

# Welcome to *Hidden Sparks Without Walls*. We will be starting shortly...

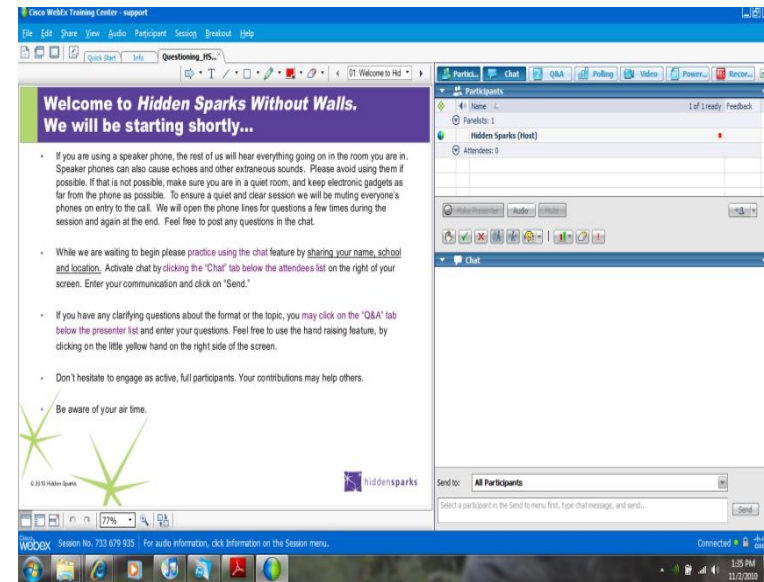
To alleviate background noise and ensure a quiet session, your phones have been automatically muted.

Questions and comments can be submitted via the **CHAT FEATURE**.

While we are waiting, activate the chat feature by clicking in the “Chat” tab that is located below the attendees list on the right of your screen.

**When chatting, please remember:**

- Select “**All Participants**” if you would like everyone to see your message. Select “**All Panelists**” if you would like only the presenter and facilitator to see your message.
- If you have any clarifying questions about the format, or the topic, you may click on the “**Q&A**” tab located below the presenter list and enter your questions.



# ABOUT HIDDEN SPARKS

**Hidden Sparks** is a non-profit whose purpose is to help children with learning differences reach their full potential in school and life. Hidden Sparks develops and supports professional development programs for Jewish day schools to help increase understanding and support for teaching to diverse learners.

Guided by a philosophy that helping schools meet the needs of children with learning and behavioral differences will ultimately benefit all students, Hidden Sparks' programs combine professional development in learning and positive behavioral support, guided classroom observation and one on one coaching. The Hidden Sparks model and program is currently in 45 Jewish Day Schools/Yeshivot in NY, NJ, Baltimore and Chicago.

hiddensparks  
without walls

***Teaching Teens:  
What Every Educator Should  
Know About the Adolescent  
Mind, Body and Soul***

**With Rona Novick, PhD**

**October 27, 2015**



**hiddensparks®**  
helping children reach their potential™

## Our Guest: Rona Novick, PhD



**Rona Novick, PhD**, is the Dean of the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration at Yeshiva University and holds the Raine and Stanley Silverstein Chair in Professional Ethics and Values. She holds an appointment as Associate Clinical Professor of Child Psychology at North Shore-Long Island Jewish Medical Center. Dr. Novick also serves as Co-Educational Director of the Hidden Sparks program, providing consultation to day schools and Yeshivas.

# Overview of the Session

Understanding the adolescent experience and cognition will offer us a view into their

- *Developmental tasks*
- *Belief systems*
- *Passions and drives*

And will enable us to adapt our educational and other approaches such that we harness teens' strengths and support the remarkable learning and growth which can and should characterize the adolescent years.

