



# Psychological Behavioral Changes in Puberty

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● Important

● Doctor's explanation

● Additional information

## Conventional Stages of Development:

Stage	Starts From	Until	Additional notes
<b>Embryo</b>	Conception	8 <sup>th</sup> week	
<b>Fetus</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> week	Birth	When heart starts pumping
<b>Infancy</b>	Birth	15 <sup>th</sup> month	
<b>Toddler</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> month	2 ½ years	
<b>Preschool</b>	2 ½ years	6 years	
<b>Middle Years</b>	6 years	12 years	
<b>Adolescence</b>	12 years	19 year	Has 3 stages (early, middle, late)
<b>Adulthood</b>	20 years	65 years	Until 65 is not considered old age
<b>Late Adulthood</b>	Old age		

## Why do we study adolescent development?

Can give us realistic expectations for adolescents

Knowledge of development can help us respond appropriately to an adolescent's actual behavior

Knowledge of development can help us recognize when departures from normal (according to society background) are truly significant.

Studying development can make you better advocate for the need rights of adolescents \*

Studying development can help in preventing national/international concerns regarding youth e.g. substance abuse

\* Supporting an adolescent does not necessarily mean agreeing with him/her, e.g. support and give advice in the same time

## Puberty:

- Endocrine studies documented the **rise in pubertal hormones** that is generally **parallel to the emergence of secondary sex characteristics**.
- Puberty is characterized by dramatic set of changes in which a child's body gradually comes to approximate (come closer to) that of an adult.
- **Includes:** genital enlargement - growth of pubic & axillary hair - breast development & menarche in females
- Considered to mark the beginning of **adolescence**.
- Time of puberty and final outcome of pubertal process **can be affected by psychosocial factors:**
  - Low fat –to-muscle ratio (affects self-esteem among males)
  - Stress may cause interruption of menstrual cycle
  - Family conflict may lead to early onset of puberty
- **Cognitive development during puberty:**
  - Formal operation (e.g. thinking of the cause and can figure out the result)
  - Abstract thinking (can figure out the deep meaning of things)
- **Egocentrism:** more thinking about himself and focuses on things that are related to him, this will help him find his identity.

- **Cultural definition of what is desirable and expectable** plays an important part in mediating the psychological experience of puberty.  
E.g.: Body weight  
(Society determines the standard body. If the adolescent's body does not look like what the good appearance in the society's opinion, he/she will think of himself/herself as “not accepted person“)
- **Gender Differences:** Start to become more apparent in puberty, and the adolescent starts noticing them
- **Self-image (how the adolescent looks at him/her self):**  
**(Important for psychological maturation)**
  - Emerging Sexuality
  - Autonomy (independence)
  - Motility (merging with the society)
  - Vocational identity and independence (e.g: being given responsibilities, especially outside the house)

## **Adolescence:**

- It is the period of maturation between end of childhood and beginning of adulthood (12-20).
- It is a time of great **biological**, **psychological** and **social changes**
- During adolescence, puberty is established with characteristic physical changes.
- It is time for establishing personal identity.
- Marked by: psychological signs + surging (rising) sexual hormones of puberty.

- Adolescents can be best described as works in progress(**improvement**) characterized by:
  - Increasing ability for mastery over complex challenges, such as: academic, interpersonal (**social**), emotional tasks.
  - Searching for new interests, talents and social identities
- **Cognitive and physical changes will give rise to self-awareness.**
- Peer influence is considerably increased (**increased influence of the friends on adolescent**)
- **Fighting authority control** is an important issue
- **Oversensitivity to criticism**, **moodiness** and **easily provocation**" **easily stimulated**" are common.
- **By the end**, they will establish **personal identity**, **independence** and **workable relationship** with peers.
- **Adolescent turmoil (storm)**
  - **80%** of youth: adolescence is a period of **successful adaptation** to physical, cognitive, and emotional changes, largely continuous with their previous functioning.
  - **20%** of the adolescent population experience psychological **maladjustment**, self-loathing, disturbance of conduct, substance abuse, affective disorders (**depression... etc**) and other impairing psychiatric disorders emerge. **Genetics predispose psychiatric disorders in adolescence.**

## Stages of Adolescence

### Early Adolescence

From 12 to 14 years of age

- Physical changes.
- Criticize usual family habits.
- Insist on spending time with peers.
- Awareness of style and appearance.
- Increase interest in opposite sex.
- Experiment with cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana  
(الحشيش=القنب)

### Middle Adolescence

Between the ages of 14 and 16

- Independence.
- Abilities to combine abstract reasoning with realistic decision-making.
- Sexual behavior intensifies.
- Identify with a group of peers.
- Conflict with families.

