

# Strengthening Self-Regulation

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PYD Network  
Webinar  
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# Objectives

- PYD Network
- What is self-regulation?
- Introducing a co-regulation model
- Strategies to strengthen self-regulation
- Resources

# PYD Network: History & Background



NYS Partnership:  
1998 - 2012

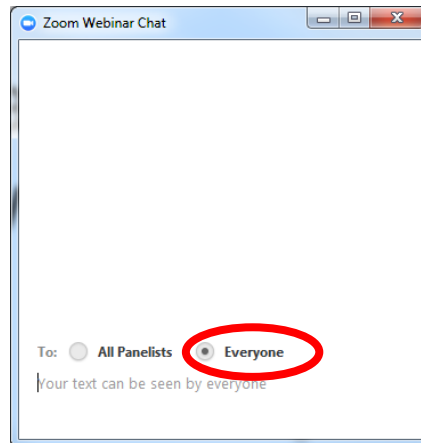
New PYD  
Curriculum 2015

New PYD  
Online  
Courses 2016-17



[http://www.actforyouth.net/youth\\_development/professionals/](http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/)

# Housekeeping

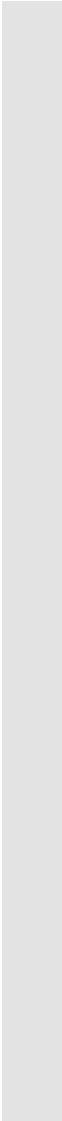



## Experiencing delays?

Try closing out the other programs running on your computer

## Questions?

Use chat function. Post to Everyone.



# Why talk about self-regulation?

Your interest? Your expectations?

Please chat them in...

## INSIDE THE TEENAGE BRAIN

Adolescents are prone to high-risk behaviour

### Prefrontal Cortex

Its functions include planning and reasoning; grows till 25 years

**Adults** Fully developed

**Teens** Immature, prone to high-risk behaviour

### Amygdala

Emotional core for passion, impulse, fear, aggression.

**Adults** Rely less on this, use prefrontal cortex more

**Teens** More impulsive



### Parietal Lobe

Responsible for touch, sight, language; grows till early 20s

**Adults** Fully developed

**Teens** Do not process information effectively

### Ventral Striatum

Reward centre, not fully developed in teens

**Adults** Fully developed

**Teens** Are more excited by reward than consequence

### Hippocampus

Hub of memory and learning; grows in teens

**Adults** Fully functional; loses neurons with age

**Teens** Tremendous learning curve

Adolescence - Emotional brain in the driver seat!

