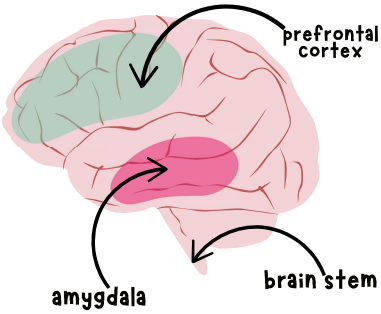
Smart Brain and Emotional Brain

Let's understand your brain using your hand!

Our brain controls all of our actions!

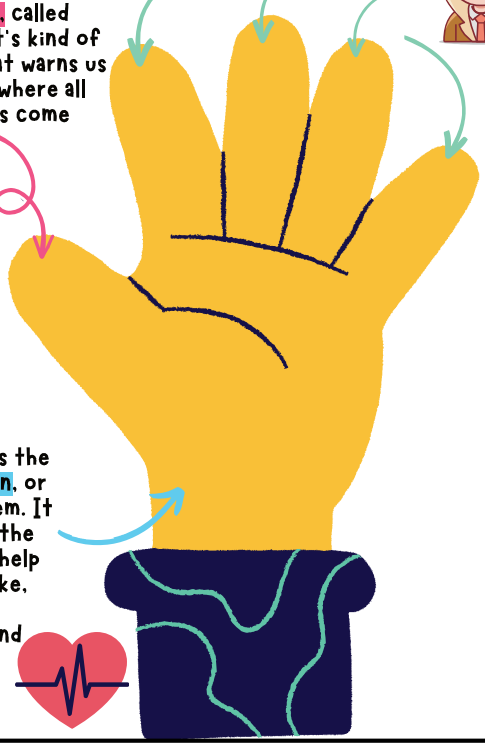


Open your hand. Your 4 fingers are your smart brain, called the prefrontal cortex. It's like a detective. It helps you make good decisions, solve problems, and have self-control.



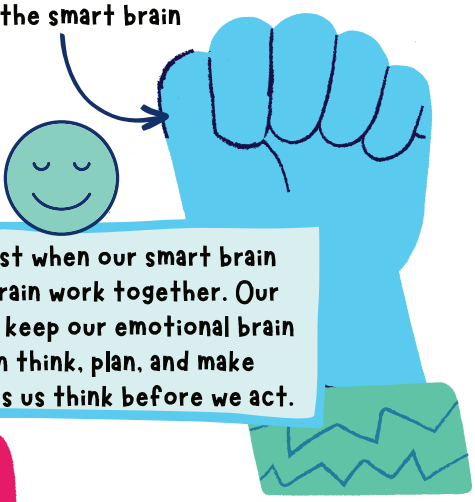
Your thumb is your emotional brain, called the amygdala. It's kind of like an alarm that warns us of danger. It's where all of our emotions come from.





Your wrist is the survival brain, or the brainstem. It controls all the things that help us survive like, swallowing, breathing, and heart rate.

Now make a fist, with your thumb underneath your fingers. This represents a calm state. The emotional brain is safe under the smart brain



We're at our best when our smart brain and emotional brain work together. Our smart brain helps keep our emotional brain calm so we can think, plan, and make decisions. It helps us think before we act.



Flip your four fingers up. This represents a stressed brain. The emotional brain senses danger and takes over. This is when you "Flip Your Lid."

fight, run, freeze
not ready to learn



When we feel BIG emotions, we "Flip our Lids." This means our smart brain flips up, and our emotional brain takes charge! It senses danger and tells us to fight, run, or freeze. When this happens, it's hard to stay calm and make good decisions. We may do things like scream, hit, shut down, or run away.

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It's okay to feel BIG emotions. We just need to build skills to help our smart brain and emotional brain work together!

Adapted from Dan Siegel's Hand Model of the Brain (Mindset, 2010).

