

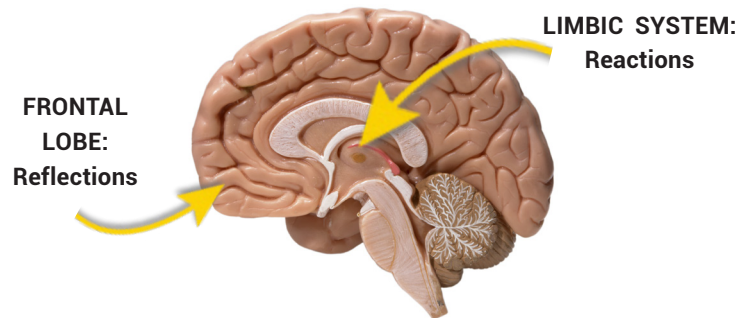


Impulse Control Definitions & Discussion Questions

Impulsivity: Behavior without adequate thought, the tendency to act with less forethought than do most individuals of equal ability and knowledge, or a predisposition toward rapid, unplanned reactions to internal or external stimuli without regard to the negative consequences of these reactions (Impulsivity.org).

Impulse Control: The ability to resist the temptation to speak on a thought, or act on a desire, until thinking through the consequences. This executive function skill takes the longest to fully mature because it is dependent on the development of our prefrontal cortex.

Impulse control involves the interaction between two different types of experiences: **reactions** and **reflections**. Our reactions relate to our natural instincts while our reflections relate to our ability to reflect on and process our current situation, evaluate potential consequences of certain behaviors, and act in accordance with our values.



Reactions occur in our Limbic System where the reward circuits encourage us to seek out novel, adult-like behavior. These circuits mature more rapidly. This may result in a period of time when we are prone to engaging in risky behavior before the slower to mature Frontal Lobe can appropriately weigh risks and rewards. Controlling the impulse to engage in behavior that may arrest brain development may seem quite difficult because the skills that prevent us from engaging in risky behavior are not yet fully developed.

Critical Thinking Section

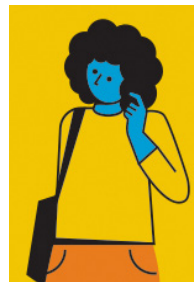
Students:

- On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the best, rate your impulse control skills.
- How well do you reflect and predict the consequences of your behavior?
- What situations are easy and what situations are more difficult to engage your impulse control skills in?
- Does being around certain peers affect your impulse control? Why?
- How does lack of sleep or food affect your self-control?
- When have you reacted impulsively and what were the consequences?
- What is your self-talk when you are trying to control an impulse? Does your self-talk increase or decrease your self-control?

POOR IMPULSE CONTROL:

Impulse control includes the ability to predict long-term consequences. Studies show that teens with poor impulse control may be more likely to become addicted to substances like alcohol or drugs. This is because people with poor impulse control tend to have a difficult time weighing the consequences of their actions and acting in accordance with them.

Making things worse, Frontal Lobe development can become impaired by substance use. So, the part of their brain in charge of impulse control becomes less active over time making it harder for young people to stop drug or alcohol use.



Staff & Family:

- How do you model good impulse control to your students or kids?
- When have you displayed poor impulse control in front of your students or kids?
- How do you teach young people to control their impulses or delay gratification?
- Has your self-control improved with age? Why or why not?
- What are your favorite ways to control your impulses?
- What triggers poor impulse control?
- When did you fail to control an impulse and face consequences? What do you wish you had done differently?