



Trauma, Parenting, & Challenging Behaviors (Adolescent)

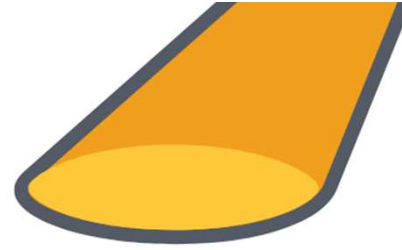
Presenter: Melissa Bernstein, PhD

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Speaker SPOTLIGHT



MELISSA BERNSTEIN, PHD
Evidence-Based Practices
Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego

 @drmelbern

- Advancing California's Trauma-Informed Systems (ACTS)
- Trauma-Informed Licensing Team (TILT) Initiatives
- Research centers around supporting systems in planning for, implementing, and sustaining Trauma-Informed change that aligns with best practice and science



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Child Trauma, Parenting, & Challenging Behaviors

MELISSA BERNSTEIN, PH.D



A top-down view of a workspace on a light-colored wooden desk. In the top left, a white ceramic cup filled with dark coffee sits next to a black fountain pen. Below the pen is an open notebook with a black cover and blank white pages. In the bottom left, a portion of a silver laptop keyboard is visible. At the bottom center, a pair of white earbuds with a coiled cable lies on the desk.

Overview

- The Impact of trauma on Adolescence
- Collaborating with Caregivers
- Responding to Challenging Behavior

Behavior Problems, Trauma & Adolescents

**What are some disruptive
adolescent behaviors?**

NORMATIVE ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

- Cognitive abilities develop
- Social skills and perspective-taking abilities mature
- Physiological developmental changes
- Formation of Identity
- Individuation from caregivers
- Future becomes real and meaningful
- Not yet efficient in connecting current plan to actions



Chronic & Complex Trauma

- Exposure to multiple traumatic events or multiple events over a period of development
- Caused by adults entrusted with the child's care
- Cumulative Effect
- Survival ➤ Growth & Development

Impact of Trauma on Adolescent Development



Interpersonal Difficulties (attachment)

- Problems with boundaries
- Problems trusting others
- Difficulty with perspective-taking



Affect Regulation

- Poor emotional self-regulation
- Difficulty describing feelings & internal states
- Difficulty communicating needs & desires



Negative Self-Identity

- Disturbed body image
- Low self-esteem



Cognitive

- Difficulty with abstract thinking
- Poorer ability to consider consequences of behavior & make realistic appraisals of danger & safety
- Difficulty with attention & planning

Common Beliefs Impacted by Trauma

| | Of Self | Of Others/World |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Trust | I make bad decisions. I can't trust my own judgement. | People can't be trusted. Don't trust the system/authority. |
| Control/Power | I don't have control of the future. Control is all or nothing. Must control what I can. | Life is unpredictable/uncontrollable. |
| Esteem | I am a bad kid. I am worthless. I am only valuable for... | People are bad and they will hurt you. |
| Intimacy | I shouldn't get close to people. | Others will take advantage of me. Relationships cause pain. |
| Safety | I am unsafe. Something bad will happen to me. | Adults won't keep me safe. Adults are dangerous. |

Adaptation
Rather than
Damage

COPING

SAFETY

LEARNED

SURVIVAL

II. Collaborating with Caregivers

Collaborating with Caregivers



Collaborating with Caregivers

- ✓ Create space for caregivers to share their concerns
- ✓ Align with Caregiver
- ✓ Am I communicating a message of hope?
 - Normalize
 - Validate
- ✓ Provide psychoeducation
- ✓ Provide resources

Common "Misunderstanding" of Behavior

| | |
|---|--|
| Developmentally inappropriate expectations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should know how to behave by now• Only upset when they got caught, no remorse |
| Over-personalizes Misbehavior | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teens doing this to "get at" me• Teen is disrespecting me |
| Pathologizing Child Behavior | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can't attach to others, callous• Manipulative• Disordered |
| | |

Psychoeducation Resources

Handouts

- Traumatic Stress Fact Sheet
- Understanding Traumatic Stress in Adolescents
- Trauma and the Brain

www.youtube.com › watch

Childhood Trauma and the Brain | UK Trauma Council



A general introduction to what happens in the brain after children face **traumatic** experiences in childhood, like ...

