

Understanding Youth Development

Presented by Allison Iles & Mary Bradford



Ice Breaker



Your Affiliate

Years in
ACE

Role in ACE



Let's spill the tea!

Bet
Ship

Addy

Ate and Left no Crumbs

Rent Free

No Cap

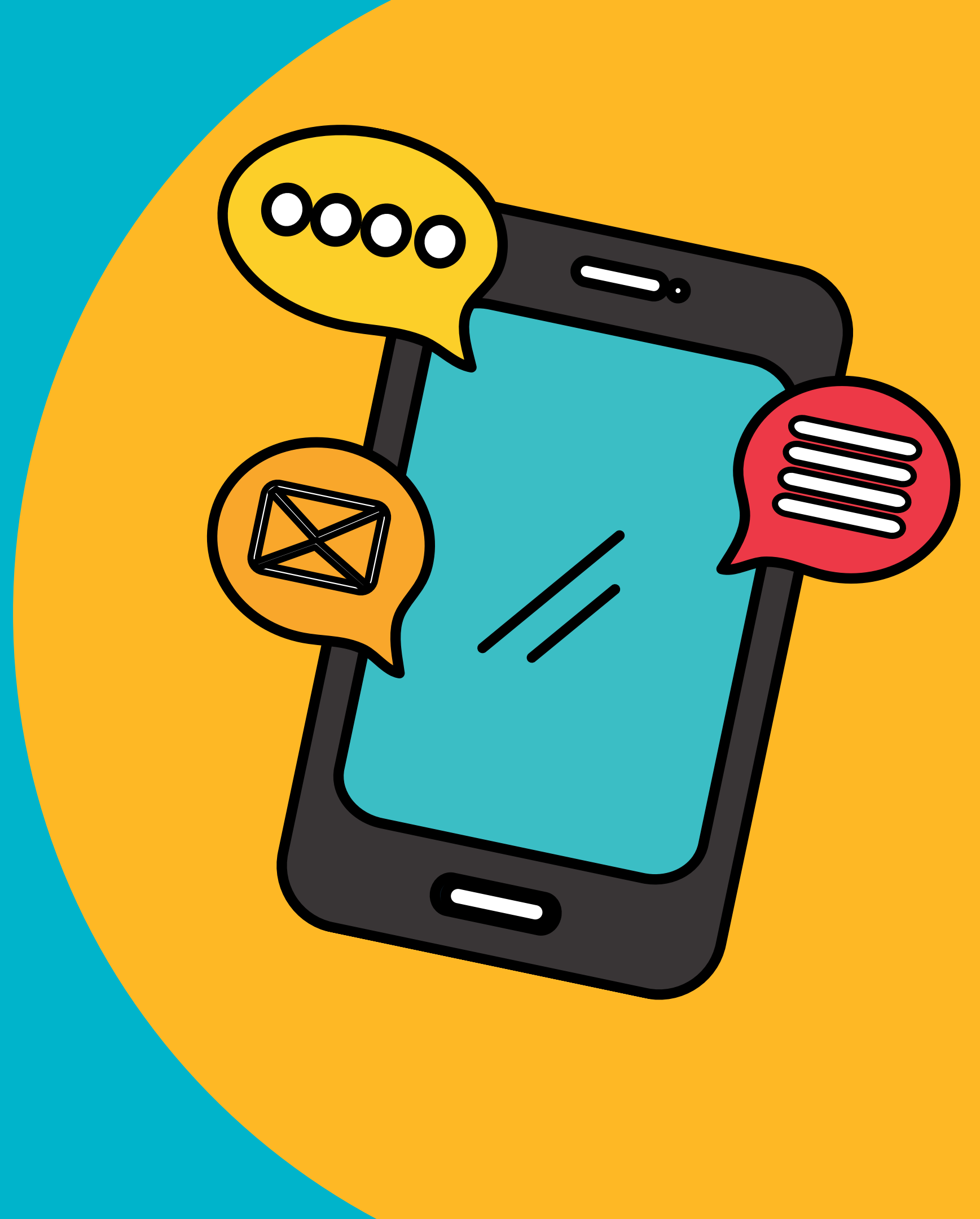
Drip

Let them cook

Highky

Ghost

Bussin'



