENAGE BRAIN LIKE?

## ANATOMY OF A TEENAGER'S BRAIN

THE  
BIRDS  
AND THE  
BEES  
LOBE

REBELLION  
CENTER

SUPER TURBO  
REBELLION  
CENTER

CENTER OF  
UNIVERSE  
CENTER

"COOL"  
GAUGE

MEMORY  
FOR MUSIC

JUDGEMENT  
GLAND

MEMORY  
FOR CHORES,  
HOMEWORK, ETC.

SELF  
IMAGE

FITTING-  
IN  
GLAND

EVERY EPISODE  
OF THE  
SIMPSONS

INDESTRUCTIBILITY  
CORTEX

SLAM  
DOOR  
REFLEX

CAR  
KEYS  
DRAWING

ALL THE  
ANSWERS

PRONE TO  
BRUISING

INTERNET  
PHONE  
ADDICTIONS

PEER  
PRESSURE  
RESISTANCE

ABILITY  
TO BE  
SEEN IN  
PUBLIC WITH  
PARENTS

SLANG DECODER

PERSONALITY  
FLUCTUATOR

LOVE  
FOR  
PARENTS

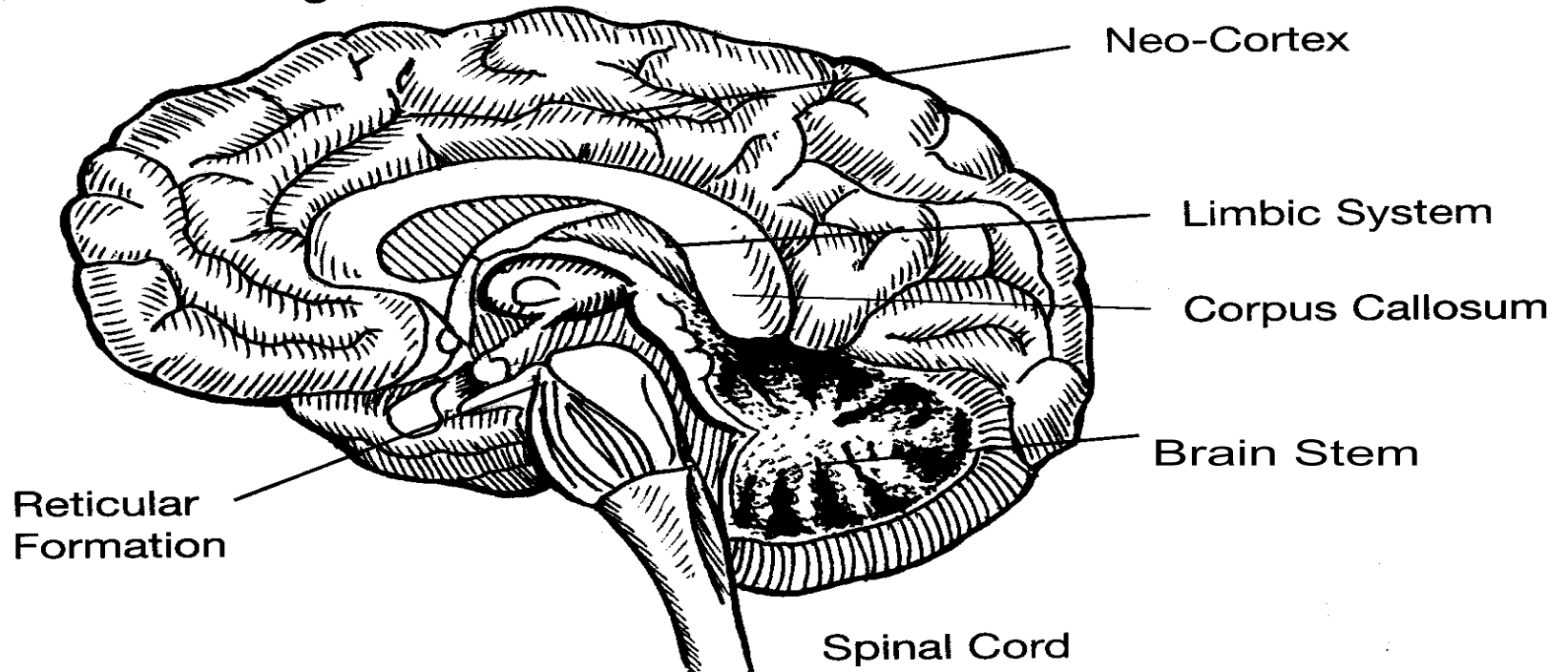
DISDAIN  
FOR  
PARENTS

BBC



# Let's Make a Brain

## The Brain in Learning



# Did you know?



- The brain, not hormones, is to blame for the inexplicable behavior of teenagers.
- Short-term memory increases by about **30%** during adolescence.
- The activities teenagers invest their time and energy in influence what activities they'll invest in as adults.
