

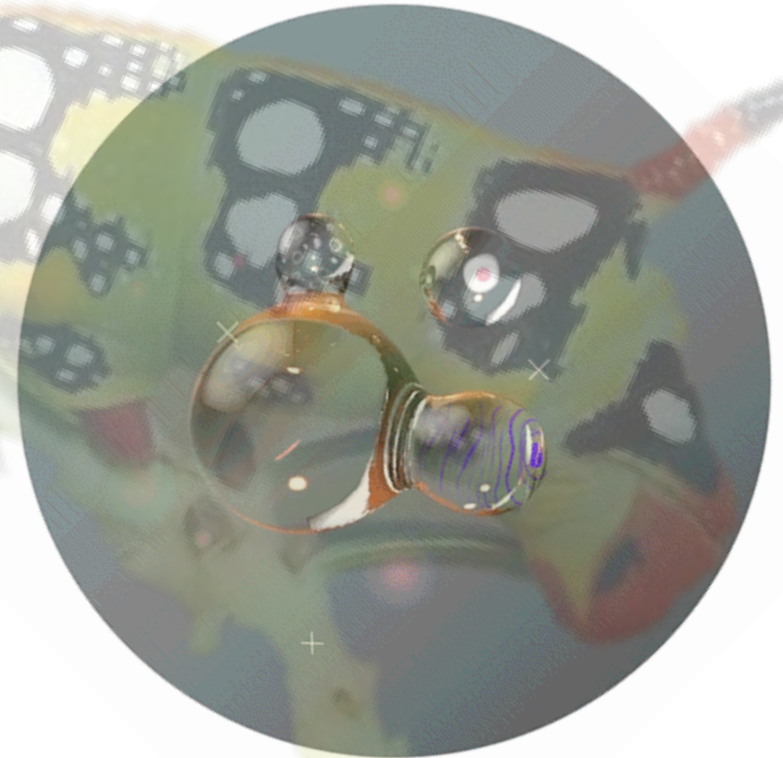
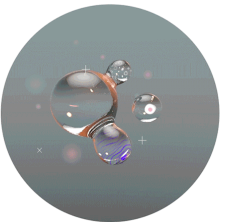
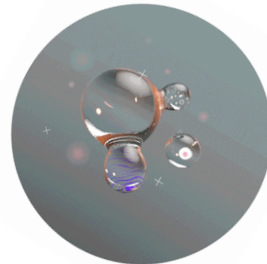
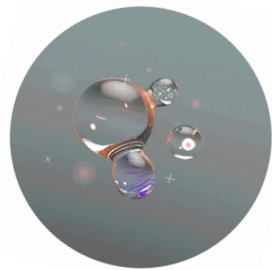
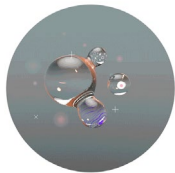
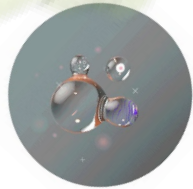
Beyond Adultism & Tokenism



Let's begin... here



IMAGINAL CELLS





Vulnerability

Excitement

Adventure

FEAR

Anxiety

Frustration

Discovery





What Happens When the Caterpillar and Its Cells are STRESSED?



Stress Leads to Developmental Problems (Or Worse)