Training Objectives

- Understands basic cognitive development in adolescents
- Understands basic social/emotional development in adolescents
- Learn basic educational strategies to reach students
- Building Developmental Relationships with ACE students



Meet your Trainers



Understanding the Teen Brain



ACE

Brain Development

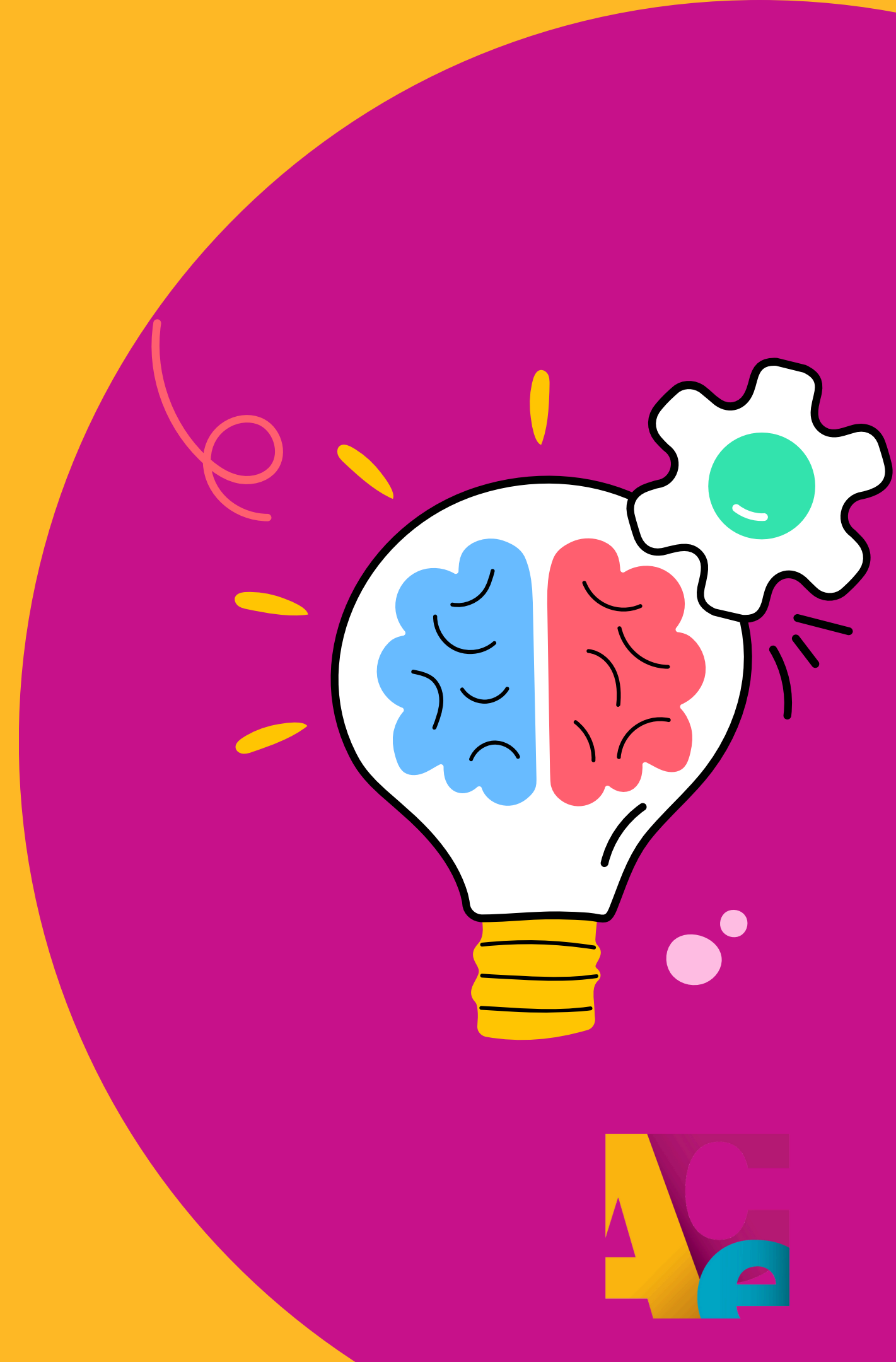


- Born with Billions of synapses and two major times where our brain goes through pruning of unused synapses.
- Adolescence is a time for pruning.
- The Prefrontal cortex does not develop until age 25 for most
- This is the best time to make a huge impact in students' lives.
- Be Engaging. Connect to their real life experiences.
- Explore the knowledge they don't



Social/Emotional Development

- Able to communicate reward, risk and identify some emotions
- Some things might not be developed: Planning, thinking critically, prioritizing and moderating social behavior
- Emotions run high, but students might not be able to logically process.
- Social Anxiety is real
- Socialization is huge!