- Teenagers are ruled far more by their emotions than logic.

# Timeline of Brain Development?

## Birth to 3

Time of rapid intellectual, emotional & physical growth of brain & brain "wiring"

## By age 6

95% of brain development completed

## Preteens (10-12 years)

2nd major brain growth spurt

## Adolescence (13-20s)

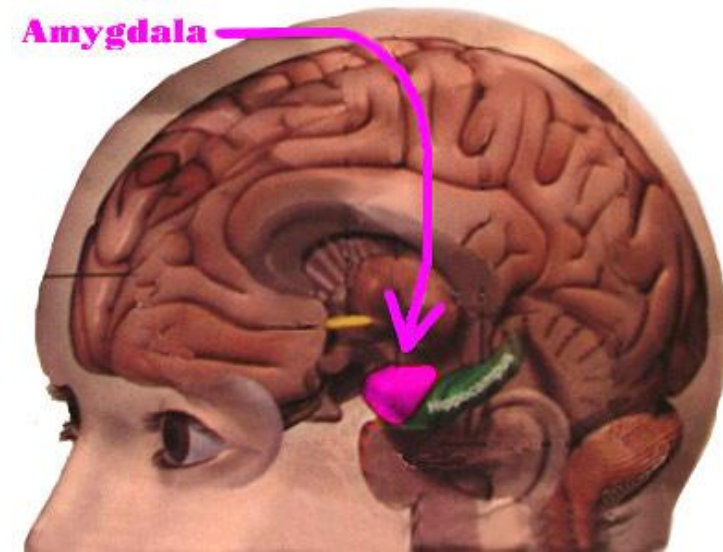
Pruning and organizing, especially in frontal





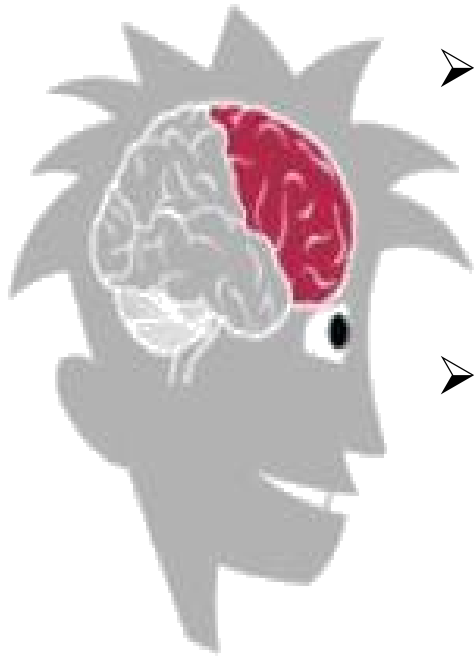
# Relying on Amygdala

- The **amygdala** is partly responsible for our actions when we feel threatened.
- **Teenagers rely more** on the amygdala than the frontal lobes and **respond emotionally** .  
*This explains the poor decisions they make, like going shopping instead of doing homework, and their highly emotional responses to ordinary requests.*
- A teenager is more likely to misread feelings and may confuse sadness with anger and surprise with fear. No wonder miscommunication is so rampant at this age.
- Amygdala closes the gate to learning when a remembered emotion is negative such as anger or fear.



