

# Can you train your Teen?!

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DREAMWORKS  
HOW TO TRAIN YOUR  
**DRAGON**  
3D

Coming to Theaters, DVD, Blu-ray™ 3D and IMAX 3D

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# WHAT IS ADOLESCENCE?

## ◆ A Mental Illness?

- ◆ Split personality with one foot firmly planted on each side of opposing two realities
- ◆ Most teens recover without treatment
- ◆ Most teens survive long enough to become eligible and choose to become adults

## ◆ Reverse genetics (We inherit a mental disorder from our teenagers)

## ◆ A time when parents age faster than their children

## ◆ A time when the children we have been correcting start correcting us

# What others have said about adolescents

## Mark Twain

When child born, buy large barrel of whiskey and tap it

When child turns 13, place child in empty barrel, nail lid shut, remove tap for breathing hole

When child turns 16, plug the hole!

## Pastor's sermon series

Before his first child: *"10 Commandments for Parents"*

After first child born: *"10 Suggestions for Parents"*

When his first child turned 13: *"A Few Hints for Parents"*

When his first child turned 16: He quit preaching!



# What does the Bible say about adolescents?

Exodus 20:13

*"Thou shalt not kill."*

1Thes 3:4

"it came to pass"

Hebrews 12:11

"No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who are trained by it"

Proverbs 22:6

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it.

2 Peter 3:8

But do not forget this one thing, dear friend with the Lord a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a day.

# ADOLESCENCE

## A CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- A culturally determined phenomenon (Not Universal)
- Invented in 1899 by the State of Illinois Legislature passed the first law in the US defining children under 16 as being subject to a different set of laws
- Teens were no longer subject to the adult criminal code
- Teens had their own set of new laws called "status offenses"
- A status offense is a law that you outgrow at "age of majority" (e.g., purchase of tobacco, fire arms, or alcohol, curfews, etc.)
- **In effect, teens were no longer expected to act like adults**

# ADOLESCENCE

## A CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- We have created a temporary social class without a plan for what to do with it
- In therapy, teens often complain that they are expected to act like a responsible adult while being treated like a child
- This condition is best illustrated on a family vacation:

Pay adult fare for airline ticket

"Kids stay free" (under 18) at hotel

Must pay adult admission at movie theater

Old enough to have driver's license

But can't sit in the Exit row

But can't order beer or off of  
kid's menu

But can't view R-rated movie

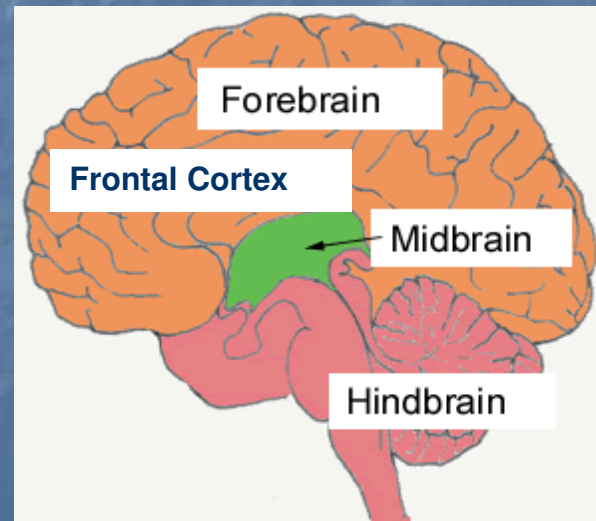
But not old enough to rent a  
car

- In some states, old enough to buy a gun but not alcohol
- Eve of Destruction (1965 anti-war protest song) *"You're old enough to kill but not for voting."*



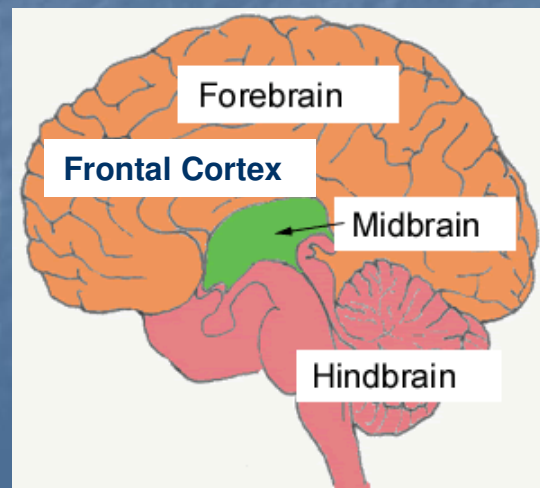
# Adolescent Brain

- Human Brain 90%– 95% of it's final size by age 6 - 7 years
- By age 12, it is fully grown
- But, it is not fully developed until mid 20's
- Female brain grows about 1-2 years faster during adolescence