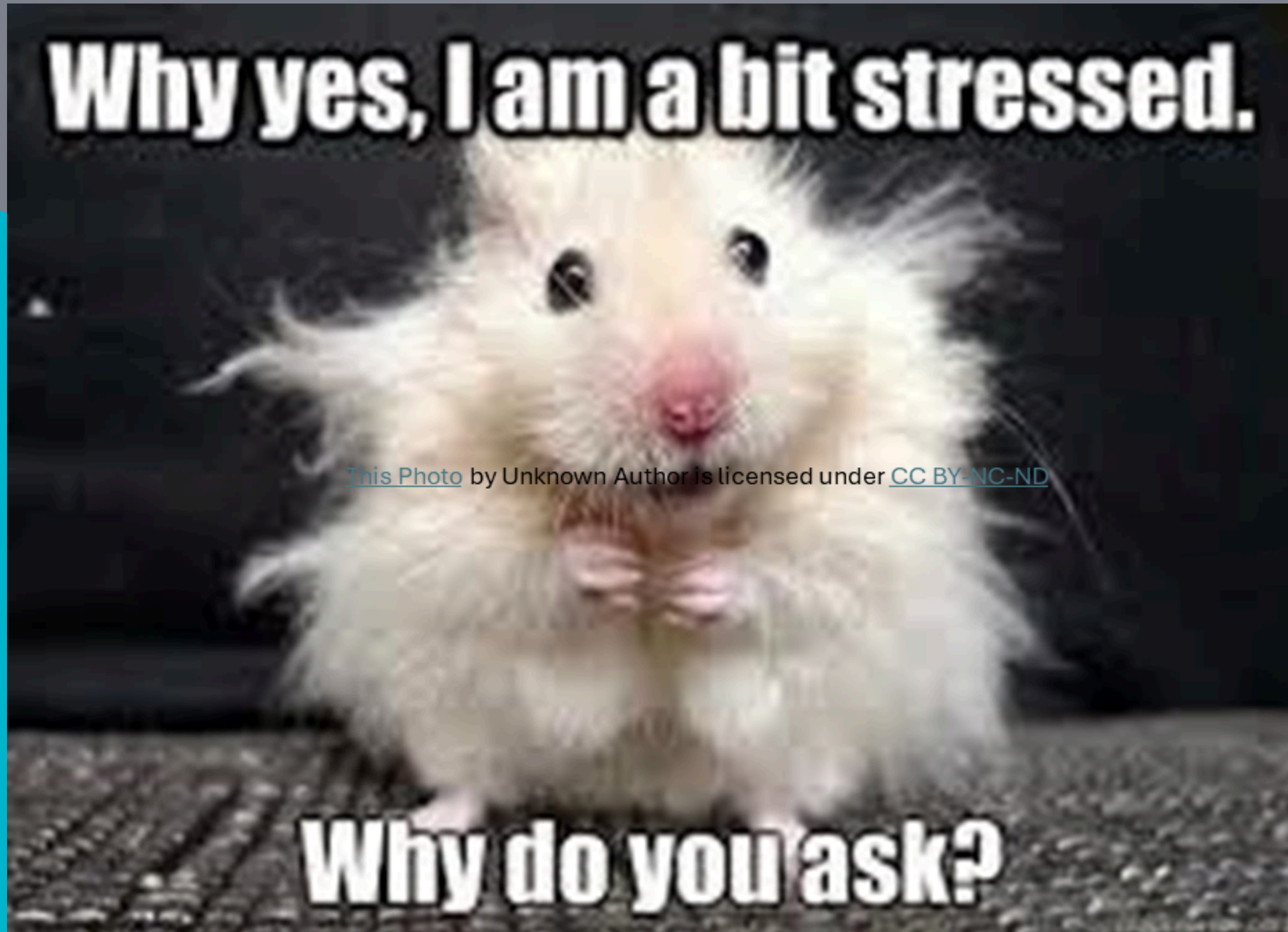


Putting it in Action...



- They look like tiny adults, but their brains are not there yet.
- Each student is different and will be at a different stage in brain development.
- Do not talk longer than 5-minutes at a time.
- Check to make sure lessons are grade/age appropriate
- **ICE BREAKERS** – Every session
 - Builds routine, expectations and this is how you start to build trust

Little overwhelmed?!



Neurodiversity

The idea that people experience and interact with the world around them in many different ways; there is no one “right” way of thinking, learning and behaving, and differences are not viewed as deficits.



Common Characteristics of Neurodiversity

- Social communications difficulties
- Learning Challenges
- Inflexibility
- Unusual Physical Behaviors
- Unusual responses to sensory input
- Speech and Language Challenges

- Ability to stay focused on a topic or activity of interest for long period of time
- Outside-the-box thinking-innovative
- Strong Observational skills and attention to detail
- Superior ability to recognize patterns, including in codes and behaviors
- Having strong skills in areas such as music, art, technology, and science.