# Waiting for the Frontal Lobes

- At the front of the brain, behind the forehead.
- Frontal Lobes are the last part of the brain to mature (mid 20's)
- Frontal lobes are in charge of higher level thinking. Speaking, reading, writing, math and music are all processed in the frontal lobes, along with the ability to analyze, apply and evaluate. Prioritising and controlling impulsive actions are also processed here.
- The frontal lobes also influence language. Young adolescents have more difficulty generating words and expressing themselves than do older adolescents. By high school, teens start speaking in a more rational and logical manner.
- Adults rely more on the frontal lobes of their brain and less on the amygdala, and therefore respond more logically to situations.



# Recognise these signs?

- Difficulty holding back or controlling emotions
- A preference for physical activity
- A preference for **high excitement** and **low effort activities** (video games, drugs, rock 'n' roll)
- Poor planning and judgment (rarely thinking of negative consequences)
- More risky, impulsive behaviors, including experimenting with drugs and alcohol.

*Blame the Frontal Lobes!*

# Really IMPORTANT!

The neural connections a teenager makes **endure a lifetime** and unused connections are lost forever. If they aren't reading, doing science or solving problems, the synapses for those activities will be pruned. **It is a golden opportunity to build a better brain.** It is also a golden opportunity to waste the brain's potential and water it down instead.

# Learning and Teenagers



- The teen brain is particularly susceptible to novelty
- The burst of growth in the frontal lobes means that teens overcomplicate problems, idealize the world and say one thing while doing another
- The development of the parietal lobes helps teen athletes improve their pace and teen musicians improve their beat
- Physical movement helps the cerebellum develop, thereby helping teens improve their cognitive processing skills
- Feedback improves the brain's efficiency
- Teens crave structure and organization in spite of their attraction to novelty

# Caution: Brain under construction!

- Teenagers often aren't paying attention, are unorganised and are unable to multi-task.
- They understand information differently than adults.
- They hear criticism and rejection in statements adults would classify as helpful or innocent.
- They are more prone to stress than adults
- Be patient! They will grow up.



# Making Decisions

**It's unrealistic** to expect teenagers to organize information and make decisions with the same skill level as an adult.

Making decisions is a complicated process that involves searching for options, tapping into prior knowledge, problem solving, creativity and evaluation.



## "THE TEENAGE BRAIN" - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What were you like as a teenager?
- From the information so far is there anything that has stuck with you or that you hadn't thought of?



# MOTIVATING AND DEMOTIVATING FACTORS BY MR SPEEDIE



Why is struggle a bad word?  
If we are not struggling, we are not  
fulfilling our potential.

Carol Dweck

# What Turns You On & Off Learning?

Do any of these turn you off learning?  
Circle those that apply to you. Add any of your own

## What de-motivates you?

Not understanding the work      Feeling ignored

Criticism      Poor marks

Low confidence      Too much pressure to do well

Frustration with studying - not feeling you are getting anywhere

Being late with work and feeling like you will never catch up

Very little praise

Slow or little progress

Do any of these help you keep learning?  
Circle those that apply to you. Add any of your own

## What motivates you?

Praise and reward      Good marks

Being able to see steady improvement

Setting and achieving targets

Understanding your work

When someone says "think!"

