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| **Understanding the Teenage Brain - Behaviours** | |
| **Adolescent brain and behaviour**  **changes (copingskills4kids.net)** | **Additional stressors as a result of early childhood experience (Jane Mitchell )** |
| Young person has age appropriate development across Social, Emotional, Cognitive and Physical domains. They are able to manage and accommodate the changes happening to them with support of family and friends. | Young person is likely to have reduced functioning in Social, Emotional and Cognitive domains, and be operating at significantly younger developmental level. This greatly reduces the young person’s ability to cope with the changes that are happening. |
| “I’m not a child, and not yet an adult, so who am I?” This is a core identity task which is scary and can be observed as the young person | The essential tension in this crisis of adolescence is made much more  difficult if you do not have a solid sense of yourself as part of a family.  Young people who have suffered |

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| oscillates between dependence and independence. | trauma are not likely to be operating from knowledge of a family going back generations with links to appearance and skills. (Kinship carers or special guardians may be an exception, however the enhanced knowledge may bring its own set of difficulties) Key aspects of how they view themselves and their core identity are unknown or damaging. |
| Turning away from parents and towards peers | Attempts to engage with peers can be difficult as social skills may not be developed. Younger behaviour patterns may frustrate and sabotage friendships.  Misunderstanding of social cues and facial expression add to difficulties. Young person is vulnerable to bullying or exploitation to gain entry to a social circle. |
| Being more critical of myself and others | Existing poor self-esteem and self- loathing can escalate into self-harm. Doubts about birth parents feed in to this, as does doubt about whether current Carers really care, or are just doing their job, because they have to. Disparagement of carers fuelled by stress and fear can lead to escalations. |
| Increased self-consciousness and sensitivity to stress | If the young person’s system is already on cortisol overload, the  sensitivity to stress will be  heightened. Capacity to regulate or accept regulation will be massively reduced. |
| Intense need to belong and be accepted by others | Poor social and emotional functioning leads to extreme vulnerability. This may be further exacerbated by poor self-esteem, self-loathing and feelings of being unworthy of being included or loved. |
| Having mixed feelings of linking and disliking the same person | These feelings of trust versus mistrust are at the heart of many families of young people with developmental trauma. Fear of rejection or abandonment can lead to rejecting  or violent behaviour |