YouTube · Anna Freud NCCF · Sep 16, 2020

Handout

Working More Effectively
with Caregivers



III. Responding to Challenging Behaviors

Clues That Youth is Stuck in Fight/Flight/Freeze

- Extreme emotions
- Behavior feels like its out of the blue
- Big response over very minor issue
- Happens quickly (0 to 60)
- Child is unable to calm down
- Doesn't respond to reasoning
- Distress may last a long time
- Apologetic later



Applying Skills to Trauma Reactions



Understanding dysregulation: How to Support a Highly Emotional Child



Dysregulation occurs when the brain responds to sensory input in a manner that triggers the alarm state.



When a child is dysregulated, it is harder to listen, comprehend, and cope.

Remember the Three "R"s

Regulate

focus on soothing your child. Make them feel calm, safe, and loved.



Relate

Validate their feelings with your words and tone of voice. "I know you're upset right now." "This is very hard". Focus on connecting with your child.

Reason

Once your child is calm, now it is time to talk about alternatives to behaviors while reinforcing limits you set before. You can reassure them you love them but that the behavior they're exhibiting is not ok.



Until a child is regulated, they are unlikely to related to you (feel connected & comfortable). And until a child is related, they are unlikely to have the mental capacity to reason with you.

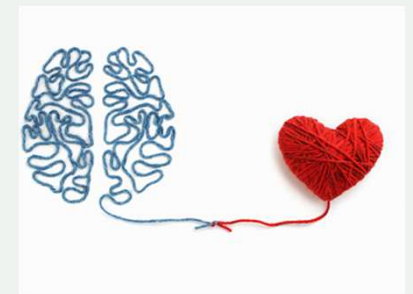
Graphic Source: "The 3 R's from Dr. Bruce Perry," MLA Counseling Services,
<https://www.facebook.com/MariaArescolC SW/photos/the-3-rs-from-dr-bruce-perry/1007843656284147/>

Strategies to Shape Behavior



Emotional/Relational Strategies

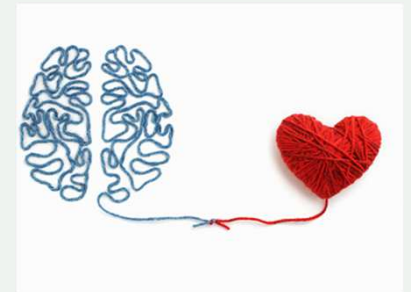
“Effective interventions for teenagers is not intervention that forcibly stops behavior- it’s intervention that builds deeper connections” –
Bruce Perry



Emotional/Relational Strategies

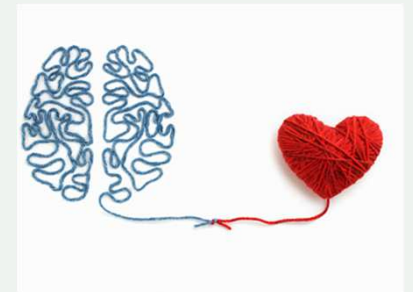
AVOID POWER STRUGGLES

- 1.Remove yourself from the confrontation
- 2.Regain Composure
- 3.Remember -not a teachable moment
- 4.Avoid arguing
- 5.Plan ahead



Emotional/Relational Strategies

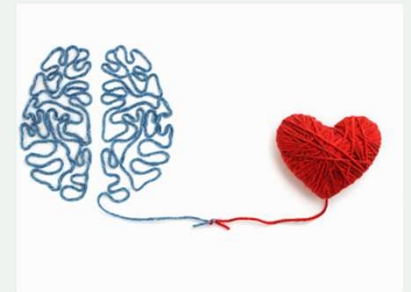
Increase Social Networks



Emotional/Relational Strategies

CREATE A COPING PLAN

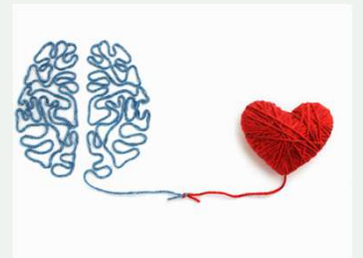
- Identify signs of stress
- Include relaxation activities
- Practice when calm
- Reward practice
- Remind teen of coping plan



