



Understanding what children are experiencing and how to help

Transition is a Process, Not an Event

“All beginnings are hard” Chaim Potok

- Starts now and expect it to take time
- Children may be excited one day and anxious the next
- Expect tiredness, emotional ups and downs and uncertainty
- Growth in the journey



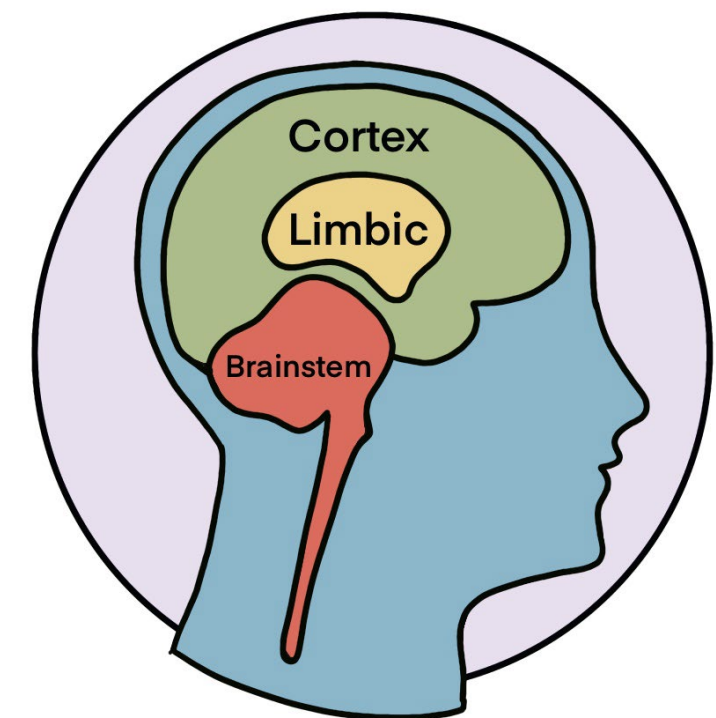
What Children Are Really Worried About

- Friendships
- Belonging
- Getting lost
- Safety
- Fitting in

- Academic expectations

The Developing Adolescent Brain

- Emotions develop faster than reasoning skills
- The planning and rational decision-making parts are still developing
- Peer relationships become increasingly important
- Children need both independence and support
- They may need fewer solutions but more reassurance



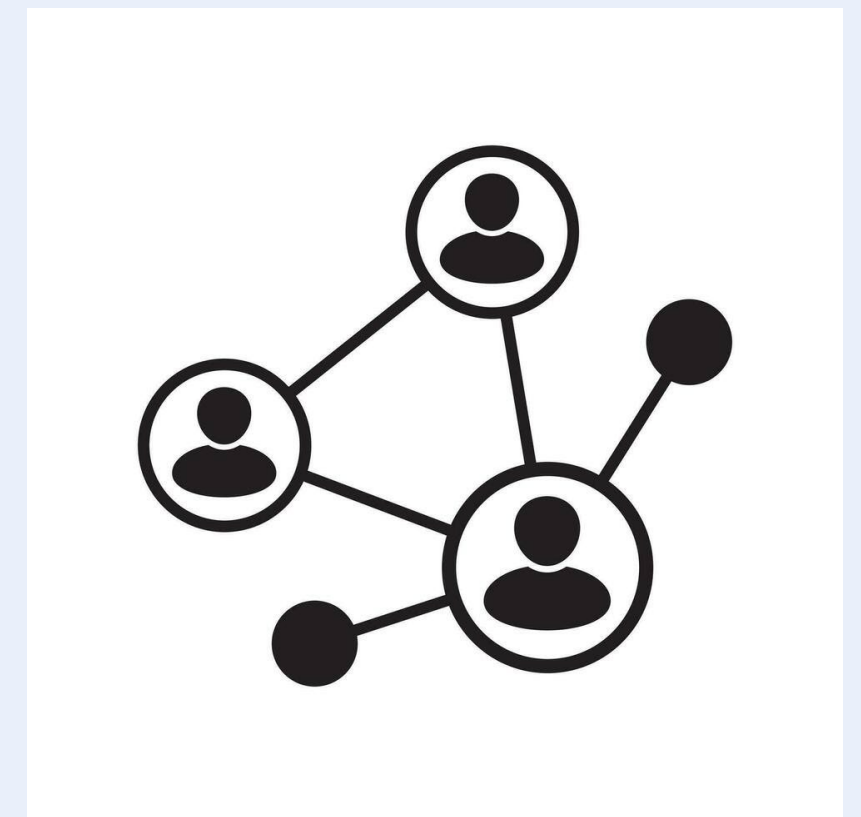
Expect a Dip Before Growth

- From oldest in primary to youngest in secondary
- Confidence may temporarily fall
- This is usually a normal part of adjustment
- Avoid interpreting every wobble as a problem



Connection is the Biggest Protective Factor

- Emotionally available adults make a significant difference
- Prioritise connection over interrogation
- Many children talk more while doing activities together





Communicate with your children

“Effective communication is 20% what you say and 80% how you listen.”