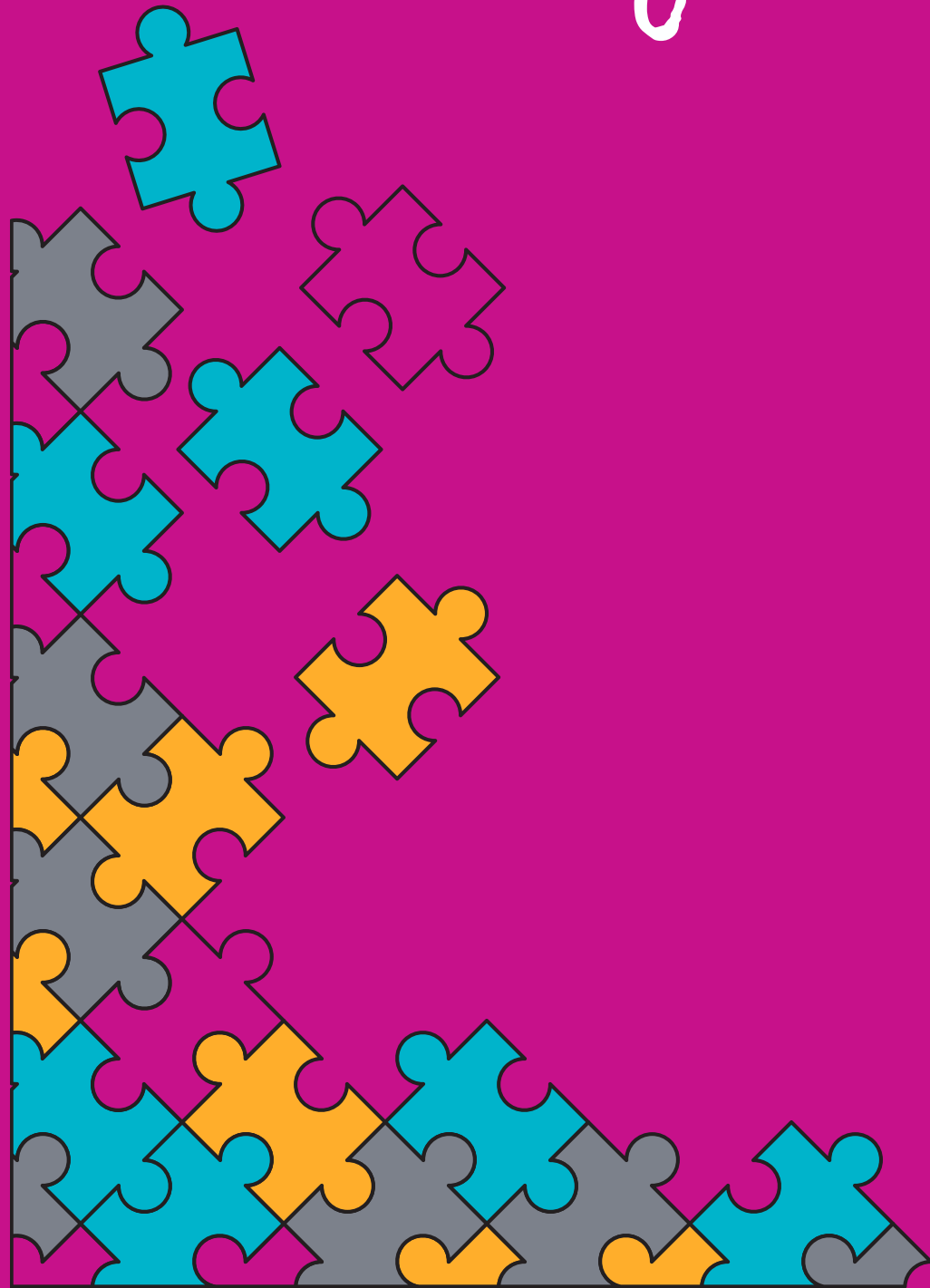
Chat Time



- What are some considerations you will need to consider with your lesson?
- What can I do before hand to make session go smoothly for all?

