



**Working Together To
Build Resilience**

SUPPORTING YOUR TEENAGER WORKBOOK

'If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up.
Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around
it.'

Michael Jordan



BY SIOBAINN CHAPLIN

WELCOME

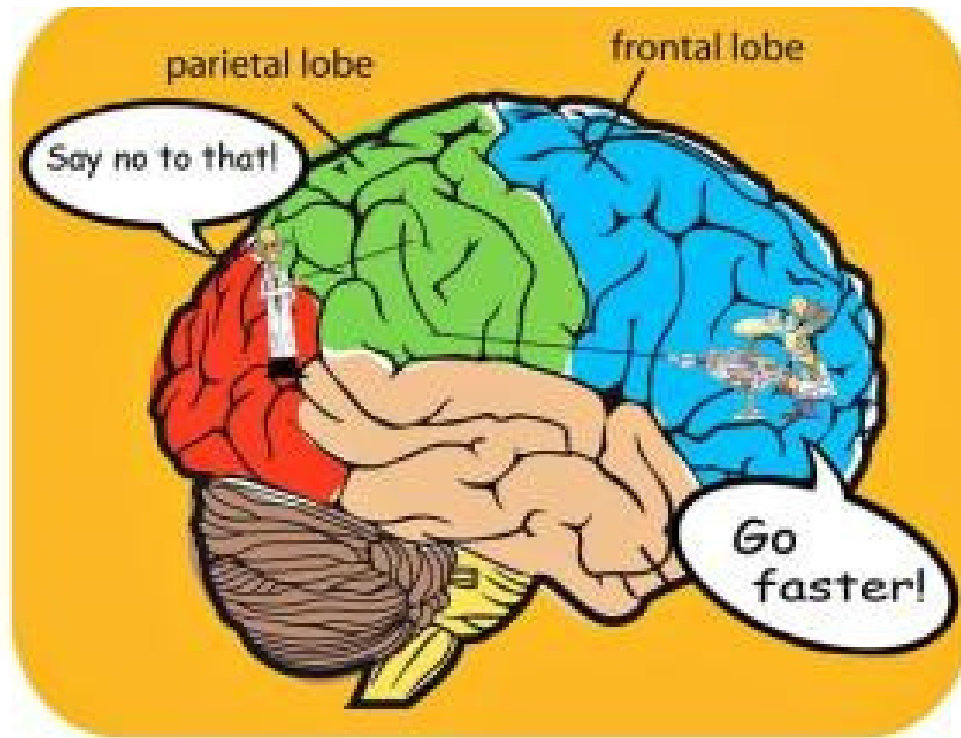
Hi There!

For many years I have advocated the importance of early intervention; if we can step in and offer support when issues start to arise rather than waiting for them to reach crisis point we can work together and resolve issues at an early stage. What is important is that we learn about ourselves and how we communicate. Do we keep communication channels open? Are we really listening? I raise these questions not to challenge but because I have had to ask them myself; as a parent and a professional. How can we reframe how we say things? Rather than challenging negative behaviour let's refocus and look for why it's happening.