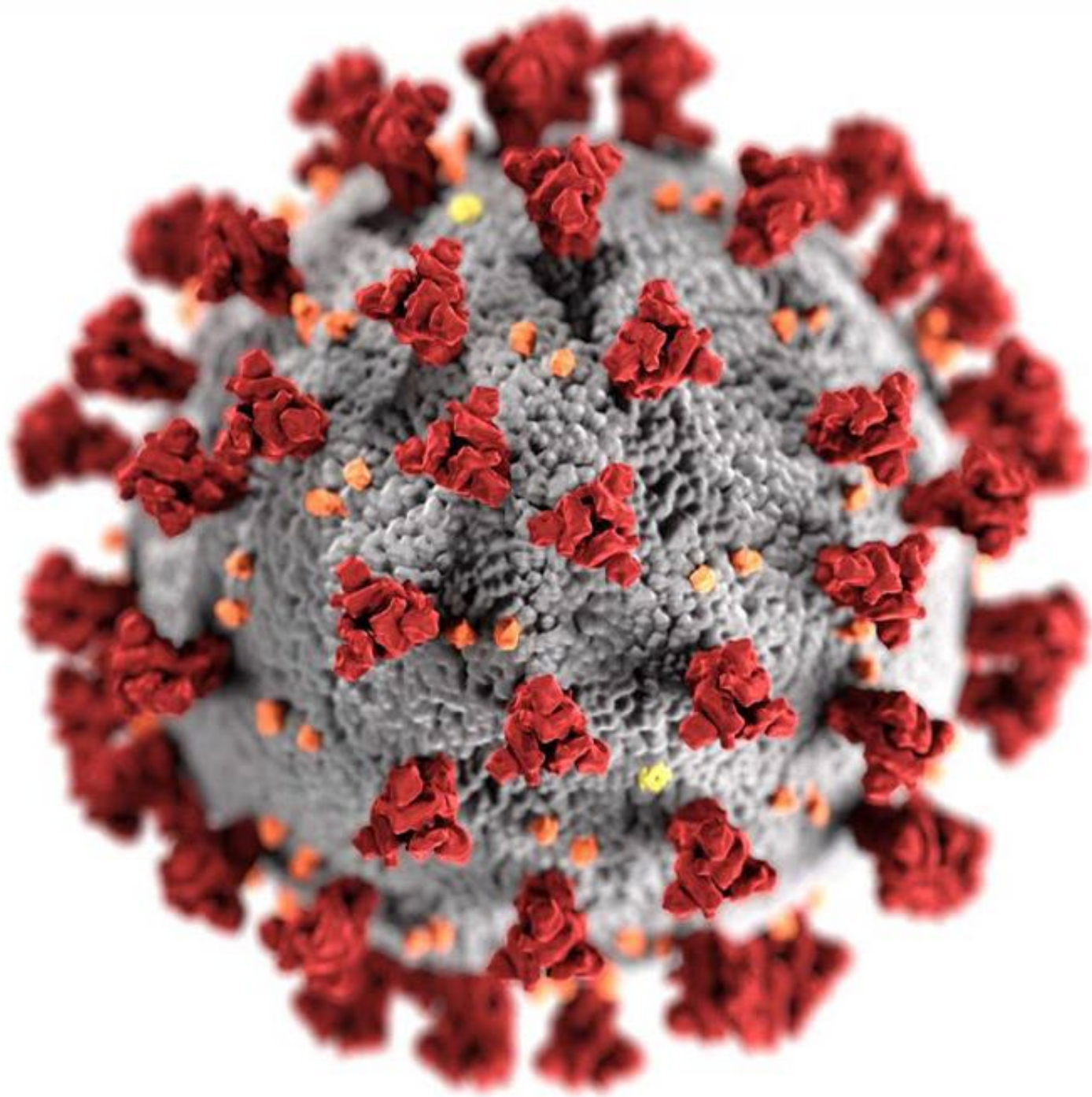


- Caterpillar doesn't fully "die" before beginning transformation
- Transformation is halted from imbalance of necessary chemicals
- Butterfly emerges too soon
- Butterfly emerges too late
- Cocoon doesn't attach

CHRONIC STRESS...

CHRONIC TRAUMA...





GENERATION

C





Yet Somehow, Youth are BEING LEADERS!