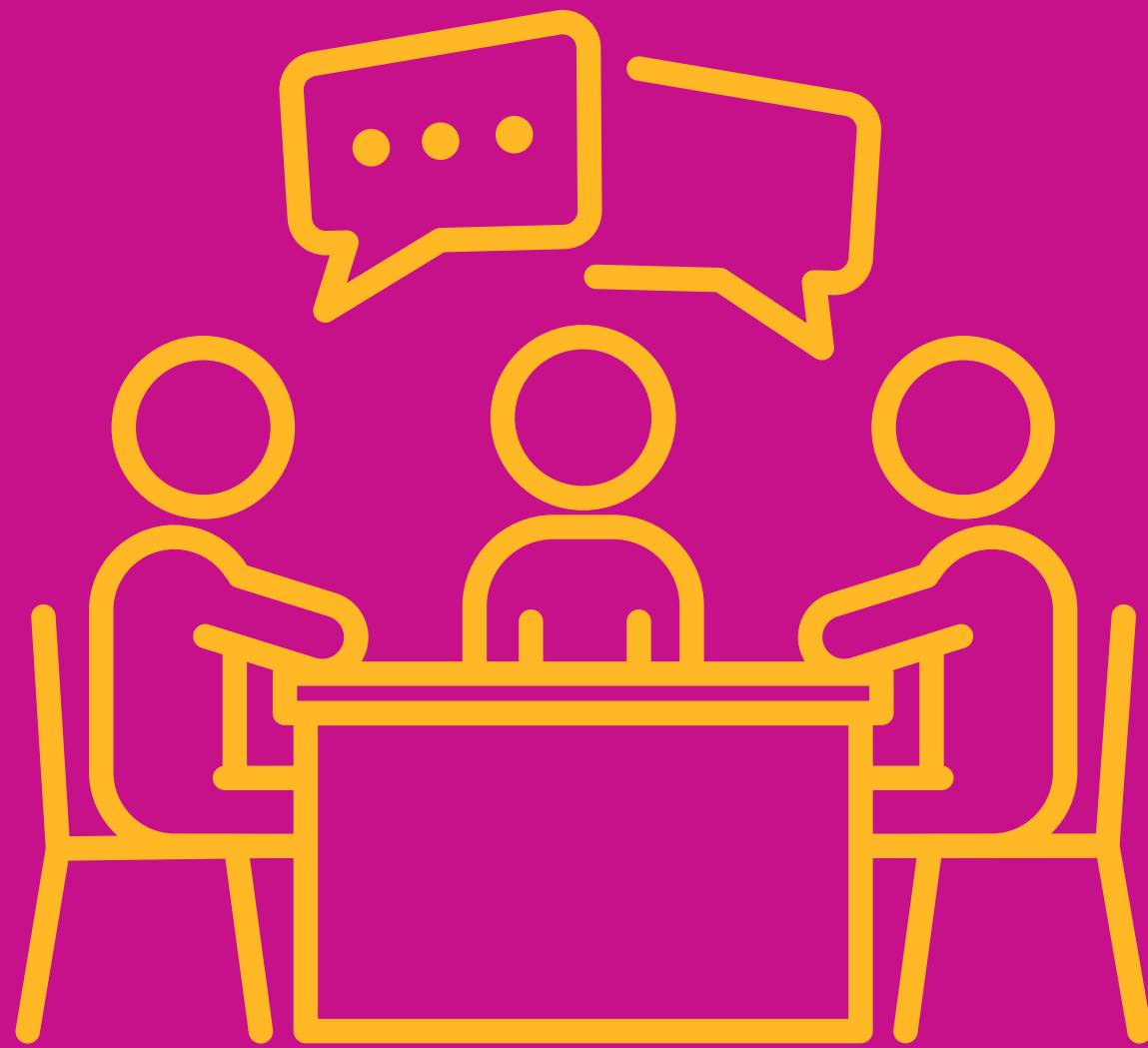


Putting it in Action...



- Every single brain works differently
- Expectations must match level of student's ability
- Meet them where they are at cognitively and social/emotionally
- Get to know ALL students and their "quirks"
- When they are not understanding how to do something, it is not always a hearing issue or it actually could be a hearing issue. Don't keep repeating the same thing. Find another way to make a connection in their brain.
- Lecture style is not recommended . ENGAGE them

Share Time



Think back to your sessions. Do you think you can easily identify the student's grade level? If so, what are the traits?



Putting it together



9th grade

Routines
Clear Directions
Opportunities to socialize in positive ways
Work on Team building skills
Emotional Trainwrecks
Struggle with rational conversations
Long term = maybe 2 days
Generally, doesn't understand sarcasm
Attention Span: 2-3 minutes

10th grade

Working on self-identity
Opportunities to socialize in positive ways
Started to mature
Able to have a more rational conversation
Physical changes
Long term = 2-3 weeks
Some start to understand sarcasm and tone
Attention Span: 3-5 minutes
*Depends on level on interest

11th grade

More independence
Maturity level continues to rise
Career/college planning can really start to have meaning
Opportunities to socialize
Can be more physical changes that happen
Long term = weeks to months
Ton of pressure for college bounds – ACT/SAT
Understands sarcasm and tone
Attention Span: 3-5 minutes
*Depends on level on interest

12th grade

Realization of adulthood will hit sometime this year
Opportunities to socialize
Career/College Planning
Senioritis will also claim many a student
Mentor appreciation happens
Is capable of having a rational conversation
Still Capable of making incredibly dumb decisions..
Perfect sarcasm and tone
Attention Span: 3-5 minutes
*Depends on level on interest