- Listen
- Attune with your child
- Be genuinely curious
- Be an anchor
- Share your own experiences
- Re-frame - first impressions / New beginnings
- Encourage them to try new things
- “Name it to tame it”



What Parents Can Do

- Build independence
- Confidence comes from doing
- Maintain routines – creates security
- Protect sleep
- Encourage effort over outcomes
- Allow manageable problem-solving

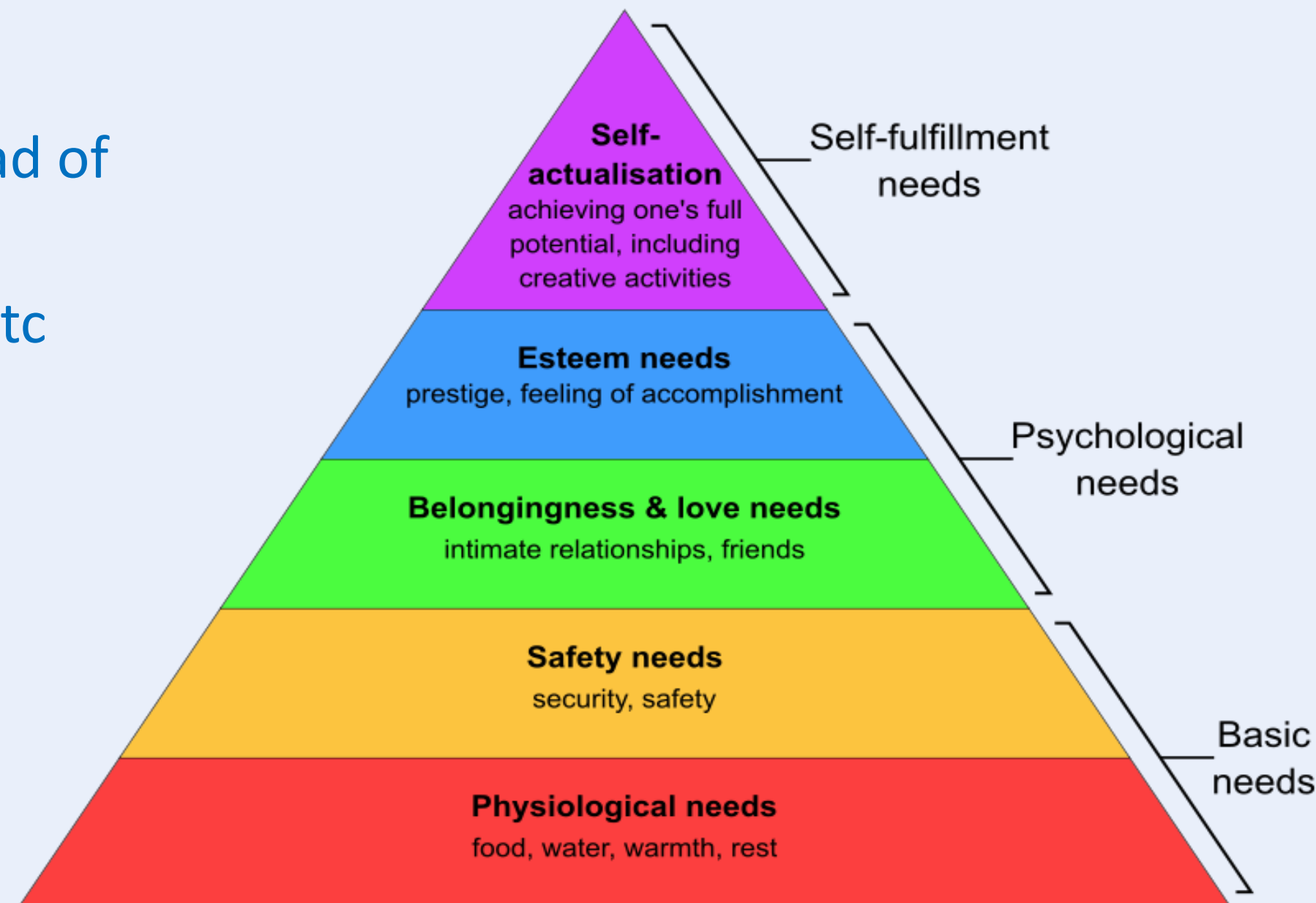


What Parents Should Avoid

- Dismissing worries
- Solving every problem immediately – develops confidence and self-efficacy
- Transferring your own anxiety
- Expecting instant friendship success

Friendships

- Friendships change
- Navigating Healthy V's Unhealthy Friendships
- Practical opportunities to build friendship skills ahead of starting and during Yr7
- Navigating the noise - meet ups, whatsApp groups etc
- Out of school friendships
- Social pressures
- Who do they want to be?