Siobainn

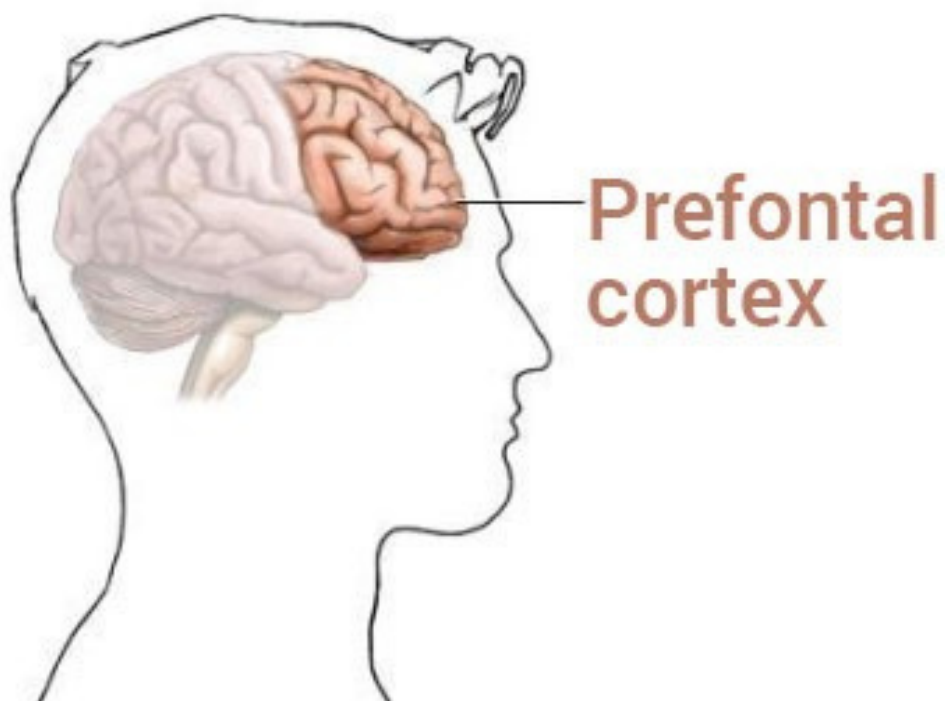


*Big changes in our teenage years happen
in the brain.*



Use it or lose it is really important in terms of our brain development. What this means is that connections in the brain that are regularly used are strengthened and those that are not are lost. The connections in the brain are strengthened by experiences so what young people do and experience literally shapes their brain!

This makes teenage years great for learning new things both in and out of the classroom and for developing good social skills and relationships - which is something you can support your child with just by showing them how it is done!



The Pre Frontal Cortex- is responsible for planning, decision making, inhibiting inappropriate behaviour, social interactions and self awareness (to name a few), yet this area of the brain also develops last! And generally goes on developing until our mid 20s.

This alone can explain some of young people's behaviour. But because the Pre Frontal Cortex is still developing teenagers use a different part of the brain for these incredibly important functions.

This area is called the Limbic system and is responsible for rewards, emotions, impulse and instinctive behaviour. This can therefore lead young people to misinterpret someone else's emotions for example, seeing concern as anger, it can lead to risk taking behaviour such as driving too fast which the brain finds rewarding and can lead to trouble in managing strong emotions resulting in mood swings!

Sleep - there is a reason why teenagers sleep more / later than adults. This is due to the hormone melatonin which is produced at different times in teenagers than adults. This can lead them to being awake late into the night and asleep at lunchtime! It's not totally their fault!!

COMMUNICATION STYLES

3 main styles of communication:

- **Aggressive** - bossy, arrogant, intolerant, over-bearing
-E.G get out of my way, I don't give a s*x*t about you

- **Passive** - waiting, moaning, helpless, submissive, apologetic
-E.G nothing ever goes right for me, it's ok we can do what you want to do