Seeing Youth as They Are

*Misconceptions
and Realities*





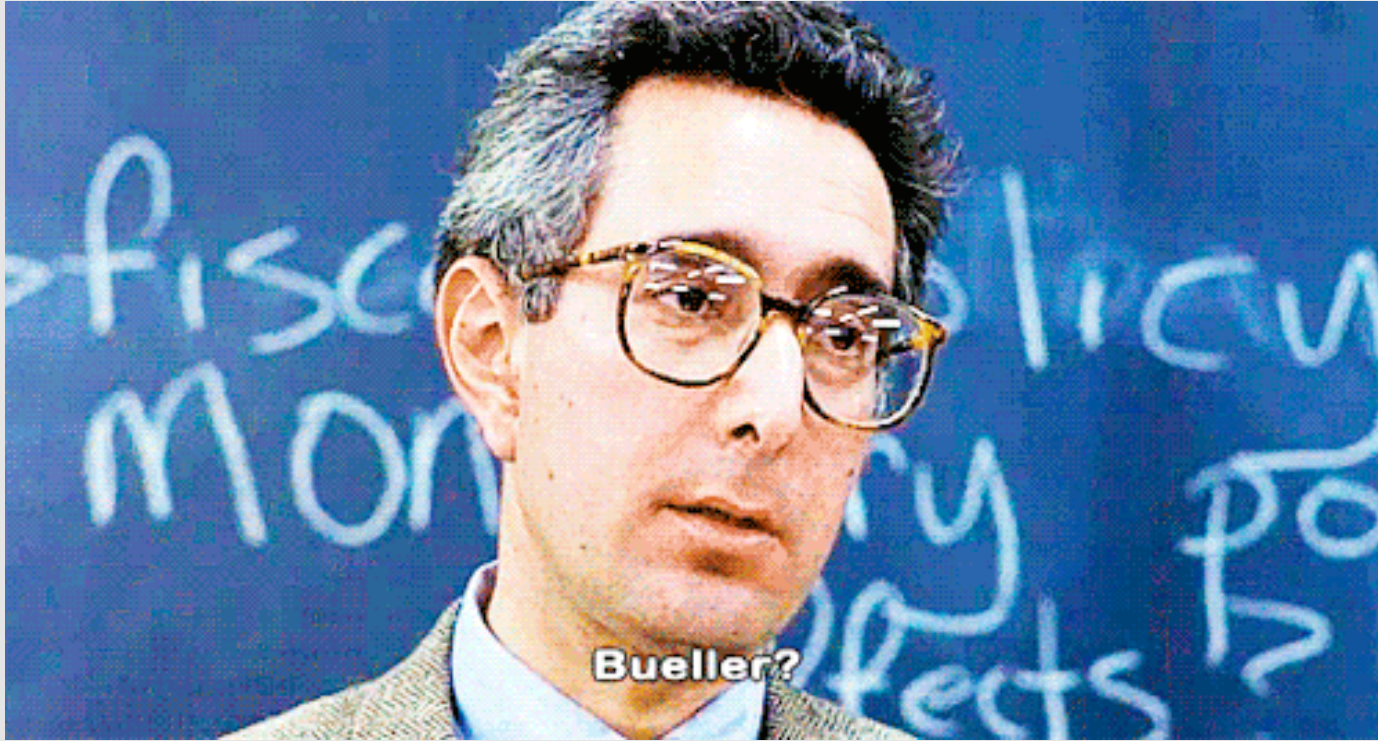
What Is a Misconception?

A view or opinion that is incorrect because it is based on faulty thinking or understanding

“Youth Have Short Attention Spans”

- Reason: Adults expect youth to pay attention to information that isn't relevant or interesting.
- Truth: Most young people will focus on anything that is relevant, interesting or exciting.





“Youth Only Listen to Youth”

- Reason: This is a great excuse for adults to avoid trying (and then blame the youth).
- Truth: Young people can spot authenticity in *anyone*, and they'll respond to it.



“Youth Only Care About Themselves”

- **Reason: Developmentally, we ARE wired to think of ourselves more when we are young**
- **Truth: This does NOT mean youth don't have empathy, compassion, and altruism. In fact they often display more than adults.**

“Youth Don’t Understand Complex Issues”

- Reason: Adults often don’t give young people the opportunity to engage with complex issues.
- Truth: Leadership organizations have engaged tens of thousands of youth in policy work for over 20 years.



An older man with white hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, is looking towards a younger man on the right. The younger man has dark hair and is wearing a blue denim shirt over a white t-shirt. They are both looking off-camera to the right. Two thought bubbles are positioned between them, each containing text. The top bubble is connected to the older man, and the bottom bubble is connected to the younger man. The background is a plain, light gray.

Spoiled, entitled kid..!

Spoiled, entitled Boomer..!

The “Generation Gap” Widens into a Canyon..

“Adults have to be
‘youthy’ to engage youth”

Never mind the reasons.
Just DON'T DO IT!