# Living in Adverse Environments



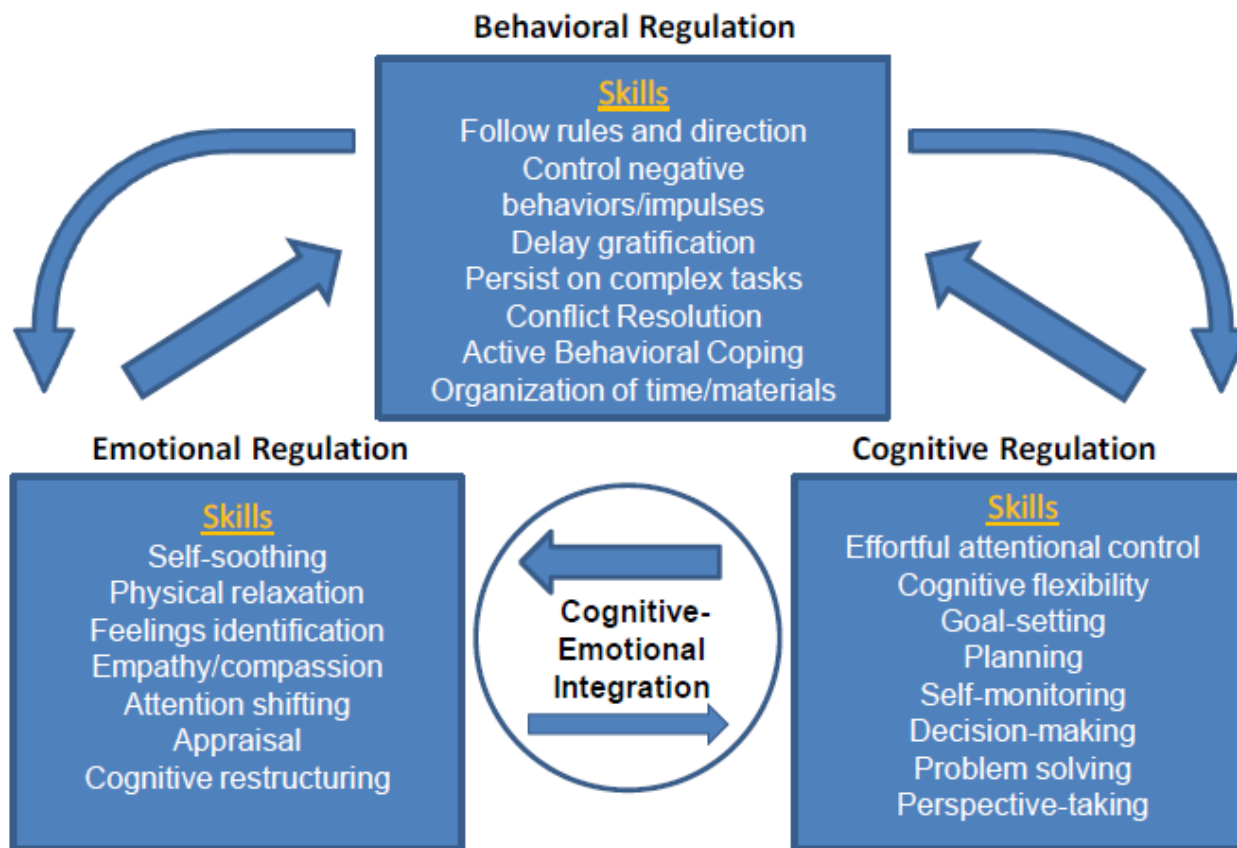
Working with young people from tough neighborhoods what do you see?

# Self- Regulation

Self-regulation can be defined as the act of managing thoughts and feelings to enable goal directed actions leading to success in school, relationships and work.

Foundational in promoting wellbeing  
across the lifespan





Source: OPRE Report 2015: Self-Regulation and Toxic Stress  
[https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/report\\_1\\_foundations\\_per\\_final\\_012715\\_submitted\\_508.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/report_1_foundations_per_final_012715_submitted_508.pdf)

# Self-Control

Walter Mischel: Marshmallow Experiment

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX\\_oyg614HQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX_oyg614HQ)



## Core findings

- Self-control is a great predictor for success later on in life (school, work, healthy lifestyle)
- Self-control can be taught

Walter Mischel. 2014

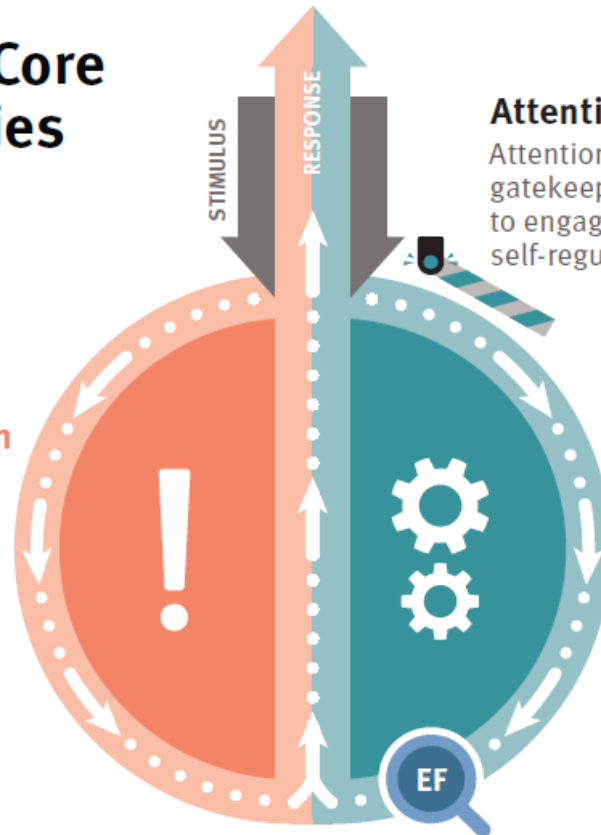
# How Our Core Capabilities Work

## Automatic Self-Regulation

Rapid, impulse-directed

“Fight or flight” response

Important for urgent situations



## Intentional Self-Regulation

Conscious, planful, proactive

Inhibits automatic responses

Important for achieving goals

## Attention

Attention is the critical gatekeeper that's needed to engage intentional self-regulation.