Emotional/Relational Strategies

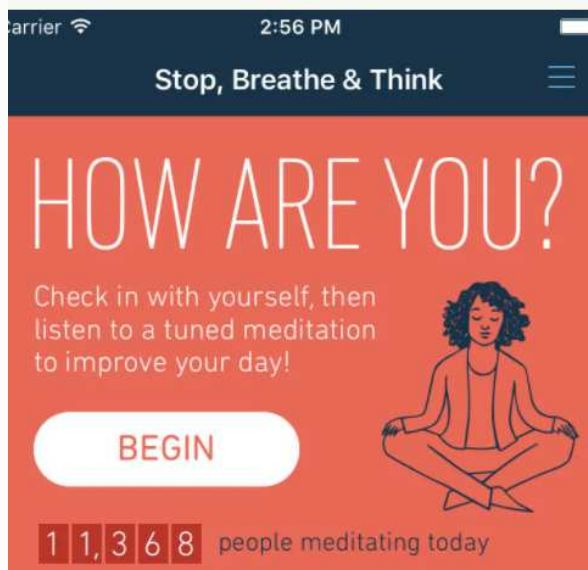
COPING PLAN RESOURCES

- https://depts.washington.edu/uwhatc/PDF/TF-%20CBT/pages/cognitive_coping.html#anger
- <https://www.thecenterforteenandfamilytherapy.com/coping-skills-for-teens>

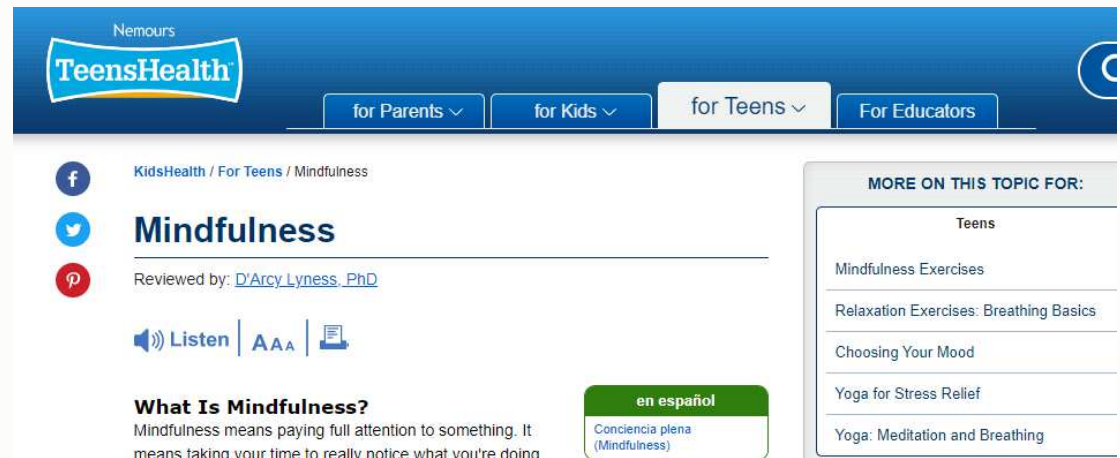


Emotional/Relational Strategies

<https://www.stopbreathethink.com/about/>



<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/mindfulness.html>



Cognitive Strategies

TEEN PROBLEM SOLVING

- STOP AND STEP BACK FROM THE SITUATION
- TAKE A BREATH
- ORGANIZE YOUR OPTIONS
 - "Am I putting the situation into perspective?"
 - "Is what I am thinking about doing okay?"
 - "Do I know how the other person is thinking and feeling?"
 - "What will happen if I do this?" OR
 - "What will happen if I don't do this?"
- PICK A PLAN



PARENT-TEEN PROBLEM SOLVING

Step 1

What's the problem?

- State the problem
- Use facts only, not emotions

Step 2

Why is this a problem?

- Try to both listen without arguing or debating
- Ask questions like:
 - Why is this so important to you?
 - What's upsetting you about this?
 - What do you think might happen?
- Don't say things like:
 - That doesn't make sense
 - That's not true

PARENT-TEEN PROBLEM SOLVING

Step 3

Brainstorm possible solutions to the problem:

- No solution is too out there (at this step)
- Teen should go first
- Offer silly suggestions if stuck
- Try to come up with at least 5 possible solutions together

Step 4

Evaluate the solutions to the problem:

- Look at pros and cons of all the suggested solutions
- Cross off solutions that you all agree aren't acceptable
- Cross off solutions with more negatives than positives
- Rate the remaining solutions from 0-10 to sort the most promising solutions
- If you can't find a solution go back to step 3

PARENT-TEEN PROBLEM SOLVING

Step 5

Put the solution into practice:

- Who will do what?
- When will they do it?
- What's needed?