Which brings us to...
Adultism





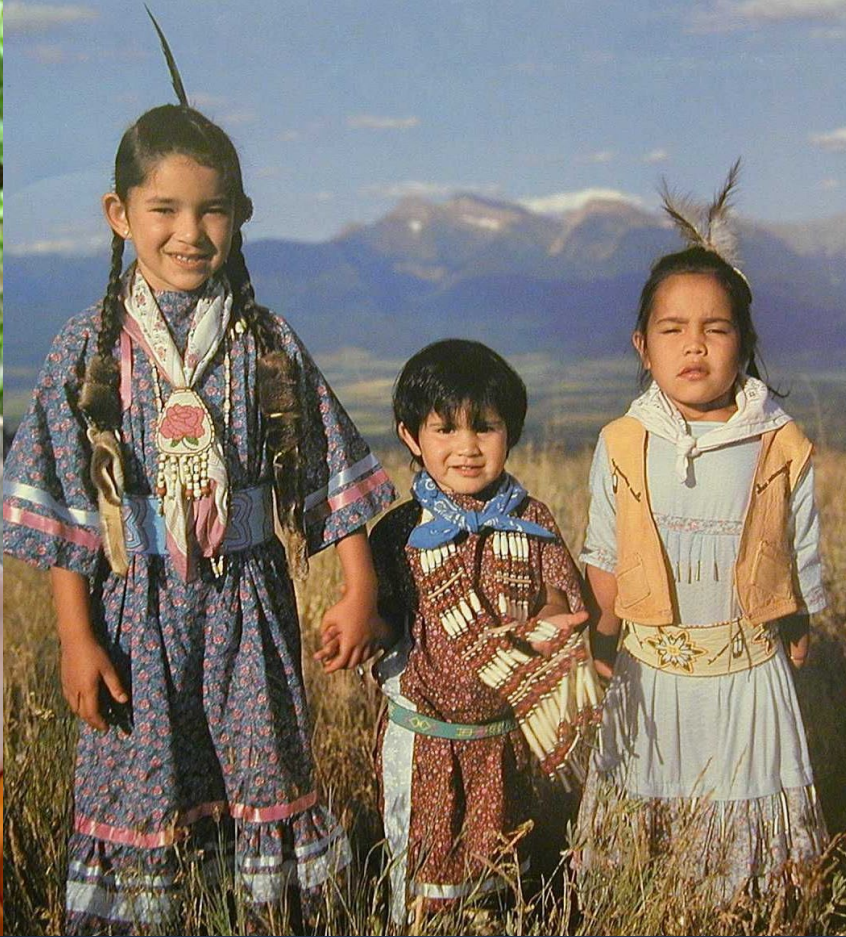
What is Adultism?

“Behaviors and attitudes based on the assumption that adults are *better* than young people, and are entitled to act on them without their *agreement or consent*”

A Piece of Context



- **Young people develop in stages**
- **Some adult control is necessary at every stage**
- **As a youth grows, adult control relaxes in a deliberate way**



Culture plays a role

Different cultures = different beliefs and practices



- Institutions and crises play a role
- Some situations require elevated levels of control without permission
- Disasters, military, survival in harsh conditions, etc.



ALONG THE LINE

- We'll see a few statements
- I invite you to stand along the imaginary line on the wall according to your responses
- This is NOT an evaluation or value judgment



**In my organization, youth are deeply involved in creating our
Vision and Mission.**



ALL the time

SOME of the time

Not much of the time

Hardly ever

Are you kidding me??

In my organization, youth have decision-making power about resources (including money and staffing).

←—————→

ALL the time **SOME of the time** **Not much of the time** **Hardly ever** **Are you kidding me??**

When we involve young people in our meetings, we meet on their own turf.



ALL the time

SOME of the time

Not much of the time

Hardly ever

Are you kidding me??

In my organization, we schedule our meetings specifically to include young people's attendance.

←—————→

ALL the time **SOME of the time** **Not much of the time** **Hardly ever** **Are you kidding me??**

In meetings in my organization, young people and adults have civil, spirited disagreements that get resolved.



ALL the time

SOME of the time

Not much of the time

Hardly ever

Are you kidding me??

In my organization, young people's attire, communication styles, and ideas are respected and welcomed by all.

←—————→

ALL the time **SOME of the time** **Not much of the time** **Hardly ever** **Are you kidding me??**

In my organization, youth do their own research and wrote their own scripts for public presentations.



ALL the time

SOME of the time

Not much of the time

Hardly ever

Are you kidding me??

In my organization, we invite and welcome young people's ideas when these deviate from evidence-based practices.

←—————→

ALL the time **SOME of the time** **Not much of the time** **Hardly ever** **Are you kidding me??**

I know young people whose health has been negatively impacted by their level of economic stability.