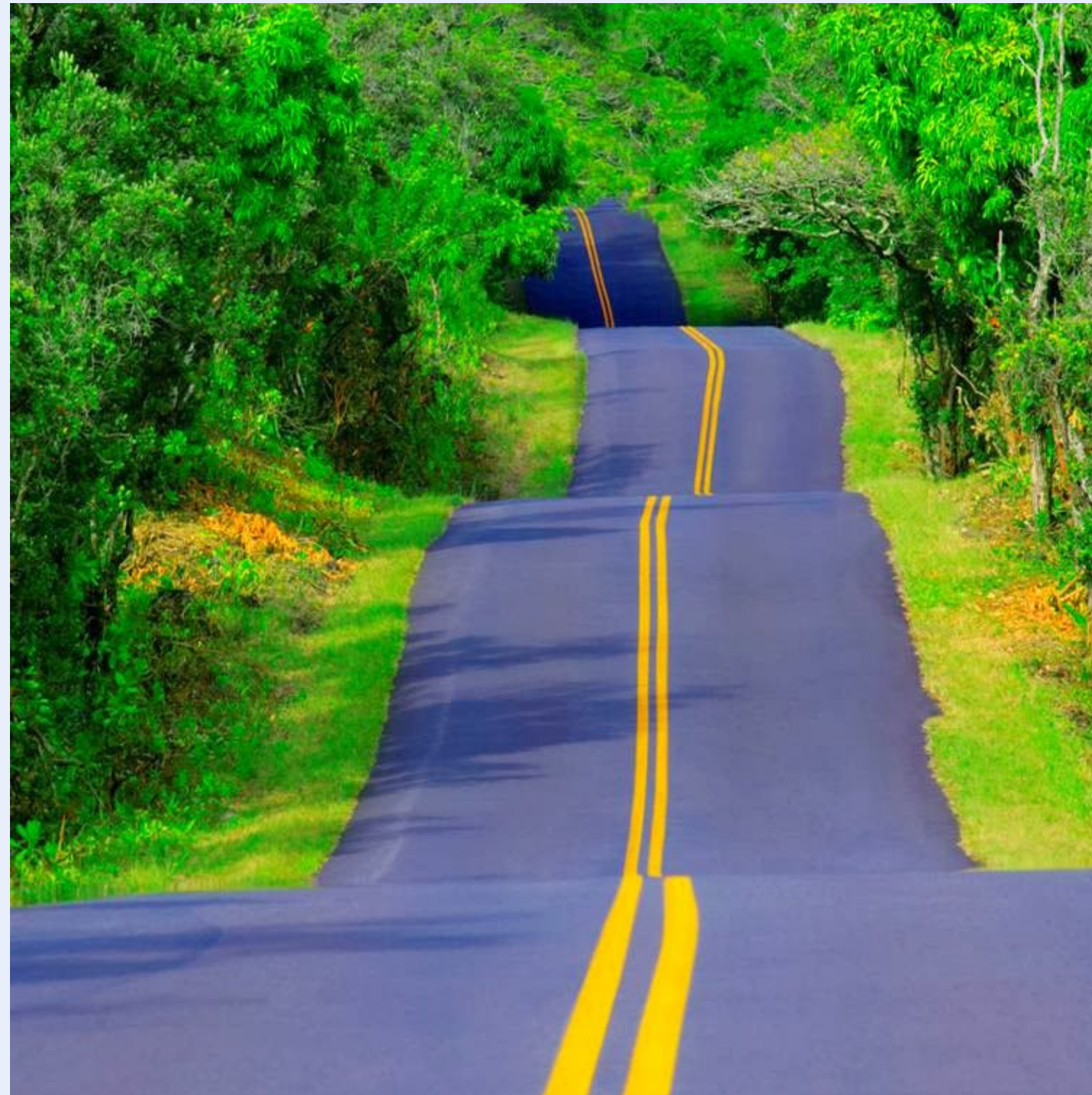




Be Prepared

- Don't organise them, help them organise! – Coloured files, printed timetables, reminders
Navigate School Systems
- Good habits – homework, screen time, processing day Food / Snacks
- Get a watch
- Period bags / deodorant Maintain clubs / extra curricular activities
- Connect with older children at School - clubs / buddies etc
- Phones – mega groups – social plans - social skills
- Independent travelling

Whose Journey is it?





A Key Message About Resilience

- Our role is not to remove every challenge
- Our role is to help children believe they can handle challenges
- Confidence grows through overcoming manageable difficulties
- 'I believe you can do hard things, and I'll be here alongside you while you do them.'



Useful Websites

Streetwise - Streetwisegb.org

Heads Up Kids – headsupkids.org.uk

Starting secondary school - BBC Bitesize

Childrens mental health and wellbeing in schools, Anna Freud Centre

How Parents Can Help With Secondary School Transition -

YoungMinds Preparing for the move - Parentkind

[Internet-Matters-Booklet-Moving-Up-To-SecondarySchool.pdf](#)

(internetmatters.org) Teaching Your Child about Internet & Online Safety -

NSPCC

Advice for parents and carers (anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)