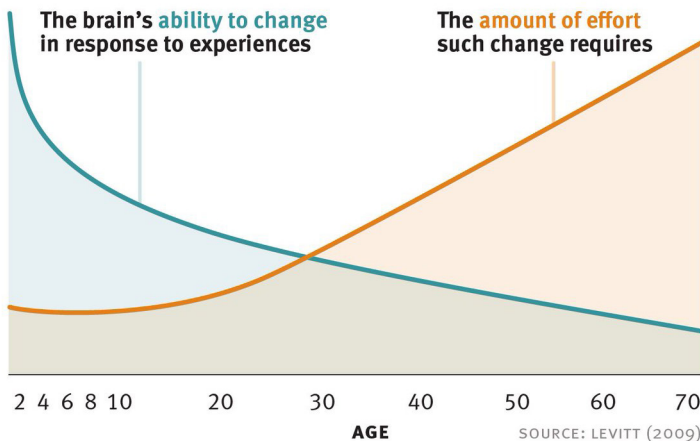


Families Facts & Stats

Early Experience Builds the Brain



Early experiences affect brain development and provide the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health. Genes provide the blueprint for growth, but the brain responds to the environment. In a responsive, care-giving family, the brain learns to be flexible and relaxed. In an unhealthy, dysfunctional environment, the brain adapts and learns to rigidly protect itself. These thoughts, feelings, and behaviors may take large amounts of effort to unlearn or change as an adult.

TOP SOURCES OF FAMILY PROBLEMS

1. Arguing all the time
2. Siblings fighting
3. Poor communication
4. Divorce or separation
5. Mental health illness

1 in 5

families includes an adult who lives with a mental illness.

46%

of adults in the U.S. reported having dealt with substance abuse in their families.

Healthy Families

- Share appreciation for each other often
- Spend quality time together regularly
- Learn healthy communication techniques
- Develop strong problem-solving skills
- Hold each other accountable

Research indicates that healthy family systems hold members accountable and provide support in times of need through open communication, positive problem-solving, and sharing quality time. They consistently show appreciation and voice feelings.

DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY RULES

Don't Trust
Don't Talk

Don't Feel
Don't Deal

Break unhealthy family rules and learn how to openly discuss problems. Consistently discuss and check-in about mood and emotional experiences.

Types of Unhealthy Systems

AUTHORITARIAN: Dictatorship with rigid rules, punishment, and very little positive validation.

SUBSTANCE USE: Inconsistent and unreliable environment that fosters fear, shame, and blame.

CONFLICT-DRIVEN: Stress-filled with constant arguing, button-pushing, threats, and retaliation.

VIOLENT: Volatile systems including traumatic verbal, sexual, or emotional abuse.

DETACHED: Lack of emotional warmth and affection with bottled feelings and low intimacy.