

Smart Teenage Brains May Get Some Extra Learning Time

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NPR:

John Hewitt is a neuroscientist who studies the biology of intelligence. He's also a parent. Over the years, Hewitt has periodically drawn upon his scientific knowledge in making parenting decisions.

"I'm a father of four children myself and I never worried too much about the environments that I was providing for my children because I thought, well, it would all work out in the end anyway — aren't the genes especially powerful?" Hewitt says.

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What Hewitt, director of the Institute for Behavioral Genetics at the University of Colorado, is talking about is a new understanding of the interplay between your genetic inheritance and how you learn from the environment. He credits another researcher, Angela Brant, for coming up with a new insight into this critical period in development.

"Even if in the end the IQ ends up being determined to a large extent by the genes, if there's been a period where the environment makes a difference, that could have lifelong consequences," Hewitt said.

The study, published in *Psychological Science*, suggests that for many children it may be a mistake to stop learning new things. Even if you're a teenager, it might not be too late to start learning Chinese, chess or the cello.

Read the whole story: [NPR](#)