# Session Goals

Build our understanding of adolescent

- **Developmental tasks**

- Autonomy
- Social connection

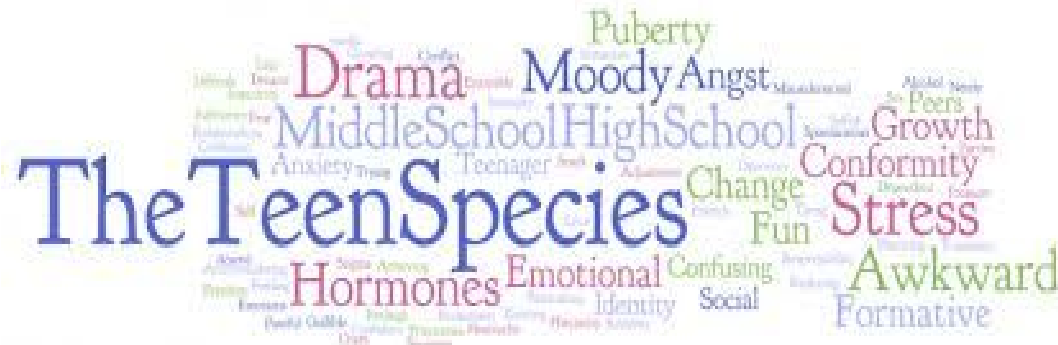
- **Belief systems**

- Invulnerability
- Hypocrisy intolerance

- **Passions and drives**

- Search for meaning and purpose
- Inner capacity for awe/spirituality – public concern about “cool”

*Re-evaluate our teaching and other activities as they support this development*



# What Is Our “Picture” of Adolescence?

Using the discussion board area, share the three words you would use to describe the typical adolescent.



# The Biological Reality

- Adolescence is now the longest period of development
- Age of puberty has moved younger (better nutrition)
- Rapid changes in body presentation
- Hormonal shifts
- Real impact of HGH – best time to function is not early am
- Brain development – will discuss later



# Developmental Tasks - Autonomy

## The Tasks

- Separate from parents/authority
- Requires both skill development AND emotional distance (may be easier in angry way)

## The Challenge

- Financially dependent, suspicious, rejecting, “disrespectful” towards authority
- Promote development when your input may not be directly requested or respected

# The Implications

- Authoritative vs. Authoritarian stance
- Do not personalize or demonize “disrespect”
- Tolerate anger
- Emphasizing reality of dependence likely to engage resentment
- Skill development, which includes failure, challenges sense of efficacy
- *“Raise your hand” if you have ever encountered these issues – share the example on the discussion board*



# Developmental Tasks – Social Connection

## The Tasks

- Belonging is critical
- Friends gain influence compared with family
- Peer influences can be both positive and negative

## The Challenges

- The lonely, shy student, the “unique student”
- Creating peer culture that is pro-social
- Building peer-refusal skills

*Use the discussion board to share any ideas you have for building positive peer networks*

# What Are They Thinking

Which do you think is a belief prevalent in adolescents?



**- Bad things happen to others, but not to me**



**- I want to live a life of meaning, not just go through the motions**



**- Life is not fair.**



# The Invulnerability Belief

- Related to adolescent egocentrism
- Trouble happens to others
- High risk, dangerous behavior is only dangerous for others
- The joy and excitement of the moment outweighs any potential downsides



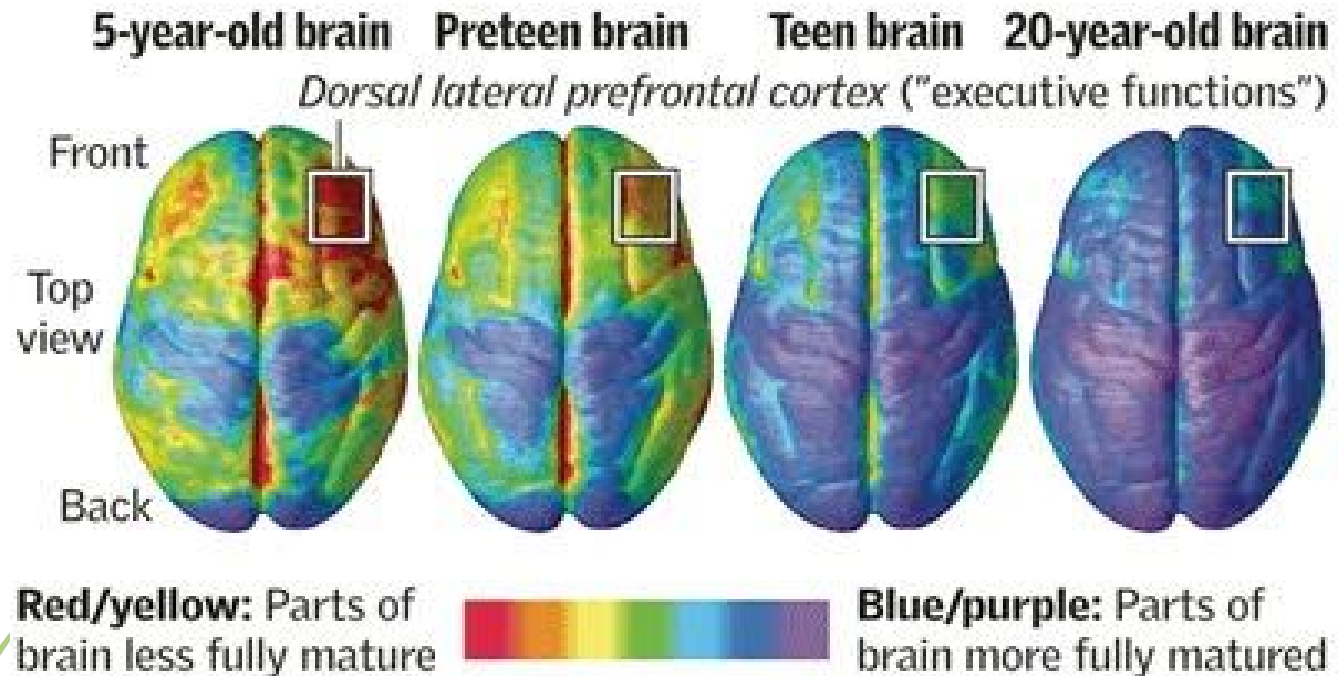
## Share your examples on the discussion board