### Late Adolescence

Between the ages of 17 and 19

- Sense of belonging to certain groups or subcultures within mainstream society.
- Well-adjusted adolescents can be comfortable with current choices of activities, tastes, hobbies, and friendships. Yet, remain aware that their identities will continue to be refined during young adulthood.

## Components of Adolescence (VERY IMPORTANT):

Physical Development.

Cognitive Maturation.

Socialization.

Moral Development.

Self-Esteem.

## Components of Adolescence

### **1. Physical development:**

Puberty is the process by which adolescents develop **physical** and **sexual** maturity, along with **reproductive ability**.

### **2. Cognitive maturation:**

- Transition from concrete thinking (**superficial thinking**) to more abstract thinking (**deep thinking**).
- An increased ability to draw logical conclusions in scientific pursuits, with peer interactions and in social situations.
- New abilities for self-observation and self-regulation.

### **3. Socialization:**

- Ability to find acceptance in peer relationships.
- The development of more mature social cognition.
- Peer influences are powerful.

### **4. Moral development:**

A set of values and beliefs about codes of behavior that conform to those shared by others in society.

### **5. Self-Esteem:**

One's sense of self-worth based on perceived success and achievements, as well as a perception of how much one is valued by peers, family members, teachers, and society in general.

#### **Good self-esteem factors:**

- Positive physical appearance.
- Academic achievement

## Risk-Taking Behavior:

- Alcohol
- Nicotine
- Cannabis (same as marijuana)
- Violence
- Bullying
- Prostitution
- Tattoos and Body Piercing

## Adolescent Sexual Behavior:

**Sexuality** is **NOT** simply the result of biological factors. But, it is the **combination of many aspects:**

- Psychological aspects:
  - Sexual identity.
  - Sexual desire.
  - Subject perception of invulnerability.
  - Self image.
- Socio-cultural aspects:
  - Cultural values/beliefs.
  - Implicit/explicit social influences ←

Implicit: one's belief.  
Explicit: Other's influence.

## **The following studies do not apply to our society = Not important**

- By high school, most male adolescents report experience with masturbation, and more than half of adolescent girls report masturbation.
- Close to four of ten girls who had first intercourse at 13 or 14 years of age report it was either not voluntary or unwanted.
- Nearly four of ten teen pregnancies end in abortion.



- Few teenage mothers marry the fathers of their children.
- The average adolescent mother who cannot care for her child, has the child either placed in foster care or raised by the teenager's already overburdened parents or other relatives.
- In 2003, 47 percent of 9th to 12th grade students reported having sexual intercourse, a decline from 53 percent in 1993.
- The additive effects of more highly educated families, social and religious youth groups, and school-based educational programs can be credited with a decline in high-risk sexual behavior among adolescents.
- Homosexuality:
  - Gay/Lesbian.

### Summary:

- 1- Adolescence is the period of maturation between end of childhood and beginning of adulthood (12-20), and it is a time of great biological, psychological and social changes
- 2- Studying adolescence development can give us realistic expectations about them.
- 3- Puberty is characterized by dramatic set of changes in which a child's body gradually comes to approximate that of an adult.
- 4- Puberty is considered to mark the beginning of adolescence.
- 5- Self-image is really important for psychological maturation.
- 6- Cognitive and physical changes will give rise to self-awareness.
- 7- 80% of adolescent pass this period with successful adaptation to physical, cognitive, and emotional changes, whereas 20% experience psychological maladjustment.
- 8- **Adolescence has three stages:**
  - ✓ Early stage: from 12-14
  - ✓ Middle stage: from 14-16
  - ✓ Late stage: from 17-19
- 9- **Components of Adolescence:** Physical development, Cognitive maturation, Socialization, Moral development and Self-Esteem.

- 10- Adolescent sexual behavior is NOT simply the result of biological factors. But, it is the combination of psychological and socio-cultural aspects.

## QUESTIONS

**1- The percentage of adolescents who experience psychological maladjustment is:**

- A- 80%
- B- 20%
- C- 50%
- D- 60%

**2- Puberty is considered to mark the beginning of:**

- A- Adulthood.
- B- Childhood.
- C- Adolescence.

**3- The middle stage of adolescence :**

- A- From 12 to 16
- B- From 14 to 18
- C- From 14 to 16

## ANSWERS

1- B, 2- C, 3- C