←—————→

ALL the time **SOME of the time** **Not much of the time** **Hardly ever** **Are you kidding me??**



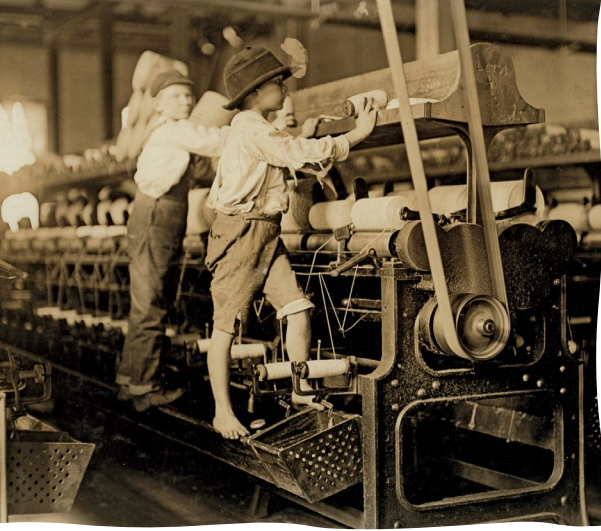
Emancipation Proclamation

Adulthood is Ultimately a Form of Dehumanizing



Slavery – We Can't NOT Talk About It

- Humans considered disposable commodities, especially children
- Families routinely separated
- No perceived intrinsic value, no rights, no perceived humanity



Child Labor



- **Prevalent in the USA through early 20th Century**
- **Only value of a child is their work**
- **Children as machines to generate profit (or to survive)**

A man in a dark suit, white shirt, and striped tie is pointing his right index finger towards a speech bubble. He has a slight, smug expression. The background is a rural landscape with green hills, trees, a white fence, and a gravel driveway. A large white speech bubble with a blue border is positioned in the upper right, containing the text "Yeah, but that was such a long time ago! It doesn't apply to today!". A second, smaller white speech bubble with a blue border is positioned below it, containing the text "Nope. Six generations is not a long time. The trauma and hurt is passed down.".

Yeah, but that was such a long time ago! It doesn't apply to today!

Nope. Six generations is not a long time. The trauma and hurt is passed down.

Corporal Punishment in Schools

- Default discipline across the USA until mid 20th Century
 - Could include anything from slaps to severe beatings
 - Often used older children to inflict punishment on younger
-