# Functional MRI (fMRI) Studies

- In children, most active region is midbrain
- In adults, most active region is Frontal cortex (prefrontal cortex is much larger in the human brain than in any other animal)
- During adolescence, a gradual shift from midbrain to frontal cortex activity





# Changes in Brain Structure During Adolescence

- Brain starts to shrink!
- Brain cell (neurons) connections (synapses) formed during childhood start breaking down
- Process is called “pruning”
- Weak and obsolete connections are replaced with new connections that process information in a very different way

# Changes in Brain Functioning that Begin During Adolescence

- Gradual shift from concrete thinking to abstract reasoning
- Must rethink values and beliefs
- Most teachable period
  - Able to understand and apply abstract concepts that facilitate new learning
  - Able to absorb and assimilate vast amounts of new information

# Changes in Brain Functioning that Begin During Adolescence

UNFORTUNATELY, social maturity, impulse control, skills in managing emotions, and the ability to delay gratification develop at a much slower pace

AND, hormone levels surge

SO, we see increases in risk taking; decisions without consideration of long term consequences; and peer pressure influences

Ready --- Fire --- AIM



# Changes in Brain Functioning that Begin During Adolescence

Once this brain transformation is completed:

- Foresight (anticipation of what will happen if...) factors into decision making and hindsight (learn from mistakes) no longer the dominant factor
- Reprocess past decision with new brain
- "WHAT WAS I THINKING!?"
- Discover that parents made their decision with this new brain that we now use to make decision about our children

(remember Proverbs 22:6)

Sir Isaac Newton

Failed high school geometry (refused to do the problems according to the text book)

James Russell Lowell (poet and diplomat)

Suspended from Harvard for "complete indolence"

Later graduated and went on to graduate from Harvard Law School

Thomas Edison

Once sent home from school with a note from his teacher stating that he was "too stupid to learn"

Dr. Werner von Braun

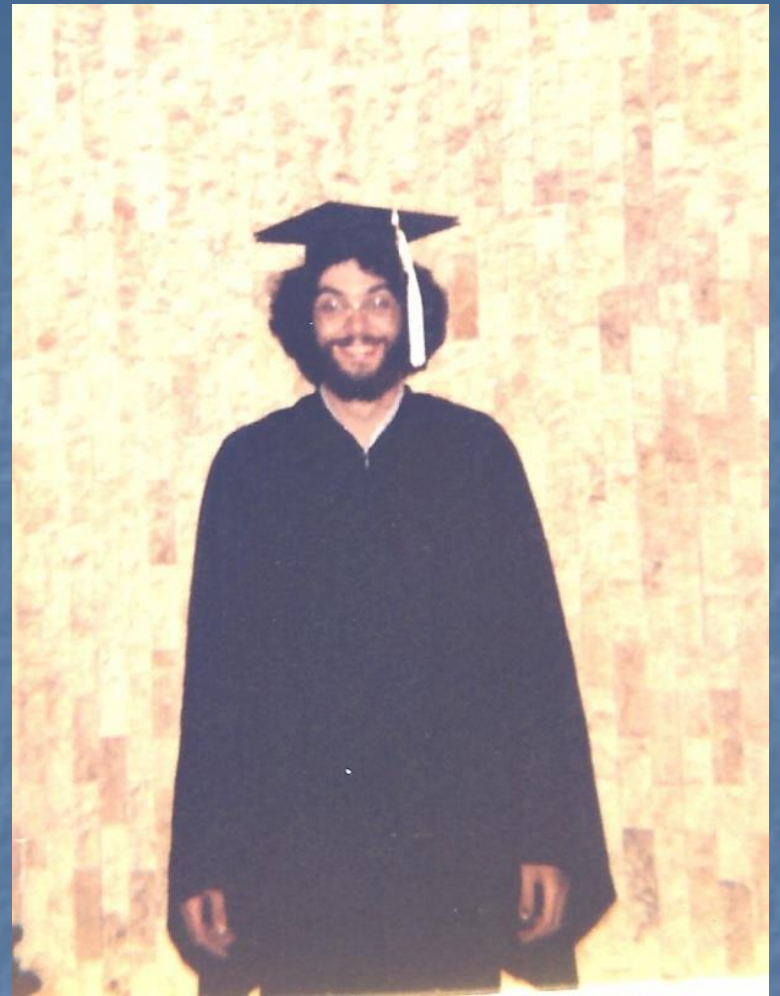
Failed math and physics in high school

Dr. William Berman

Placed on academic probation his entire freshman year of college



1969



1972





IT'S TIME YOU GOT YOUR OWN PLACE, SON.