We can use coping skills like the ones below to help our smart and emotional brains work together!


take deep breaths


write your feelings in a journal


slowly count to 10 or 20

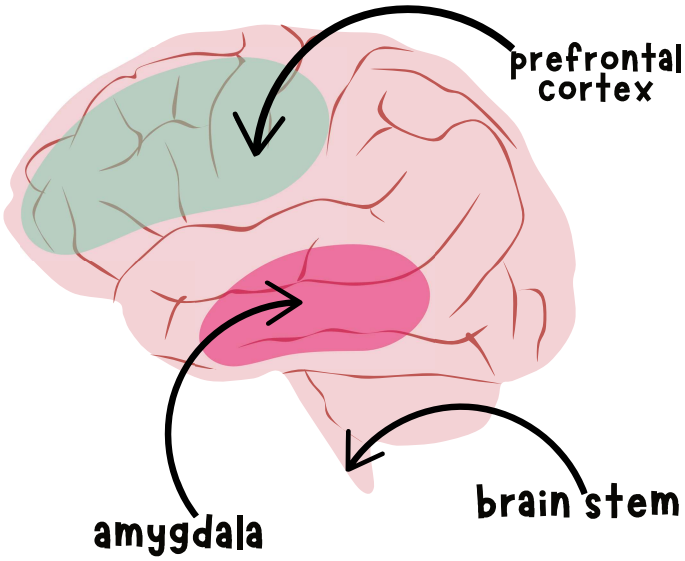

talk to someone


take a break


drink water

The Brain and Emotions!

Let's understand your brain and emotions by using your hand.



Open your hand. Your 4 fingers are your **smart brain**, called the prefrontal cortex. It's like a detective. It helps you make good decisions, solve problems, and have self control.



Your thumb is your **emotional brain**, called the amygdala. It's kind of like an alarm that warns us of danger. It's where all of our emotions come from.



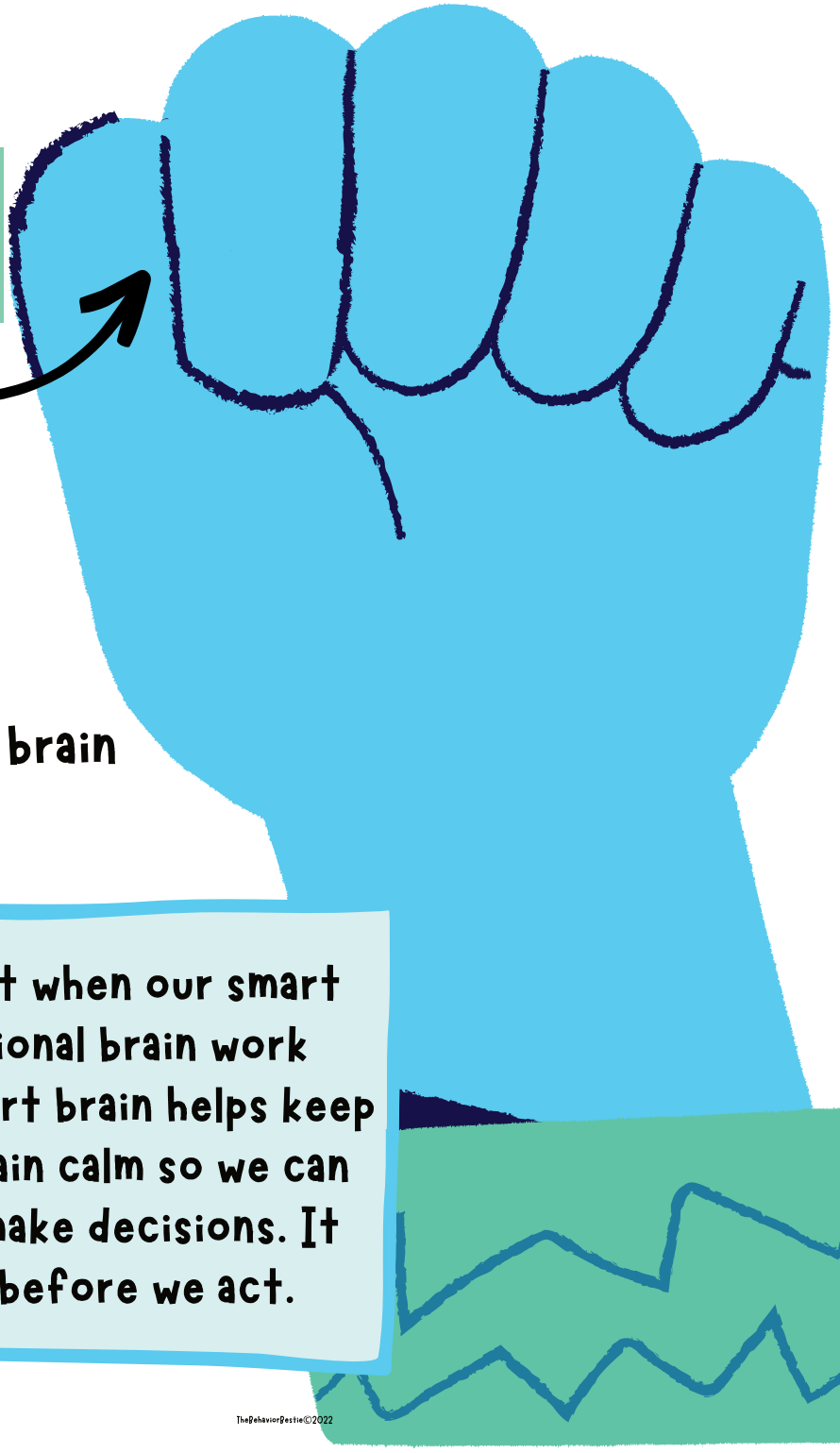
Your wrist is the **survival brain** or the brainstem. It controls all the things that help us survive like, swallowing, breathing, and heart rate.