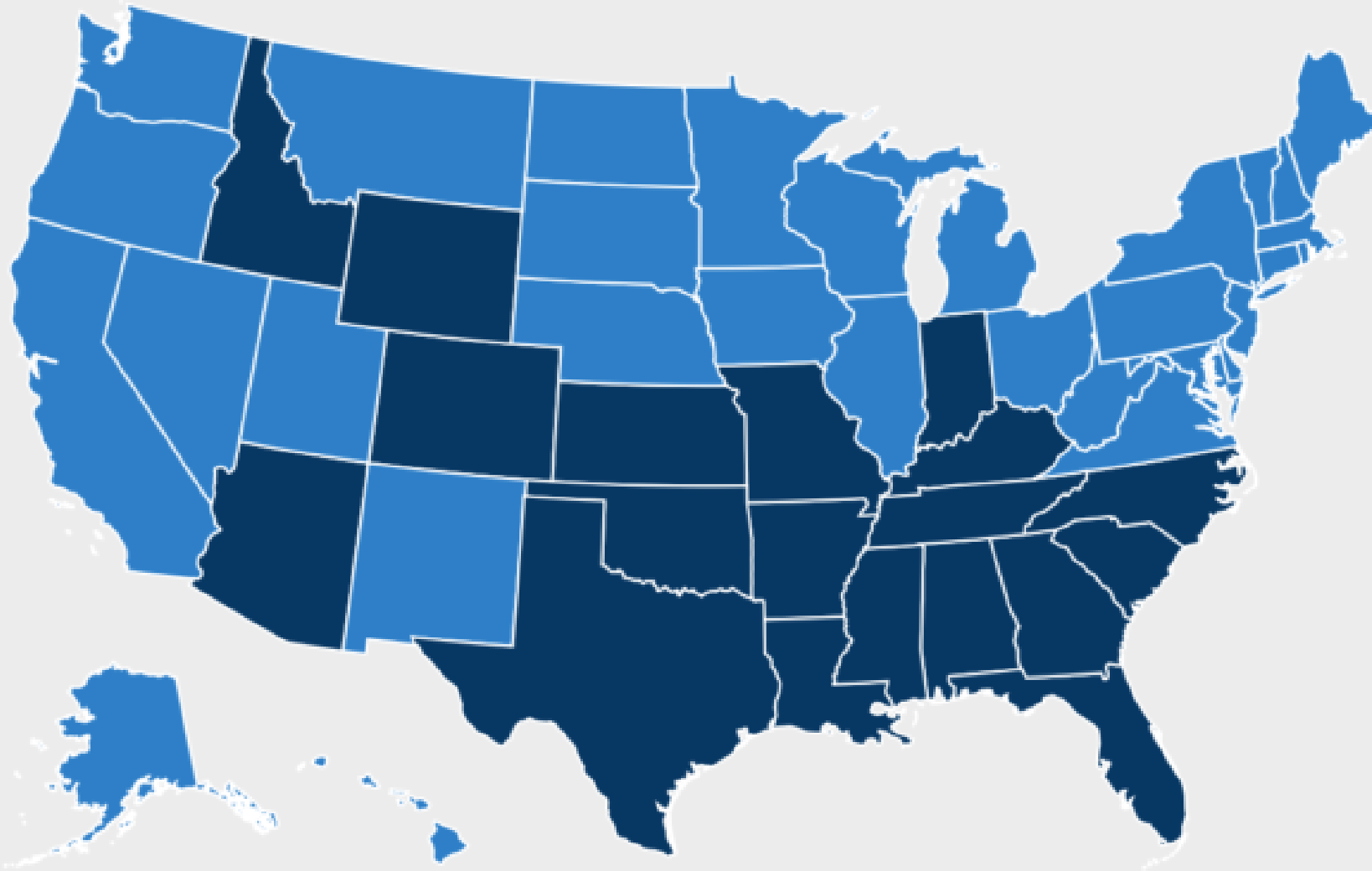




We've come a long way since those bad old days, thank goodness!

Nope. This country does a lot of things well, but we lag way behind other developed nations in this area..

Corporal Punishment in Schools is Legal in 19 States



Where Corporal Punishment is Used in 15% of Schools or More

Mississippi (57%)

Arkansas (53%)

Alabama (51%)

Oklahoma (33%)

Tennessee (25%)

Louisiana (22%)

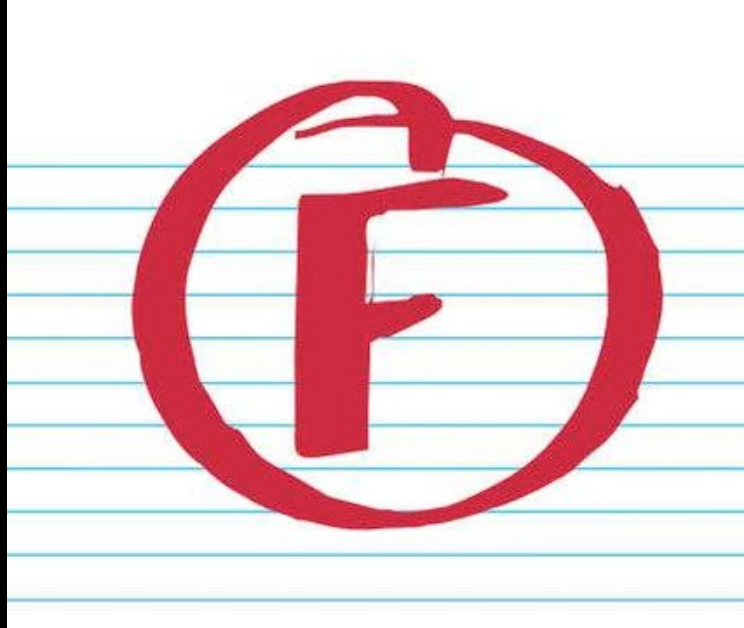
Texas (16%)

Georgia (15%)



It's Not About Single Incidents

It's about a PATTERN



- Adults deciding what youth can and cannot read
- Understaffing of counselors (overstaffing of police)
- Time-out, isolation, humiliation still common

Institutional Adultism: Schools

**What would happen if they
decided to yell back..?**





Adultism & Racism are Good Friends...

Braxton Schafer, 14. O’Gorman High School, Sioux Falls SD



- School policy on “neat and presentable” hair for students
- Given choice: Cut locks or leave school
- Never received complaints until this year (New school board)



A photograph of the Northwest High School building in Grand Island, NE. The building is a large, modern structure with a prominent entrance. The words "NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL" are visible on the building's facade in two locations. There are also decorative elements, including a large stylized logo on the right side of the building. The sky is clear and blue.