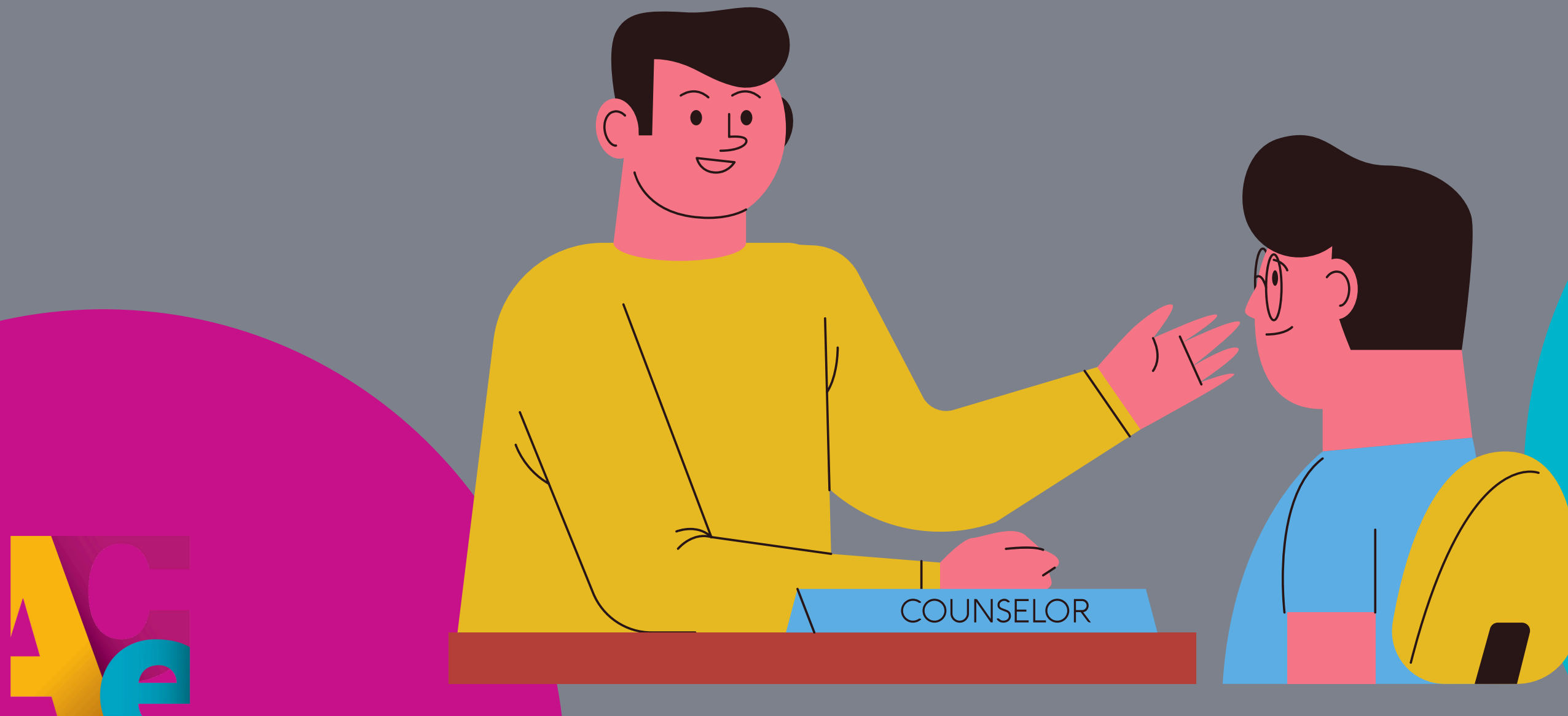
Please Remember...

- They look like tiny adults, but their brains are not there yet.
- Need to be taught the higher-level thinking skills
- Each student is different and will be at a different stage in brain development.
- Do not take things personally.
- Create a safe space

- Building trust or a rapport with each student.
- Try not to talk for longer than 5 minute stretches.
- Show up every session.
- Leave your day at the door. Share your love and passion.
- Respect is not given, it is earned.



Becoming an Askable Adult



<https://www.vtnetwork.org/askableadult/#toolkit>

Thinking time...



Did you have an askable adult when you were young? Who?

Did you have more than one?

What made them askable for you?

What did you talk to them about?