Essential capabilities such as planning, focus, and self-control are all orchestrated by the balance of two kinds of self-regulation mechanisms: **automatic** and **intentional**. The proper balance ensures appropriately responsive and productive actions.

REQUIRES

## Executive Function

- 1 Inhibitory Control
- 2 Working Memory
- 3 Mental Flexibility

<http://developingchild.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Building-Core-Capabilities-for-Life.pdf>

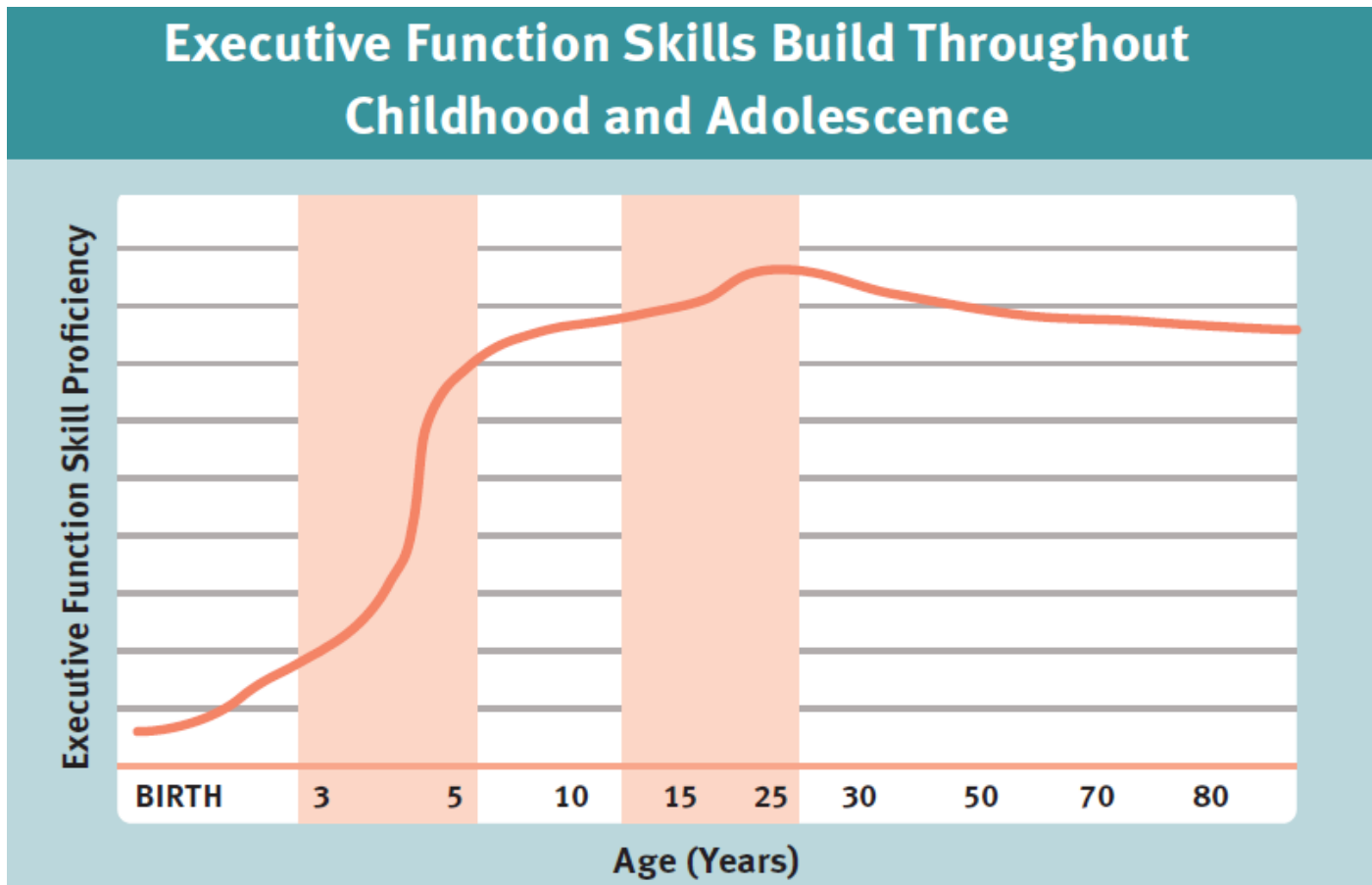
## Impact of chronic stress

Stressful environments trigger impulsive reactions and focus on the self and the present

- ✓ Lack of planning
- ✓ Lack of future orientation
- ✓ Poor decision making
- ✓ Compromises memory

Chronic stress overloads self-regulation, tips balance towards automatic self-regulation

# How Does Self-Regulation Develop?

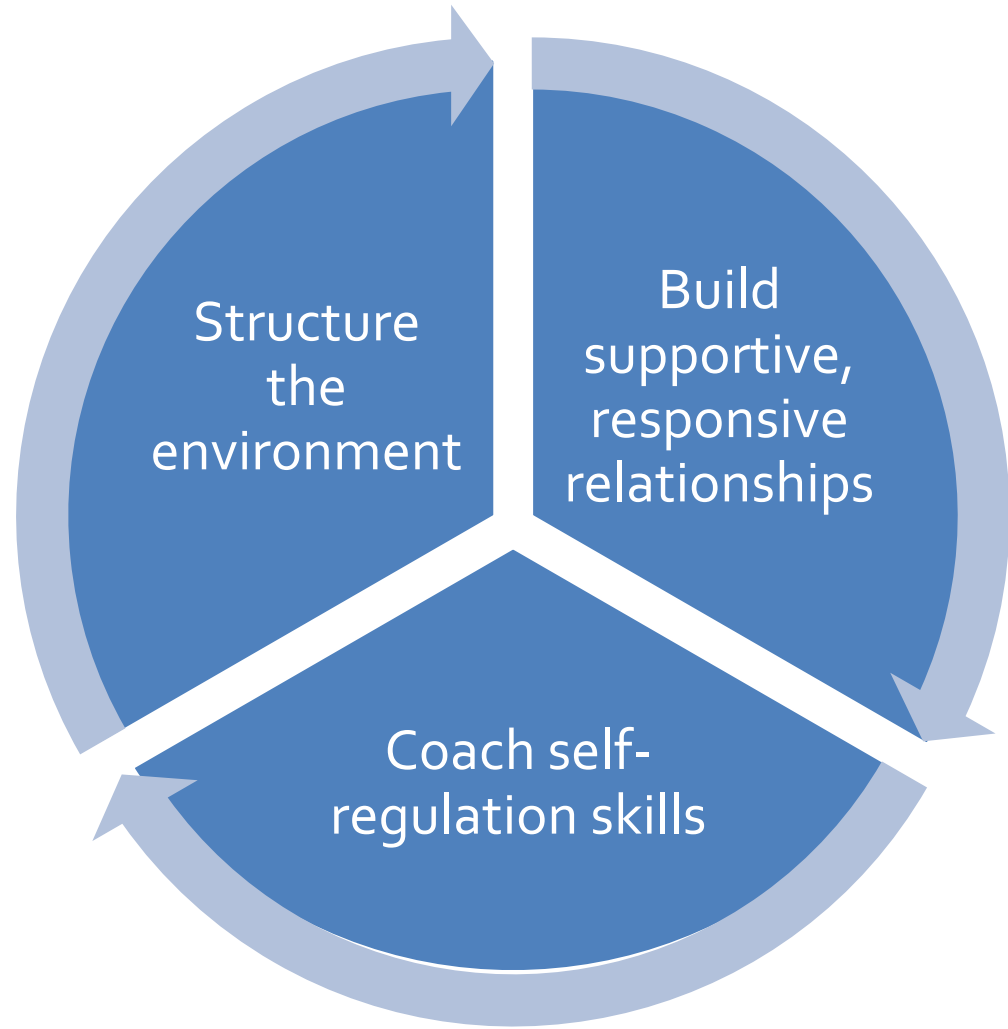


Weintraub, S. et al (2013)

