

Teacher briefing 1

The 2017 Educating with Neuroscience Conference



Three Main points

The 2017 Educating with Neuroscience Conference held in Sydney on August 11 had some high and low points. Some presenters didn't understand the audience (teachers) at all, dished out research from 1994 and were hell bent on self-promotion. Others provided practical, well researched advice and up-to-date information.

Below are three main points from the conference that **we** considered most valuable to teachers.

1. **The adolescent brain amplifies the stress associated with certain situations** which then heavily impacts on their learning abilities. Presenter Devon Barnes did a good job here. According to research adults usually believe they experience more stress than young people. This is not the case.

The brains of young people are more likely to respond to stress with the 'Flight or fight' mechanism as they view stress as being more threatening and impossible to control. This perhaps explains why adolescents run away or hide in their room more often than adults. See

<http://www.generationnext.com.au/2012/05/stress-and-the-mind-of-young-people/>

2. **That what you eat can delay cognitive decline by up to five years.** Current research on gut bacteria says that certain bugs in the gut assist brain function. This research has implications for school canteens and packed lunches everywhere. For a scientific paper, see

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3788166/>

3. **That physical exercise encourages nerve cells to bind** – especially in the hippocampus which is responsible for memory. The presenter Cheryl Chia referred to the book '*Spark: The revolutionary new science of exercise and the brain*' by John Ratey. We at Mindz rate this book very highly.

The research with schools in the USA really reinforce what Chia had to say and - how sweat producing exercise – not just simple arm waving – can produce great results for the body and the mind.