4 Askable Adult Skill Areas



- Building trusting, affirming relationships
- Commit to consistent connections
- Commit to caring communication
- Be a curious co-pilot/navigating tricky conversations

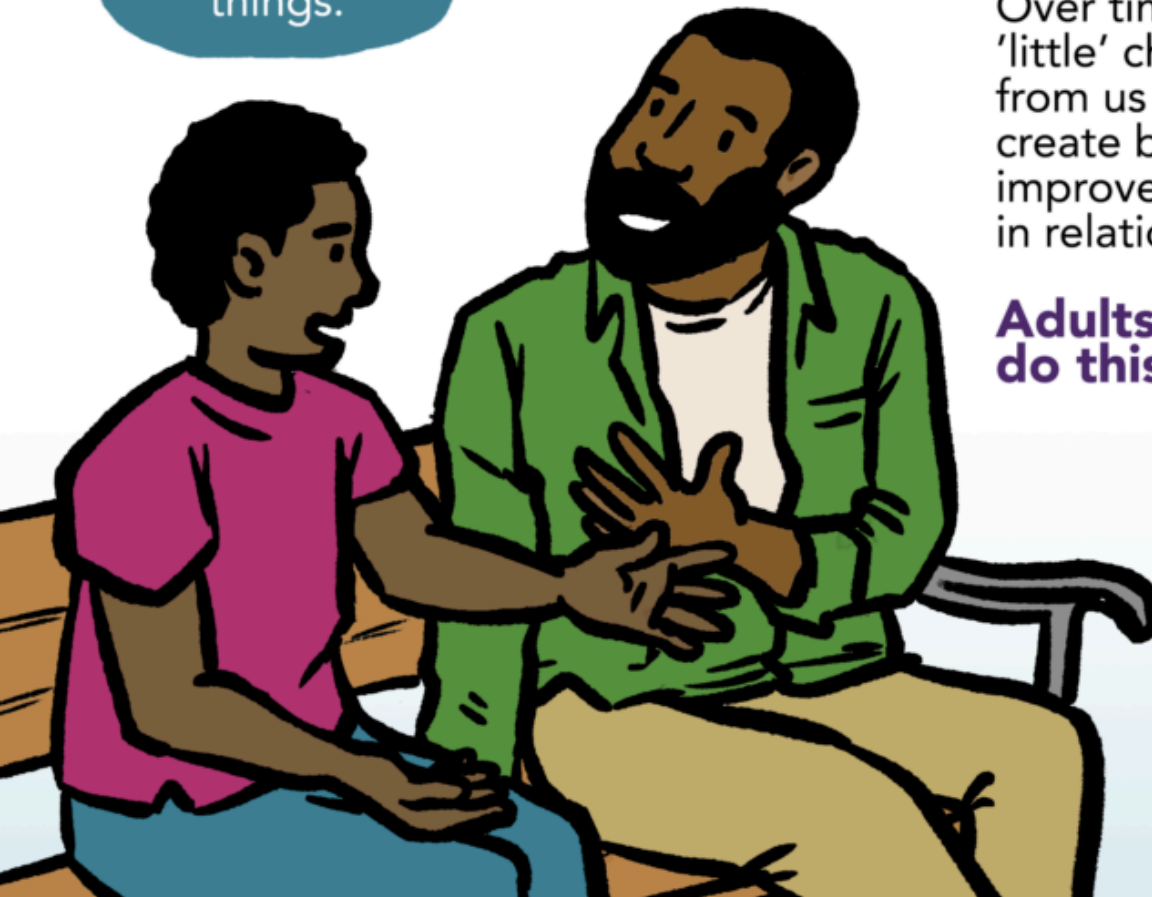
Putting it into Action

**You don't need to be an expert to...
BE SOMEONE THEY CAN TALK TO!**



Do youth really want to talk about their lives with adults?
The answer is YES!

 VERMONT NETWORK   MOSAIC
Healing Communities | Ending Sexual Violence



Check in about how they are doing before asking about what they are doing.

Notice how awesome they are.

Wonder about how they see things.

Listen to understand.

Over time, even 'little' changes from us can create big improvements in relationships.

Adults – let's do this!

<https://www.vtnetwork.org/how-to-be-a-more-askable/>



Questions?