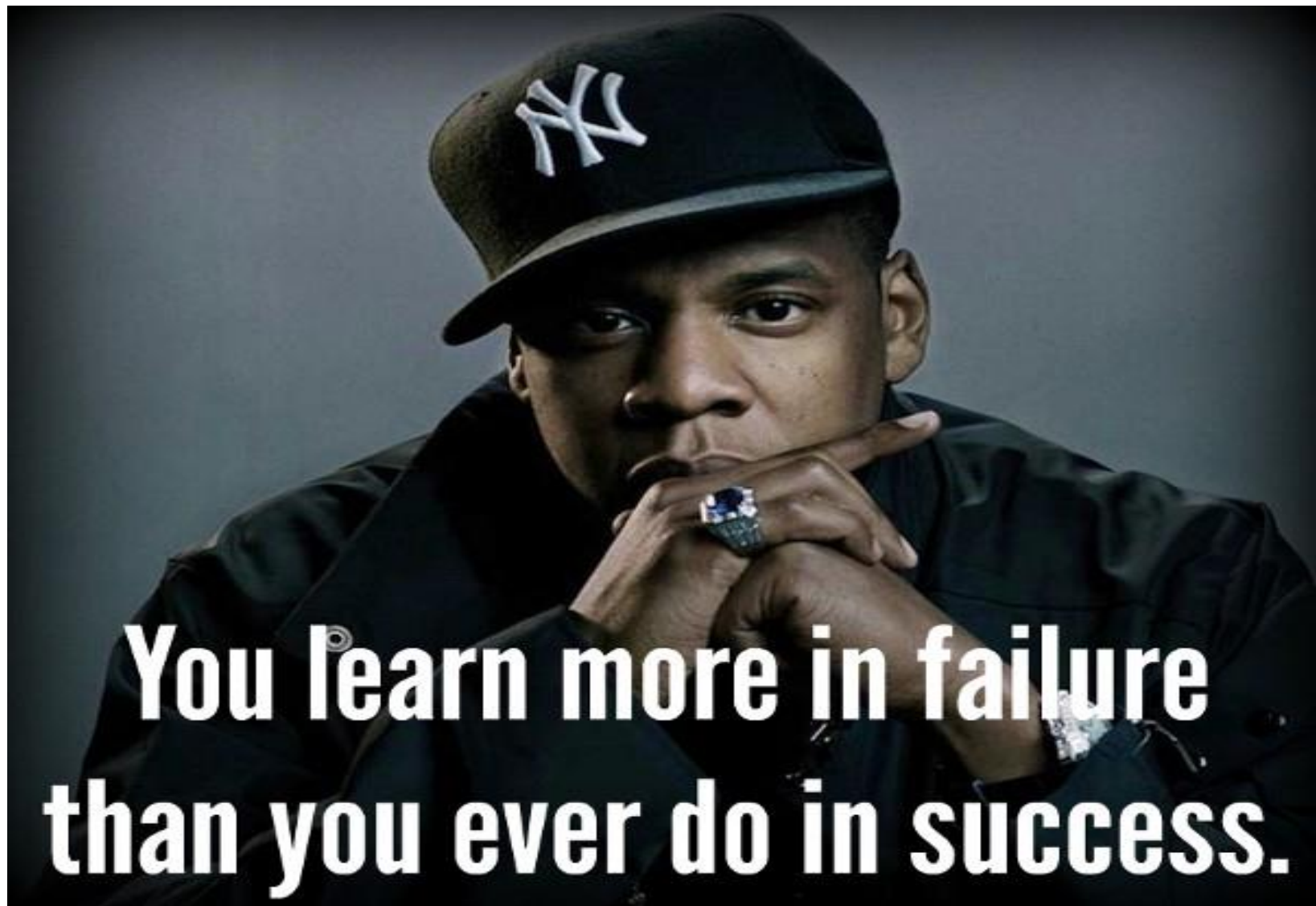
Being told you are capable of achieving

People who believe in you

Enjoying the subject

Praising children's intelligence harms their motivation and it harms their performance. How can that be? Don't children love to be praised? Yes, children love praise. And they especially love to be praised for their intelligence and talent. It really does give them a boost, a special glow—but only for the moment. The minute they hit a snag, their confidence goes out the window and their motivation hits rock bottom. If success means they're smart, then failure means they're dumb.