Same Goes for LGBTQ Discrimination

Northwest High School, Grand Island, NE

Viking Saga

NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL

GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

JUNE 2022

VOL. 59 ISSUE 8

More than just a family

EMELIA RICHLING
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

For Dramse siblings Konner, Courtney and Katelynn, the foundation of their lives have been rocked by moving through different homes, but through it all, the hope they will be together one day inspired them until their recent adoption several weeks ago.

CONTINUED ON PG. 6-7

Photo courtesy of the Dramse family
Dana, Courtney, Katelynn, Konner and Michelle Dramse stand together with the judge after finalizing their adoption on March 29.



History of Pride

LGBTQIA+ activists pushed for their rights for years, giving the community a rich history.



PAGE 4

FBLA Goes National

After two years of SLC being virtual, FBLA members finally went to state, then nationals.



PAGE 4

Terrific Trap

Trapshooting athletes explain why trap is such a beloved sport.



PAGE 10

Golden Opportunity

Sophomore Ella Lorenz won a national gold key for her sculpture in the Scholastics competition.



PAGE 11

When this issue came out:

- Student paper shut down
- School demanded apology from students
- Entire journalism program shut down



Adulthood in “Prevention”

- Scared Straight™ and other fear-based programs
- Emphasizing only consequences but not motives and conditions
- “Giving a tough message” as an excuse to bully and belittle



**Governing Boards of Prevention Programs
WITHOUT YOUTH AT THE TABLE**



Youth Events that are All Rah-Rah but Create No Lasting *Change*

**For every condition of INEQUITY, some group is preserving their
Power, Opportunities, Legitimacy, or Security**

That is PRIVILEGE



Maintaining privilege is in the NATURE of groups

Adultism can be inflicted in obvious ways...



Or in less obvious ways (Microaggression and *Gaslighting*)



“You’re being over-sensitive...”

“You’re preventing healing...”

“Oh, you’ll grow out of it..!”

“You aren’t being grateful for what you have...”

“You don’t love your (School, Country, Family, etc)...”

“You don’t really know what you’re talking about...”

“You’re just being angry (or crazy)...”