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When our smart brain (prefrontal cortex) and emotional brain (amygdala) are working together, we are calm. We can plan, problem-solve, have self-control and think before we act.

Emotional brain is safe under the smart brain.





calm brain

ready to learn

We're at our best when our smart brain and emotional brain work together. Our smart brain helps keep our emotional brain calm so we can think, plan, and make decisions. It helps us think before we act.

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Sometimes there are situations when our emotional brain senses danger. We feel BIG emotions like anger, fear, or anxiety. These situations make it hard for us to think clearly. This is called "Flipping our Lid."



feels unsafe

not ready to learn

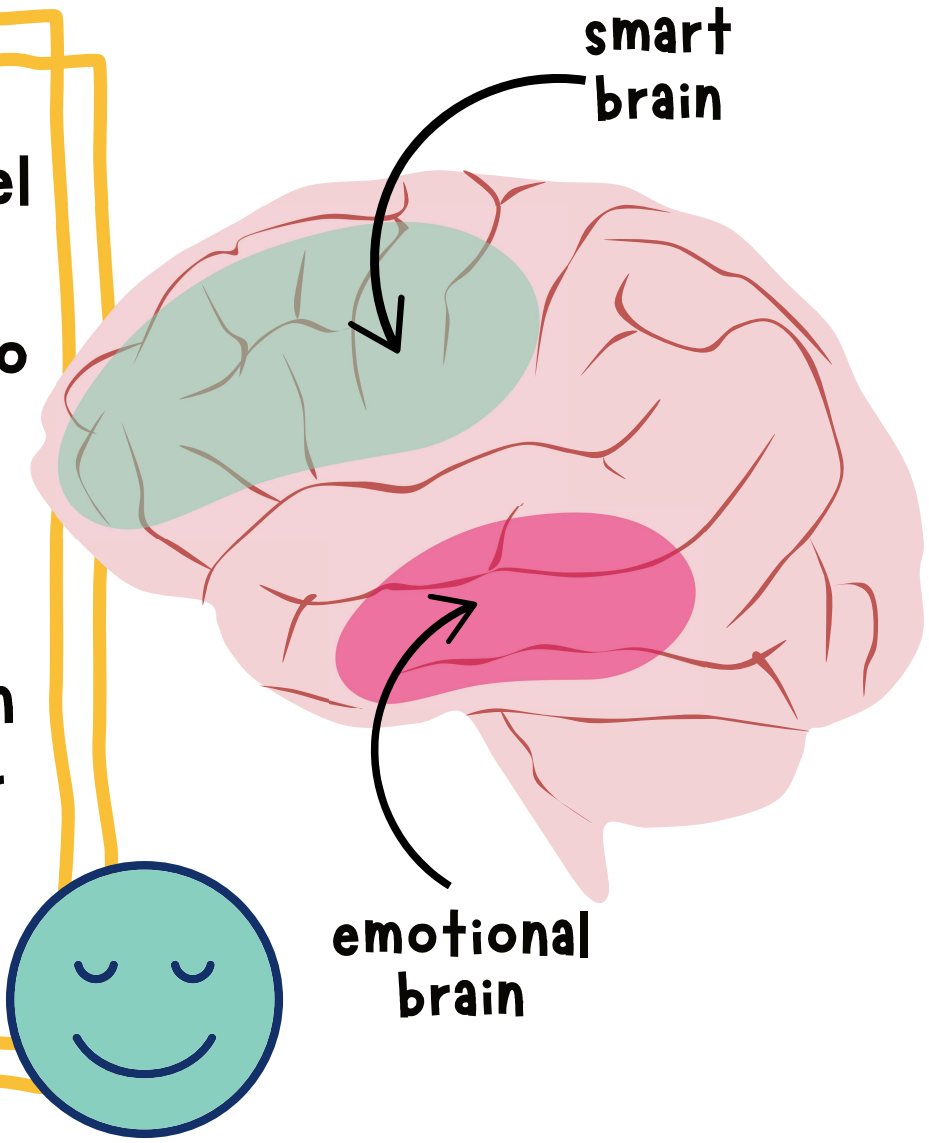


Emotional brain feels unsafe. Smart brain flips up and stops protecting.

"Flipping our Lid" is when the emotional brain pushes the smart brain up and says, "Danger, danger!" It tells us to fight, run, or freeze. This makes it hard to stay calm and make good decisions. We may do things like scream, hit, shut down, or run away.