Step 6

Evaluate the outcome:

- What's working well?
- What hasn't worked so well
- What could we do differently to make it work better?

Behavioral Strategies

Rules

- Collaborative (if possible)
- Positively stated
- Specific
- Not too many



Behavioral Strategies

Behavioral Reward System (Point System)

1. Create Behavioral Goal
2. Create a Behavior Schedule
When in the day does the problem behavior occur
3. Create a Reward Menu



| Rewards | Points |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Pick out movie | 50 |
| Extend curfew 30 min | 100 |
| 2 items from favorite sandwich place | 80 |
| Have a friend come over | 120 |
| Sundae night | 40 |

Each Yes is worth 10 points. Total 150 points per week

| | Mon | Tue | Wed. | Thurs | Friday |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|------|-------|--------|
| Makes it to the bus stop on time | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |
| | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |
| | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N | Y N |



Examples of Rewards: Get Creative!





- Time Alone
- Time with Friends
- Have Friend Overnight
- Stay Overnight with Friends
- Night off Regular Chores
- Time with Parent
- Extra time on Internet
- Family space to themselves

Handout

Behavior Chart Handout











THE CALIFORNIA EVIDENCE-BASED
CLEARINGHOUSE
FOR CHILD WELFARE

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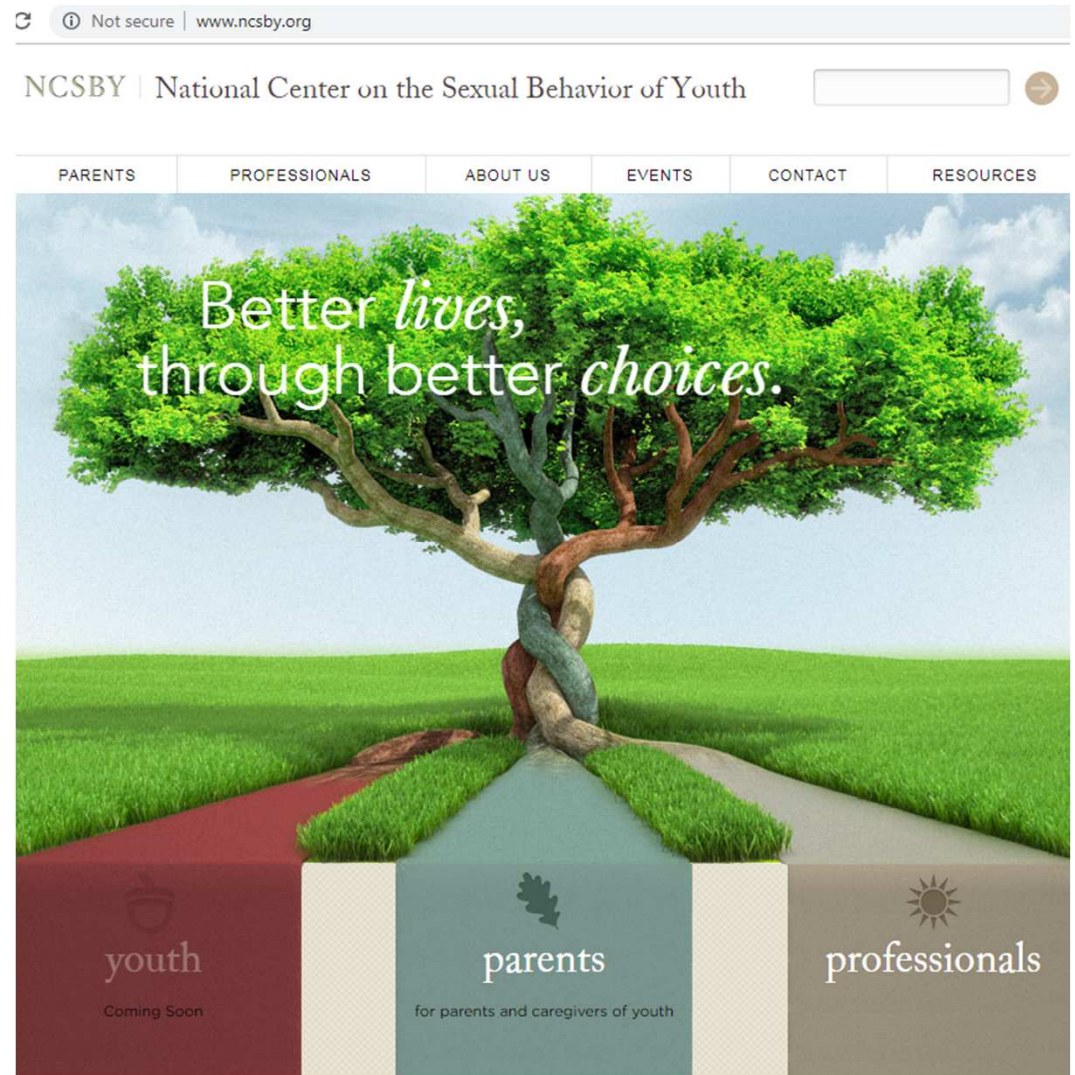
[Contact the CEBC](#)