"Praise should deal, not with the child's personality attributes, but with his efforts and achievements."

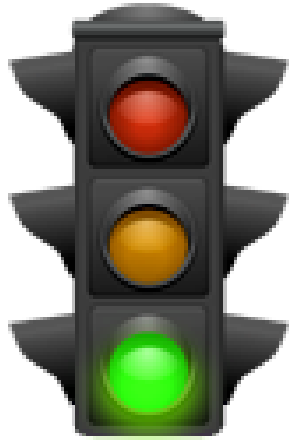


**You learn more in failure  
than you ever do in success.**

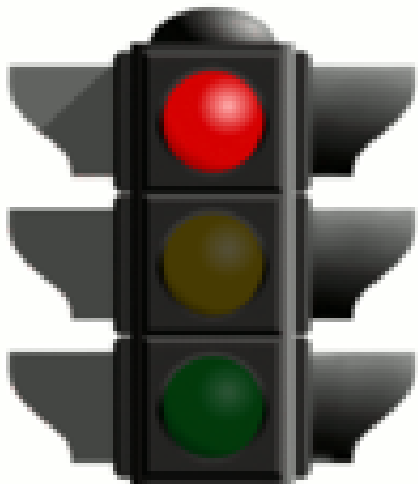
**REVISION  
HABITS  
BY  
MS. LEWIS**

How good were you at revising  
when you were at school?...

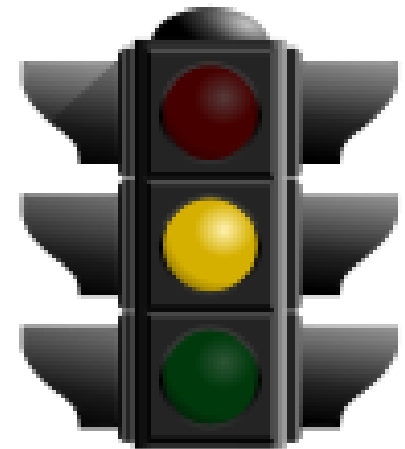
Green



Red



Amber



Can you think of one thing you could have done better, or have done better if you've gone back to study since?



# Revision Habits Quiz

Complete this honestly!