# Factors Contributing to Self- Regulation



# Co-Regulation Model





# Let's flesh out this model together:

## Skills we need to coach

- Goal setting, problem-solving, stress management, time management
- Organization, planning

## Supportive, responsive relationships

- Support and empathy, responsive to needs, positive regard, model skills
- Validation of emotional experiences, persistent reliable presence

## Structure the environment

- Limit risk opportunities; clear expectations and consequences
- Time and space to relax and calm down

# Shortcomings of Current Practice

- Most interventions target youth, but do not involve caregivers such as teachers, parents, youth workers
- Cognitive and emotional regulation skills are not taught systematically with ongoing coaching, reinforcement, and support
- Greater emphasis on emotional regulation

Integrate social and emotional learning activities into your programming



[http://www.actforyouth.net/youth\\_development/professionals/sel/](http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/sel/)

Integrate Skill Building Activities

# Emotional Regulation Sample Strategies

**Use “Inside Out” movie to teach about emotions**

**Kid Talk**

**Stop and Stay Cool**

- Notice when you are about to lose control
- Tell yourself to stop and think
- Wrap your arms around yourself and give a big hug
- Practice breathing slowly while counting to five
- Regain control and return to the social activity

**“I” messages**

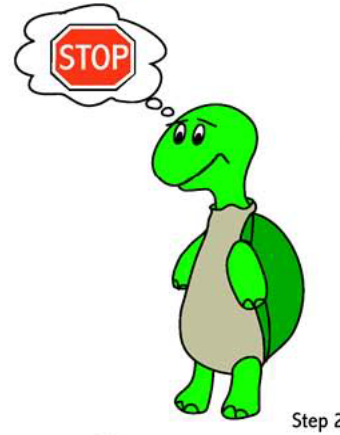
<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/15/09/brain-science-inside-out>

# Turtle Technique

**Recognize  
that you  
feel angry.**



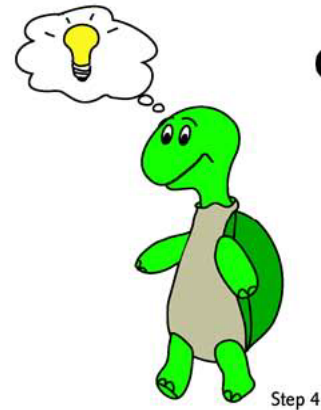
**“Think”  
Stop.**



**Go into shell.  
Take 3  
deep  
breathes.  
And think  
calm,  
coping  
thoughts.**



**Come out of  
shell  
when  
calm and  
thinking  
of a  
solution.**



# FEELING STRESSED?

**STOP!**

Count to 10,  
take deep  
breaths and try  
to calm down.

**THINK!**

Why do you  
feel like this?  
What has  
upset you?

**SHARE!**

Speak to a  
person you  
trust about the  
issue.

## S.T.A.R. POWER



**STOP**  
Breathe.



**THINK**  
How can I solve  
my problem?



**ACT**  
Talk it out.  
Work it out.



**REVIEW**  
How do I feel now?



# Resources for Older Youth



<http://youth.anxietybc.com/>

# Executive Functions

- **Working memory** governs our ability to retain and manipulate distinct pieces of information over short periods of time.
- **Mental flexibility** helps us to sustain or shift attention in response to different demands or to apply different rules in different settings.
- **Self-control** enables us to set priorities and resist impulsive actions or responses

Source: Harvard's Usable Knowledge: Executive Functions & Self-Regulation

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/executive-function/>



# Executive Function Activities

Provide experiences that promote emotional, social, cognitive, and physical development broadly, including strategies

- Reduce stress
- Foster social connections
- Incorporate vigorous physical exercise
- Increase complexity of skills step-by-step (scaffolding)
- Include repeated practice over time

Activity Guides

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/activities-guide-enhancing-and-practicing-executive-function-skills-with-children-from-infancy-to-adolescence/>

Angela Duckworth, University of Pennsylvania - Self-Control Strategies for School-Age Chi...