[Sign up for The CEBC Connection](#)

Welcome to the CEBC: California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare

Problematic Sexual Behavior

<https://ncsby.org/>



Better lives, through better choices.

PROFESSIONALS

| | |
|--|---|
| GUIDE FOR WEBBOOK | ▶ |
| GUIDING PRINCIPLES | |
| SEXUAL BEHAVIOR: TYPICAL or PROBLEMATIC? | ▶ |
| Overview and Definitions | |
| Normative sexual behavior | |
| Problematic sexual behavior | |
| CLINICAL DECISION-MAKING | ▶ |
| STANDARDS OF CARE | ▶ |
| PUBLIC POLICY | ▶ |
| RESOURCES | ▶ |

NCSBY



SEXUAL BEHAVIOR: TYPICAL OR PROBLEMATIC?

Professionals are often asked to determine if a youth's sexual behavior is considered a typical behavior, part of growing up, or if the behavior is problematic. This section of the website provides background information on normative sexual behaviors for preschool children, school-age children, and adolescents. It also provides guidelines for determining if a sexual behavior would be considered problematic or potentially illegal.



KEY POINTS

Some sexual behaviors are viewed as a normal part of growing up. Characteristics of typical or normative sexual behaviors include that the behavior is spontaneous or intermittent, light hearted and playful, occurs between children of similar age, size, and ability who may be the same and opposite genders, and typically decreases with caregiver guidance and

Downloads

- ▶ [Child Welfare Topics](#)
- ▶ [Juvenile Justice Topics](#)
- ▶ [Media and Technology](#)
- ▶ [Parenting and Sex Education](#)
- ▶ [Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Problematic Sexual Behavior](#)
- ▶ [Problematic Sexual Behavior of Youth](#)
- ▶ [Public Policy and Practice](#)
- ▶ [Sex Education and Developmental Disabilities](#)
- ▶ [Sexual Abuse](#)
- ▶ [Sexual Development](#)