- **Assertive** - direct, honest, positive, accepting, responsible,

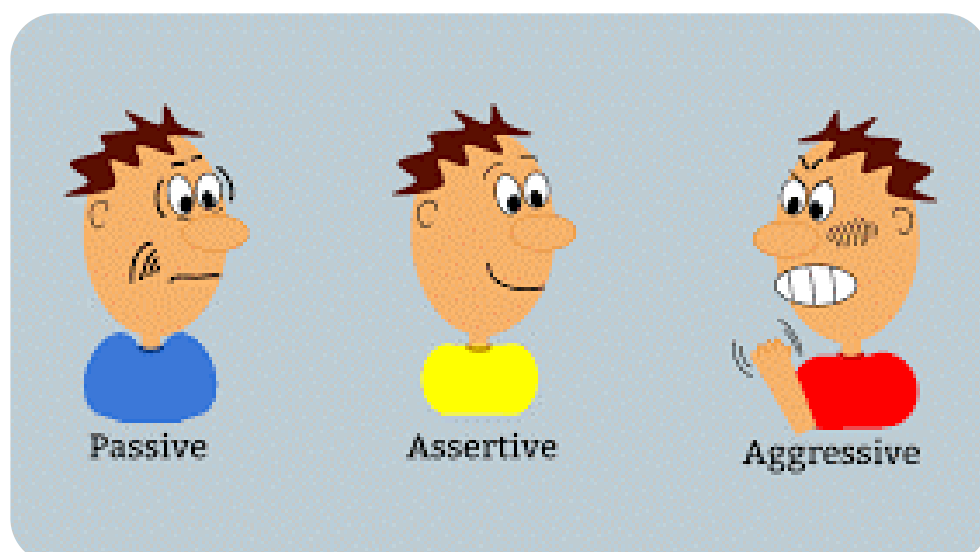
-E.G I feel angry when you leave your clothes on the floor. I would like it if you could tidy up after yourself

Being assertive is being able to state how you feel, why you feel that way and what you need without being aggressive.

Aggressive communication is bullying, doesn't take into account others feelings. Reasons for it - may believe it's the only way people will respond to their needs, make believe they are weak unless they bully others, may believe they have no control unless they bully others. Disadvantages - may face retaliation, lose relationships, people do things just to get rid of you

Passive communication - opinions, feelings and wants are held back or only partly expressed. Reasons for it - may think its polite, keep the peace, may be afraid of what will happen if they communicate assertively. Disadvantages - get taken advantage of, feel angry at self or others, lose respect for self

Assertive - is calm, direct but takes on board that others may have different opinions. Reasons for - its respects the rights of others and of self, enables a mature relationship with others.