Firstly about yourself

Secondly about your  
child

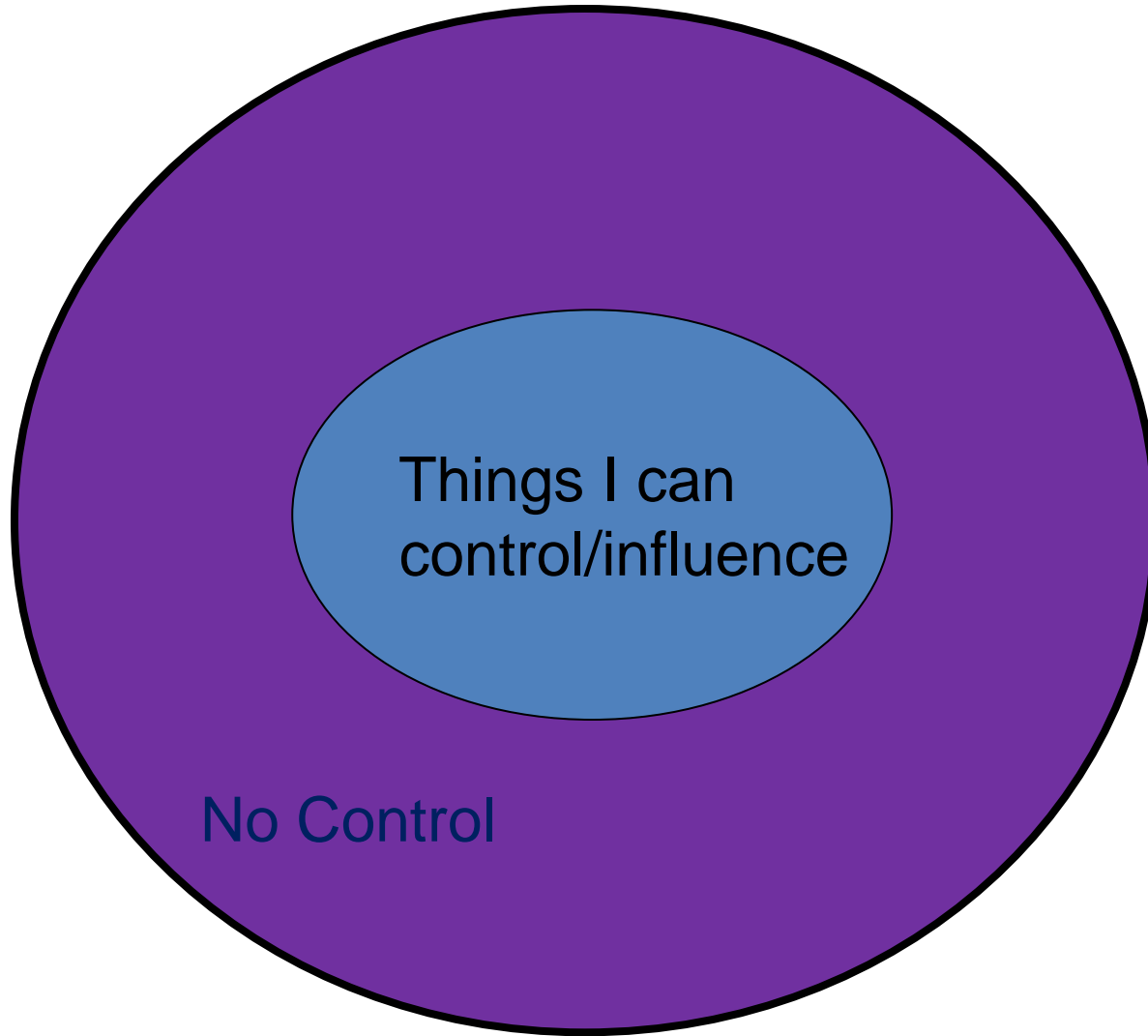
**WHAT CAN YOU**

**DO?**

**BY MRS**

**MCDONALD**

# What's in your control?



# So, what can I do?

Friends/ partners  
Time spent on revision

Information about progress/ gaps

Space/distraction

Motivation

Relaxers

Stress levels

Mood

Routine

Quality of revision

Study techniques

Barriers to learning

# How our Parents Helped Us

Megan Ongley -  
Attitude and  
Expectations

# How our Parents Helped Us

Emma Allardice-  
Creating space and  
time.

# How our Parents Helped Us

Rachael Close-  
Domesticity

# Planning for Effective Revision-

## What Can I do? CONTROL

- You have 2 sets of statements
- Sort the cards into two piles - one of things that only need to be done once and another for things that need to be done regularly.
- Now think about which things you can easily support your child to do. Which 2 are most crucial in terms of your child's revision.
- Which two are least important?



# Planning for Effective Revision-

## What Can I do? INFLUENCE

- You have a set of statements that provide a mixture of advice, support and direction for your child.
- Identify two most suited to your own situation.
- How are you going to support your child to turn these ideas into action?

# This evening aims to ensure that you:

- To have a better understanding of the teenage brain and how it affects learning.
- Have explored some motivating and demotivating factors associated with revision.
- Have thought about how to best support your child and have some practical strategies you can try out.

# Evaluation and Next Steps

- Would you benefit from another session?
- Growth and Fixed Mind-set
- Influential and Motivational Language choice
- Study timetables/ techniques
- Managing stress