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# PREPARATION FOR LAUNCH

Eagles Nest Metaphor

Average 5 ft. in diameter

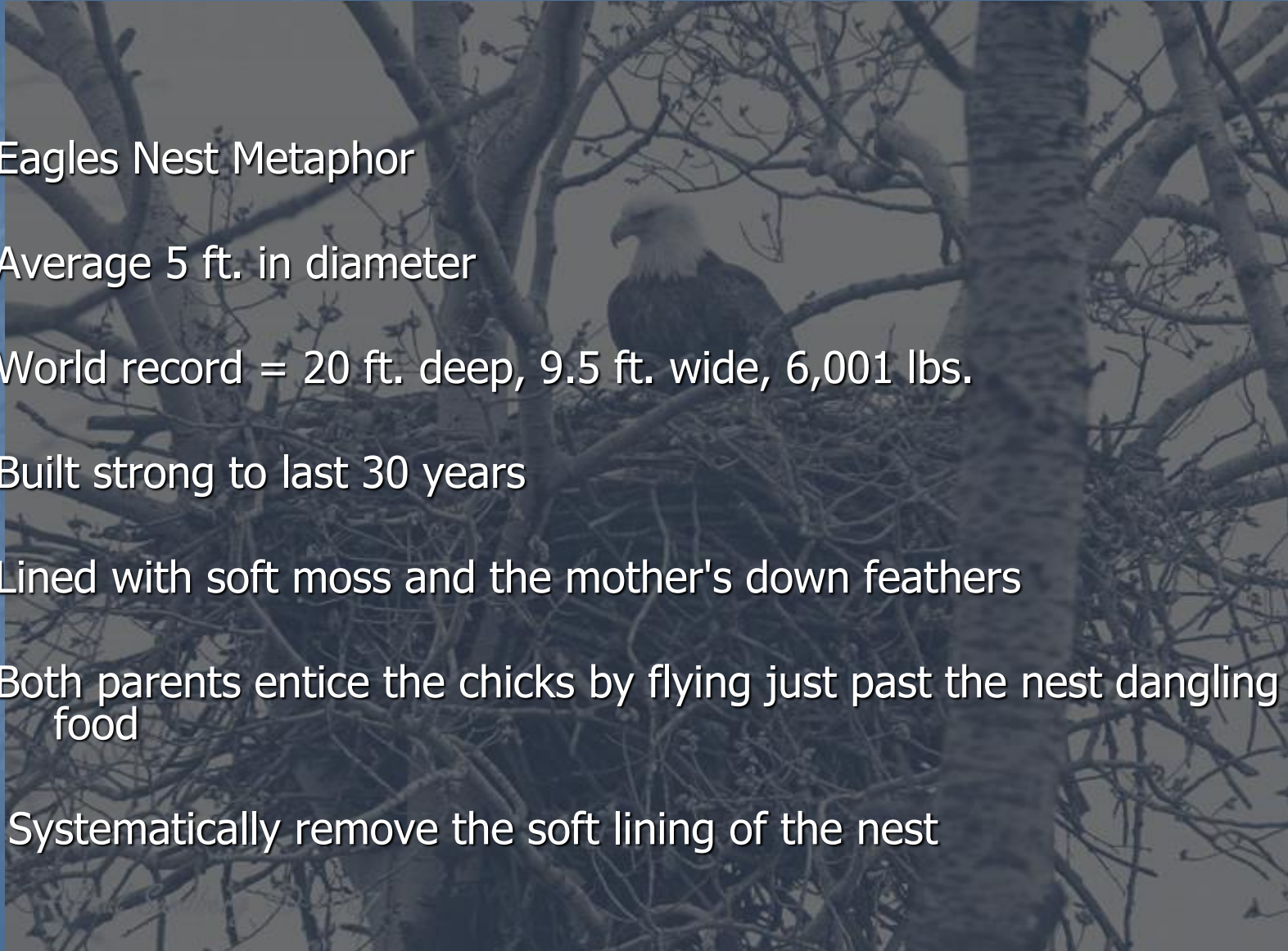
World record = 20 ft. deep, 9.5 ft. wide, 6,001 lbs.

Built strong to last 30 years

Lined with soft moss and the mother's down feathers

Both parents entice the chicks by flying just past the nest dangling  
food

Systematically remove the soft lining of the nest



# How to Train Your Teenager

1. Encourage and affirm
2. Teach and practice effective communication
  - Speaker-Listener technique
3. Time Out (stop the avalanche)
  - By mutual agreement
  - Use humor
4. Understand their struggle (They won't!)
  - Identity
  - Inadequacy
  - Conformity
  - Role confusion
  - Sexuality
  - Temptation
  - Approach-Avoidance about becoming a responsible adult (Peter Pan)
5. Tough Love
  - Very tough
  - Very loving



# How to Train you Teenager

6. Rules - Relationship = Rebellion
7. Exercise authority (benevolent dictatorship)
8. Accountability
9. Fairness  
Teen takes risk, parent suffers consequence?
10. **REMEMBER TO LAUNCH**