RESOURCES FOR YOUTH



<http://sexetc.org>

<http://www.iwannaknow.org/teens/index.html>

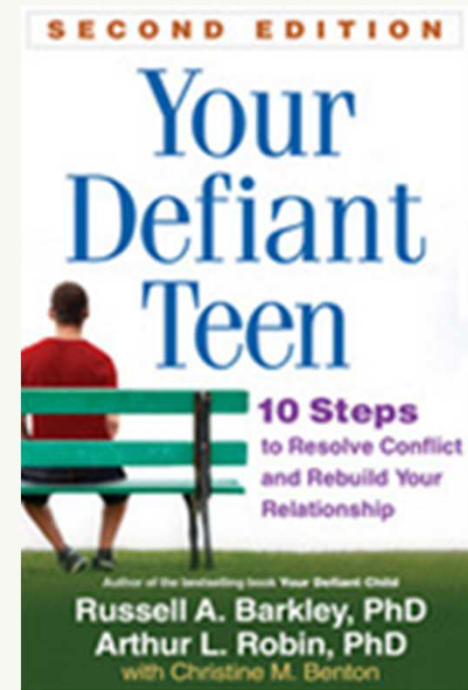


<http://www.scarleteen.com>

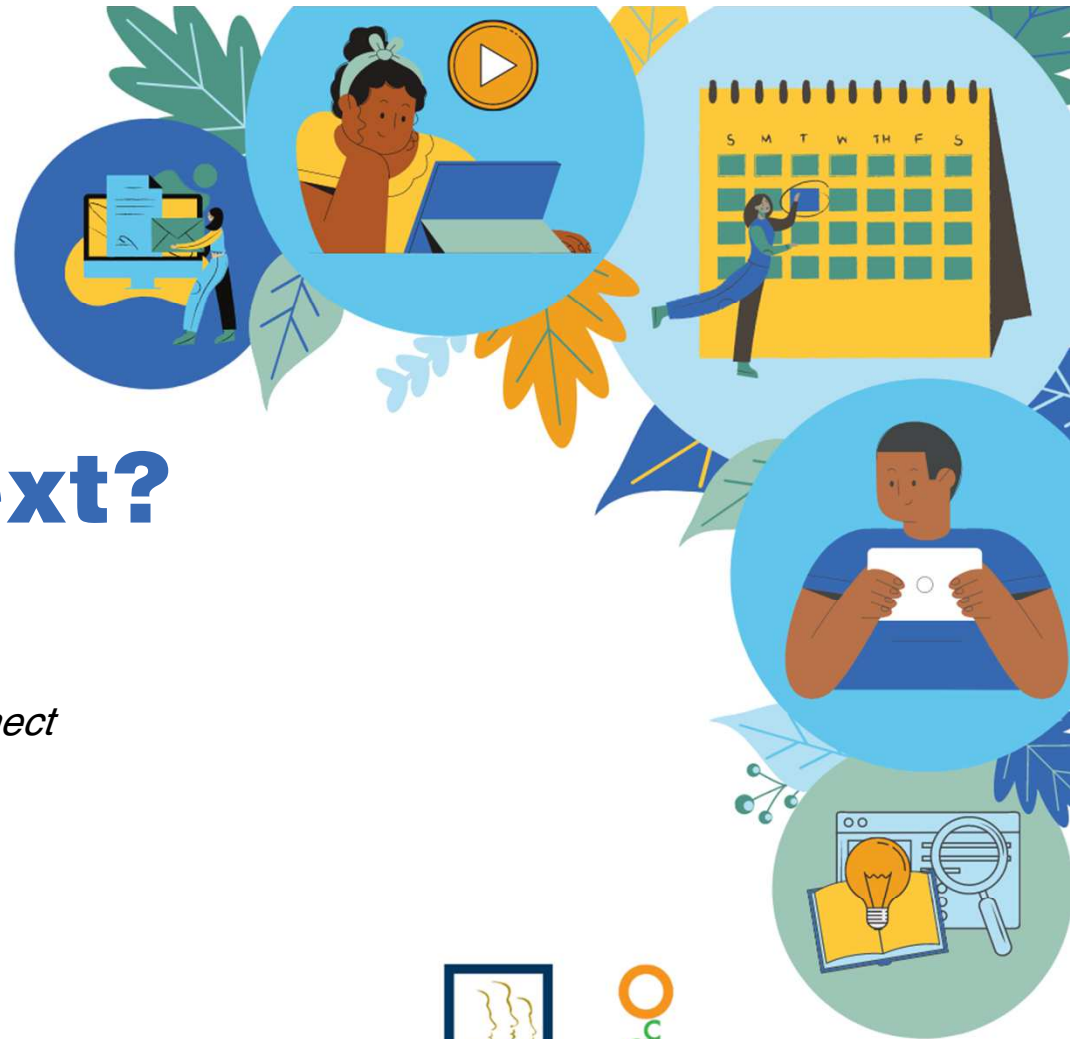
Recommended Reading

- Your Defiant Teen (2nd Ed):10 Steps to Resolve Conflict and Rebuild Your Relationship

- By Barkley and Robin








What Happens Next?

- Survey and certificate in the chat now
- Recording and resources available within two days
- Watch your inbox for the next issue of *CalTrin Connect*


Stay connected for more free training & resources

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