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It's okay to feel BIG emotions. We just need to build skills to help our smart brain and emotional brain work together so we can stay calm.



We can use coping skills like the ones below to help our smart and emotional brains work together!



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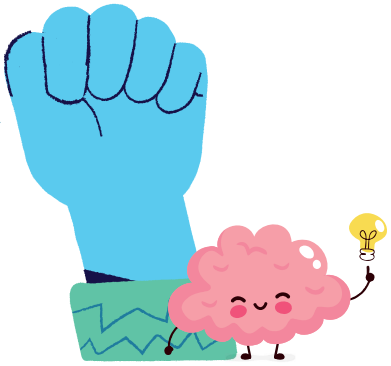


drink water

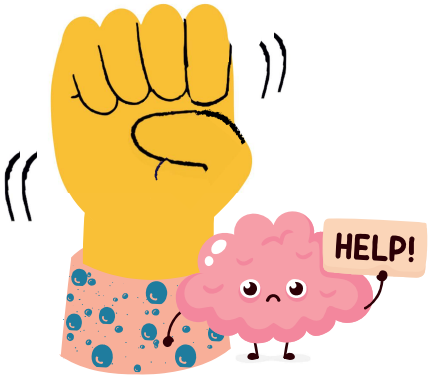
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Our brain controls our actions!

How Is Your Brain?



Calm Brain: My brain is calm and ready to learn. I can problem-solve and make good decisions.



Shaky Brain: My brain is nervous and distracted. It's hard to focus and difficult to problem-solve.



Danger Brain: My brain is not calm, flipped its lid and is on high alert. It's hard to think or make good decisions

Adapted from Dan Siegel's Hand Model of the Brain (Mindset, 2010)

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