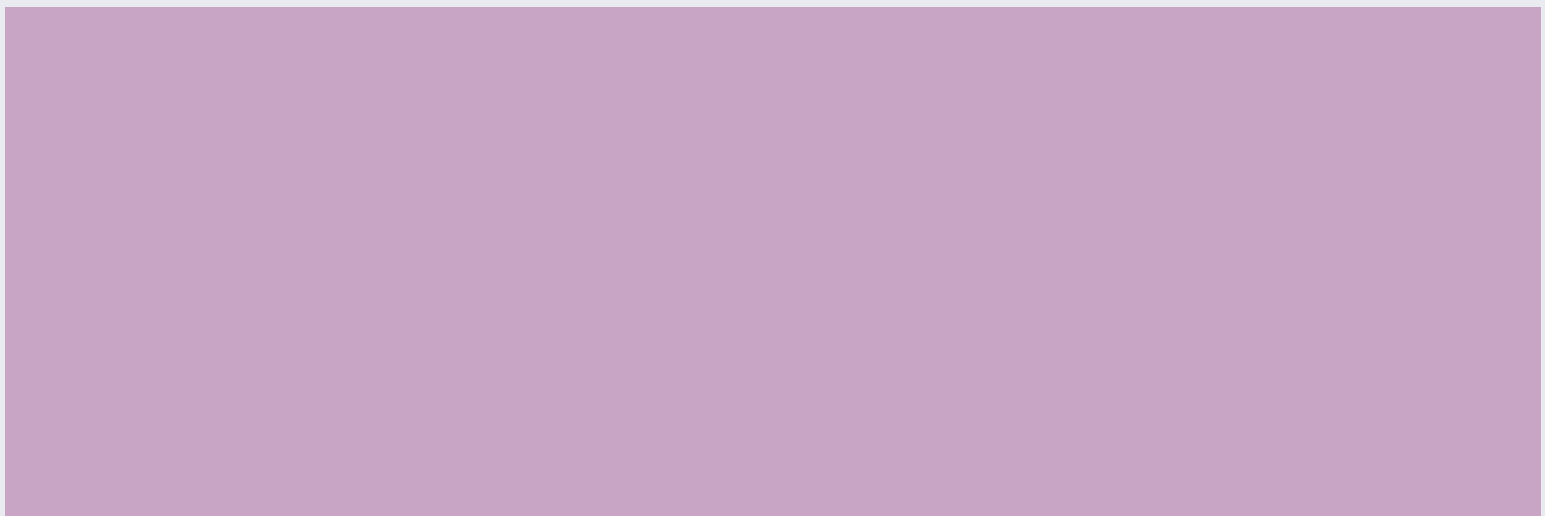


NOW THINK ABOUT YOU

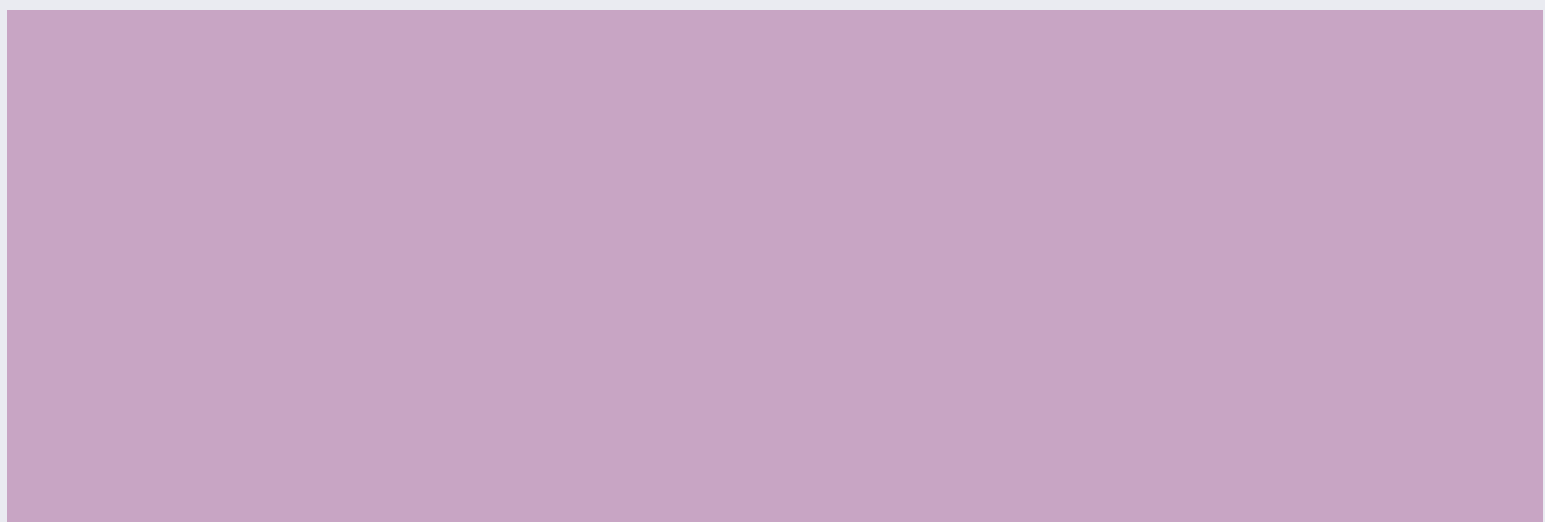
What was school like - did you enjoy it? What did you like / dislike?



What was home like - what was challenging / what was good about home?



Who were your friends / what did you spend time doing / when did you start spending more time with them and less with family?
Did your parents agree with everything you did?



20 QUESTIONS TO FIND OUT HOW ASSERTIVE AND SELF-AWARE YOU REALLY ARE

Always true for me = 4 Sometimes true = 3

Rarely true = 2 Never true for me = 1

1 - I appreciate other people's views even if they are different to mine.