## Process model of self-control



Duckworth, Gendler, & Gross 2014

NYC  
2015  
ops

MORE VIDEOS



1:57 / 20:28

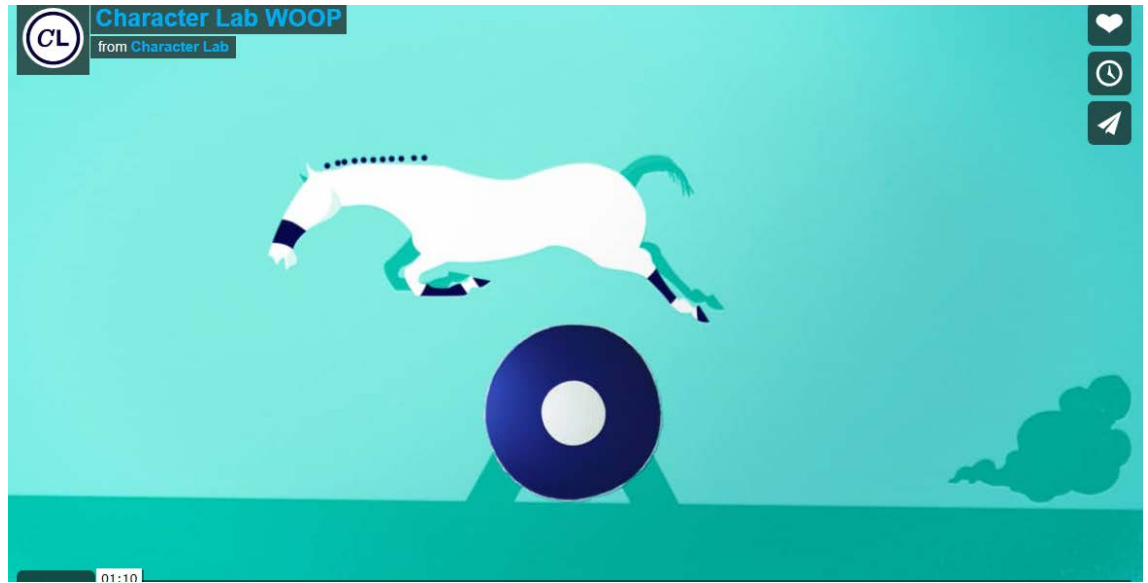


YouTube



NYU Character Lab: Self-Control <https://www.characterlab.org/self-control/>

Try WOOP



NYU Character Lab

<https://www.characterlab.org/woop>

# WOOP Student Activity

Name \_\_\_\_\_

WOOP helps people do the things they really want to do.

# W

## WISH

What is an important wish that you want to accomplish? Your wish should be challenging but feasible.

My wish:

# O

## OUTCOME

What will be the best result from accomplishing your wish? How will you feel?  
Pause and really imagine the outcome.

Best outcome:

# O

## OBSTACLE

What is the main obstacle inside you that might prevent you from accomplishing your wish?  
Pause and really imagine the obstacle.

My obstacle:

# P

## PLAN

What's an effective action to tackle the obstacle? Make a when-then plan.

When:

Then I will:  
(my action)



Questions? Comments?

# References and Resources

Weintraub, S. et al. (2013). NIH toolbox for the assessment of neurological and behavioral function: Cognition assessment using the NIH Toolbox. *Neurology*, 80 (11, suppl.3), S54-64.

## **Harvard's Usable Knowledge:**

- Fun and (Brain) Games

<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/16/08/fun-and-brain-games>

- Executive Functions & Self-Regulation

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/executive-function/>

- Tools for Success

<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/16/03/tools-success>

## **ACF. Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation (OPRE):**

- Toxic Stress and Self-Regulations Reports

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/toxic-stress-and-self-regulation-reports>

# Resources

## ACT for Youth:

- Professional Development for Youth Workers

[http://www.actforyouth.net/youth\\_development/professionals/](http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/)

- Social and Emotional Learning Toolkit

[http://www.actforyouth.net/youth\\_development/professionals/sel/](http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/sel/)

## Readings

Walter Mischel. 2014. **The Marshmallow Test**. NY: Little, Brown and Company

Laurence Steinberg. 2015. **Age of Opportunity**. Boston: Mariner Books. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt



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