

## **Working With the Adolescent Brain**

### **Summer 2022**

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**Course Number:**

**Credits:** One (1) Graduate Credit

**Prerequisite:** Graduate Standing (must have earned a bachelor's degree); this course is open to educators employed with the Plymouth School District.

**Schedule:** August 2 (3-7pm), August 4 (3-7pm), August 9 (3-7pm), August 11 (3-7pm), August 18 (3-6pm)

**Location:** Plymouth High School

#### **Course Description:**

Educators will increase their knowledge about the adolescent brain to better understand the students in their classroom. The course will delve into the science behind what makes up this stage of development. It will teach realistic expectations about the social and academic processes of a teen. Teachers will reflect on how they currently build relationships with students and strategies they can use to improve student engagement.

#### **Course Emphasis and Rationale:**

The mind process of adolescents is often confusing and frustrating. Not only do adolescents have to deal with the overall growth process, today's teens face the challenges of the physical (stress, drugs, environmental) and digital (social media, bullying), worlds. Those that work with adolescents often find themselves saying, "What were they thinking?". Understanding the development of the adolescent brain will provide educators strategies in effectively meeting the needs of the individual child. Educators can have a profound positive impact on the brain development in guiding of the mastery of new skills and honing abilities.

#### **Course Objectives:**

- Participants will explore adolescent brain research.
- Participants will gain knowledge on the importance of student/teacher relationship building to impact learning.
- Participants will learn strategies to build relationships
- Participants will learn community building activities to create a positive school climate.
- Participants will learn different strategies and approaches when meeting the needs of students.

- Participants will gain knowledge on how educator collaboration/communication impacts student success.
- Participants will create a shared resource bank of strategies and experiences.
- Participants will reflect on their practice and pedagogy and how it impacts student learning.

#### **Required Reading:**

You've Gotta Connect by James Alan Sturtevant

Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain by Daniel J. Siegel MD

#### **Additional Possible resources:**

- Why Do They Act That Way: A Survival Guide To The Brain For You and Your Teen by David Walsh
- The Teenage Brain by Frances E. Jensen MD and Amy Ellis Nutt

#### **Course Requirements,**

- Attendance
- Active participation
- Learning activities which will include reading, discussion, design exercises, and peer critique
- Creation and presentation of a course project

#### **Evaluation and Assessment:**

- Mini lesson Presentation- Develop a mini lesson to be shared with building staff 30%
- Participation in class and online discussions 20%
- Reflection and future goals 20%
- Reflective Project (poster, infographic, comic) 30%

#### **Assessment Descriptions:**

- Mini-lesson Participants will develop a lesson about an activity they tried, one they might want to try, newly learned content from the class (anything you would find beneficial to share with other staff members) in your building.
- Participation in class and online discussion - Participants will contribute to discussion in class and respond to other participants posts in the resource portfolio providing constructive feedback and criticism.
- Reflection and future goals - Participants will be required to reflect after each face-to-face meeting and create goals for implementing their learning after course completion.
- Reflective Project (poster, infographic, comic) - The poster will be a reflection and the biggest takeaway from the course. The goal of the project is to provide the participants with a resource that they can be posted in their work area as a daily reminder of best practices, understanding and patience with the students they work with. The poster can

be shared to impact other educators and parents on their knowledge of the adolescent brain.

## **Outline**

### **January 9 (3 hours) Connect and Accept**

- Myths and Mindsets Pretest
- You've Gotta Connect Read pp.8-26
- Connection Do's and Don'ts
- Dangers of the Single Story
- Acceptance of All Students
- You've Gotta Connect Read pp.41-59
- Attitude Inventory
- Jigsaw activity pertaining to connecting with students
- Brainstorm pp. 1-37

### **January 16 (3 hours) Safe Environment**

- What does safety mean to you?
- You've Gotta Connect 146-163
- Goal setting for 2nd semester
- You've Gotta Connect -Warm Demanders
- Jigsaw articles pertaining to trauma, bullying, introverted students

### **January 23 (3 hours) Communication**

- Verbal Communication activity
- What you say and how you say it You've Gotta Connect pp. 76-99
- How Cool are you? (quiz)
- What do I really say? (reflection activity)
- Nonverbal Communication
- What does my body tell my students?
- You've Gotta Connect pp. 114-118, 127-130, 136-137
- Brainstorm pp. 139-199

### **February 6 (3 hours) Social and Emotional Health**

- Your Brain Brainstorm pp. 65-89 Mini lesson
- Extended article readings and activity
- Risk taking/Impulsive Behaviors- discussion, articles, activity
- Introduce Mini Lesson Final Project
- Reflection Resource Activity

### **February 20 (3 hours) Reflection of Learning**

- Share Reflective Poster

- Develop Mini lesson
- Present mini lesson
  - Final Reflection-What are you going to *be sure to do* and *sure not to do*.

## **Wisconsin Standards for Teacher Development and Licensure**

### **1. Teachers know the subjects they are teaching.**

The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines she or he teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for pupils.

### **2. Teachers know how children grow.**

The teacher understands how children with broad ranges of ability learn and provides instruction that supports their intellectual, social, and personal development.

### **3. Teachers understand that children learn differently.**

The teacher understands how pupils differ in their approaches to learning and the barriers that impede learning and can adapt instruction to meet the diverse needs of pupils, including those with disabilities and exceptionalities.

### **4. Teachers know how to teach.**

The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies, including the use of technology, to encourage children's development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

### **6. Teachers communicate well.**

The teacher uses effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques as well as instructional media and technology to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

### **9. Teachers are able to evaluate themselves.**

The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on pupils, parents, professionals in the learning community and others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.