



Adolescent Development and Behavior

Revised by: Sydney Boudier

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Adolescence

Adolescence is the developmental process from the onset of puberty to the mid-20s

- **Puberty:** a gradual developmental transition among youth, shaped by biological and social processes

Adolescent development involves profound changes in biological, cognitive, psychosocial, and emotional development

Adolescent Phases:

- **Preadolescence** (9-11 years):
- **Early Adolescence** (12-13 years)
- **Adolescence** (14-15 years)
- **Late Adolescence** (15-20+ years)

There are predictable “tasks” or processes that are associated with healthy adolescent development, depending on the adolescent phase. As adolescents progress through developmental phases and tasks, there are expected and new behaviors that may present or arise.

PHASE	DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS	Expected	Behavior
Pre-adolescence (9-11 years)	Beginning to form ties outside the family	High energy, restlessness, and fidgeting Argumentative with parents/caregivers (rules, neatness, time management)	“bathroom humor” exploring risky behaviors
Early Adolescence (12-13 years)	-Movement toward independence (parent/caregiver rules, family values)	-Moodiness, short-tempered ; -Emotional sensitivity; increased fatigue	“testy” behavior/language highly influenced by

	-Adjusting to new body image.	-Vocal confidence -Focused on the past and the present shift toward making and prioritizing friendships	peers/peer pressure increased risk-taking
Adolescence (14-15 years)	-Discovery of personal strengths -Develop ability to abstract think; futuristic thinking -New interest in exploring sexuality and sexual identity	-Irritable, aggressive, increased fatigue -Concerns with body/attractiveness -Desire for social approval -Spending less time with family and more time alone or with friends	sudden urge for autonomy physical exploration of sexuality (with self and others) rebelliousness self-consciousness social media engagement
Late Adolescence (16-20+ years)	-Consolidate personality -Regulate emotions and behavior; “inner dialogue” -Gaining physical independence from parents/caregiver	-Increased importance on intellectual/career interests anxiety/anxious tendencies -Firm identity; stable interests -Desire for serious relationships	exploring “adult” roles mature, romantic relationships & friendships exploring financial independence acting based on cognitive/moral values

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