- Pete hiking Yosemite in the midst of forest fire evacuations
- Shira walking alone at night on Bourbon Street, New Orleans while on a youth trip
- David not studying for major exam/prep because he'll "ace it" no matter what
- Group of teens driving after having some drinks, because they are still in "good control"

- **Limbic vs. Frontal System**
- **Pleasure vs. Thoughtfulness**

## Judgment last to develop

The area of the brain that controls “executive functions” — including weighing long-term consequences and controlling impulses — is among the last to fully mature. Brain development from childhood to adulthood:



*Sources: National Institute of Mental Health;  
Paul Thompson, Ph.D., UCLA Laboratory of  
Neuro Imaging*

**Thomas McKay** | The Denver Post

# Implications

- Fear alone is not a motivator
- Meta-cognition – do teens know how their brains work?
- Need for overlearned behavior in high-risk situations
- Peer refusal skills
- Use autonomy drive – create teen “researchers”





# The Hypocrite Belief

- If you watch people, especially those in positions of power, they say one thing but do another
- This is not an indicator of human frailty – but rather a symptom of deliberate, manipulative behavior
- Therefore, nothing such people say is to be trusted



- Does anyone want to share their experience of being considered hypocritical? What was your response?

# Implications

- Own your frailty
- Predict your inconsistency
- Be careful of what you say and what you do
- Trust is easy to lose, very difficult to regain



# Passions and Drives – Search for Meaning/Purpose

- New Orleans post Hurricane Katrina
- Power of purpose
- Challenge to make meaning in a “noisy”, hectic, and technological world
- Activities and individuals seen as purposeless or not connected to meaning may be rejected



# Implications

- Engage with teens in meaning making
- Be prepared for “big questions”
- More important to allow the questions than to have the answers
- Support the angst
- Draft teens for purposeful, authentic work



## Passions and Drives: Awe and Spirituality

- May not reveal their spiritual nature, but highly spiritual
- May not manifest as typical religious observance
- Inherent capacity for awe balanced with natural skepticism and doubt



# Implications

- Create opportunities for awe and spirituality
- Make quiet moments
- Consider wide range of spiritual opportunities
- Model/share your spiritual challenges and achievements



# **Review and Conclusions**

## **Challenges and opportunities**

**Adolescents seem to be a collection of contradictions, our work with them needs to be fluid, balancing close connection and cool formality.**

**Be the benevolent “grown up” – wise, patient**

# Upcoming Hidden Sparks Without Walls Sessions

Wed. 11/4/2015	<b>For Teachers</b> A Balancing Act: The Intersection Between Student Temperament and Your Classroom's Ecology- Hollis Dannaham
Tues. 11/17/2015	<b>For Teachers</b> Take Note: Note Taking Skills and Strategies

**If you are interested in bringing  
Hidden Sparks  
to your school or city, please contact us at:  
[212-767-7707](tel:212-767-7707) or [sara@hiddensparks.org](mailto:sara@hiddensparks.org)**



# Contacting Hidden Sparks

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