**What have we heard?
How can we respond?**



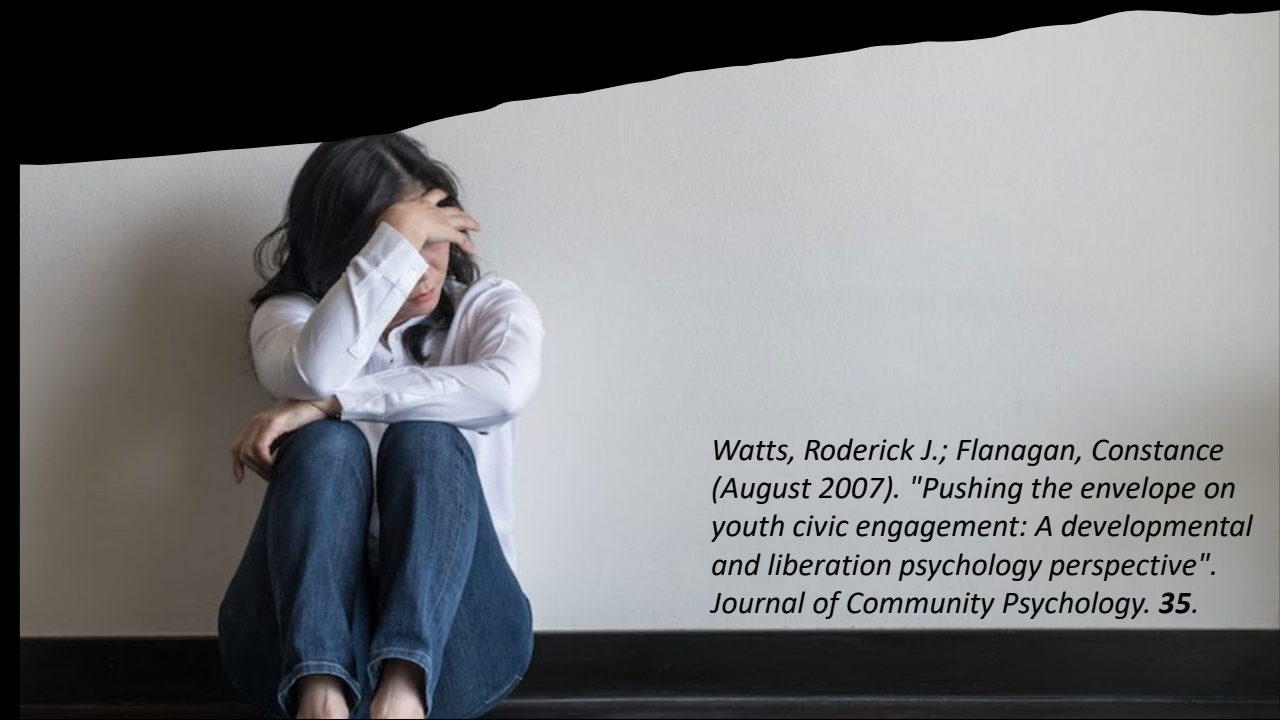
Effects of Adulthood on Young People

- **Diminished sense of autonomy and self-efficacy**
- **Negative, limited self-concept**
- **Mistrust of authority**

Watts, Roderick J.; Flanagan, Constance (August 2007). "Pushing the envelope on youth civic engagement: A developmental and liberation psychology perspective". Journal of Community Psychology. 35.

More Psychological and Social Effects of Adulthood

- Undermining of self-confidence
- Checking out and cynicism
- Fostering a sense of worthlessness and powerlessness



Watts, Roderick J.; Flanagan, Constance (August 2007). "Pushing the envelope on youth civic engagement: A developmental and liberation psychology perspective". Journal of Community Psychology. 35.



The Most Serious Effects of an Adultist Society

- Depression, self-harm, and suicidality
- Tendency to shut out civic engagement or blindly follow (cultism)
- *Belief that one is fundamentally unworthy and incapable of being loved*

A Reflection Exercise..



1. Would I talk to an adult this way?
2. Would I treat an adult this way?
3. Would I make this decision for an adult?
4. Would I have this expectation of an adult?
5. Would I look at an adult friend's problems this way?

What is Tokenism?

- Making only a *symbolic* effort to be inclusive in order to give the appearance of inclusion and equity.
- Giving the *appearance* of inclusion while reinforcing stereotypes or “safe” versions of under-represented groups.



How Do We Overcome Adulthood and Tokenism?

Call it out when we see it,
and when we do it

*In our organizations,
communities, and institutions*

Ask and listen to youth:
“How are we doing? How
can we do better?”

*Being vulnerable with young
people goes a long way*

Have youth make the
decisions *about* youth

*Nothing ABOUT them,
WITHOUT them*

Don't lead, don't dictate - COLLABORATE

Guidelines

and

Sinkholes





GUIDELINE

- **Listen without judgment**
- **Try to listen twice as much as you talk to a young person**
- **Don't just hear, but *concentrate***

SINKHOLE

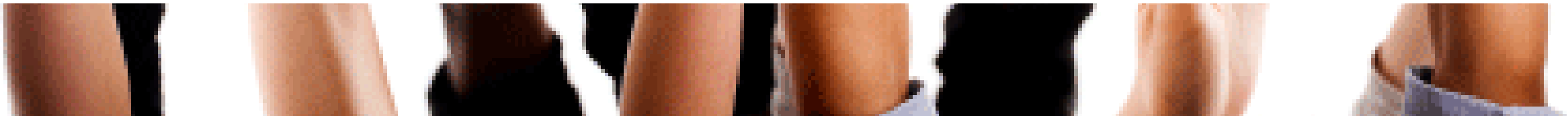
- “Without judgment” means withholding judgment, not suppressing it
- “Uh huh” is not listening
- Listening while using your device isn’t listening



GUIDELINE



Ask questions and be genuinely curious





SINKHOLE

- **Too much questioning becomes interrogating**
- **If we ask an honest question, we'd better be ready for an honest answer**
- **Some answers might require us to ACT – be prepared and informed**

GUIDELINE

AUTHENTICITY

**Be real and share complete,
accurate information.**

Yes, about *anything*.





SINKHOLE

- **Watch out for overshare**
- **ALWAYS** maintain healthy boundaries
- *Remember: Different families and cultures have different norms about sharing*

GUIDELINE

Be patient



SINKHOLE

- Where safety is concerned, patience can be harmful
 - Patience can become disconnection – Be vigilant
 - Our brains are wired to be more patient than theirs – Don't expect perfect reciprocity
-



Thank You!

Nigel Wrangham, CADC II, CPS
Eugene, OR