2 - I listen to people; they find me approachable and easy to talk to.

3 - I ask for help easily without feeling anxious or uncomfortable.

4 - I can express my feelings and opinions openly and constructively

5 - I take time to think about my responses and their consequences.

Assertiveness score =

6 - If others are rude to me I am rude or sarcastic back

7 - I am uncomfortable letting go of tasks and delegating work

8 - If I disagree with someone I 'stick to my guns' no matter what

9 - I can be 'hot headed' and little things annoy me

10 - When under stress I get short and snappy with people

Aggressive score =

11 - I will do all I can to try and avoid confrontation

12 - I hate holding eye contact as it feels like I'm staring

13 - I work hard to meet people's needs usually at my own expense

14 - When asked to do something I say 'yes' incase 'no' upsets them

15 - In the presence of authority I feel intimidated and/or flustered

Passive score =

16 - If I want someone to do a job I praise and compliment them first

17 - If someone upsets me, I find a way to get back at them, subtly

18 - I like to control others through behind the scenes manoeuvres

19 - I hide behind humour and sarcasm to avoid difficult situations

20 - If I don't like somebody I subtly let them know by excluding them from events

Passive aggressive score =

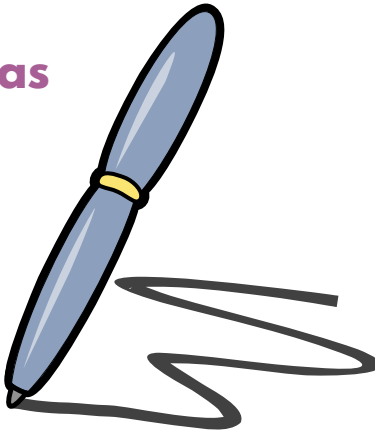
UNDERSTANDING YOUR SCORE

You can now interpret your scores using the following information:

- The highest of your four totals may indicate that this is your predominant behaviour.
- If that highest score is 15-20, this may indicate a particularly strong preference for that behaviour.
- The lowest of all your totals may indicate that this is your least preferred pattern of behaviour.
- If that lowest score is 10 or below, may indicate how infrequently, you use this behaviour.
- If all your totals are low, this may indicate an overall level of passivity, showing a lack of self-assurance and doubt in your ability when answering the questions.
- If assertive and passive totals are close, this may indicate a strengthening of your assertive approach. It shows you are asserting yourself more often, although a predominant passive insecurity influences a retreat to a people-pleasing position.
- If passive and aggressive totals are close, this may indicate a low self-esteem and insecurity, which underlies both behaviours. You may, for example, bottle up emotions and then explode with frustration when you can take no more. You then feel guilty about your outburst and return to a passive standpoint.
- If assertive and aggressive totals are close, this may indicate an imbalance of your self-expression and a dominant feeling of frustration. As you experiment with your assertion, you may still find yourself shouting or finger pointing when you struggle to get your views across. This will rebalance the more you practise.
- Return to the three non-assertive question sets and review your 3 and 4 scores. Consider and journalise the reasons behind your scores to those specific questions.
- Return to the assertive question set and review your 1 and 2 scores. Explore what stops you from scoring higher and journalise your results.
- Return to your assertive question set and review your 3 and 4 scores. Acknowledge the situations where you already behave assertively and explore what gives you the confidence to behave this way

THINK ABOUT WHAT STYLE YOU AND YOUR TEEN OFTEN COMMUNICATE IN

Think about a recent interaction that didn't go as well as hoped.



What communication styles were being used?
What could have been done differently?

How could you have communicated assertively?

How would you have done this?

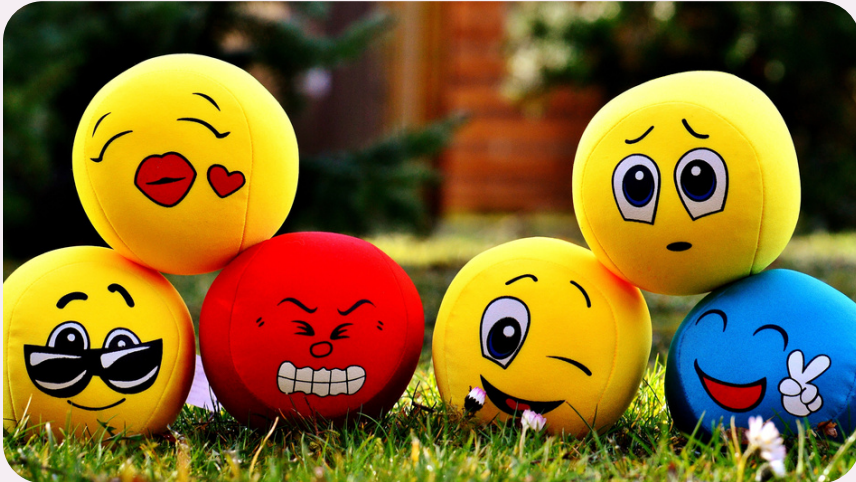
What would you have said?

HELPING SPOT IF YOUR CHILD COULD DO WITH SOME EXTRA SUPPORT IS A GREAT WAY OF BEING ABLE TO HELP THEM.

HERE IS A LIST OF SIGNS THAT COULD MEAN EXTRA SUPPORT IF NEEDED

- Often feel anxious or worried
- Have very frequent tantrums or are intensely irritable a lot of the time
- Have a lot of stomach aches or headaches with no explanation
- Are constantly moving and find it hard to sit quietly
- Have trouble sleeping
- Have a lot of nightmares
- Lose interest in things they used to enjoy
- Avoid spending time with friends
- Have trouble doing well in school or start to struggle in school
- Are afraid of gaining weight, over exercise or diet obsessively
- Have no or little energy
- Harm themselves e.g. cutting or burning
- Smoke, drink or use drugs
- Have thoughts of suicide
- Think their mind is controlled or out of control, hear voices

TIPS FOR HANDLING EMOTIONS AND DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR



- Stay calm and breathe
- Keep good eye contact
- Give your teen the space to express what they are feeling
 - Listen and don't try to find solutions
 - Do not react or judge them – stay in your 'Adult' state
- 'Boundary' the situation e.g. your teen has some quiet time or goes to speak to someone
- Get support if the matter is beyond the bounds of your role

What can you do if you feel yourself reacting or start to feel overwhelmed?

- Take some time and breathe
- Step back and give yourself a bit of space
- 'Boundary' the situation which may mean communicating that now is not a good time to discuss the matter further
- Get support from friends and family
- Give yourself time to process your response
- See it as an opportunity to learn



And don't forget about YOU:

One of the hardest things to do is to identify our emotions when we are in the moment of a debate, disagreement or argument. When our emotions become involved we can lose our normal rational thinking and instead give way to a bunch of thoughts that skew our objective nature. When you're having an argument can you objectively name the emotion you are experiencing. This may sound obvious but it's actually pretty tricky. Emotions, especially when they're negative have a tendency to take over our mind and body without us realising it. Think about it like putting a pair of sunglasses on. You move them to your head and then wonder where you have put them and it's not until you consciously focus on them that you remember they are sat on your head.

Think about the following questions:

What are your most coping mechanisms?

When do you get most defensive in life?

What coping mechanisms did you develop as a child that no longer serve you?

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TIMELY INTERVENTIONS FOR FAMILIES (TIFS) AND HOW YOU CAN BE SUPPORTED?



Email - support@tifs-positivefamilies.org

Website - www.tifs-positivefamilies.org

Facebook - [@WorkingTogetherToBuildResilience](https://www.facebook.com/WorkingTogetherToBuildResilience)

Instagram - [tifs.resilience](https://www.instagram.com/tifs.resilience)