

# STAGES OF ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

Developed by: Wayne Pawlowski, ACSW, and Gayle Hamilton

	<b>Early</b> <b>Girls: 11 – 13</b> <b>Boys: 12 – 14</b>	<b>Middle</b> <b>Girls: 13 – 16</b> <b>Boys: 14 - 17</b>	<b>Late</b> <b>Girls: 16 – 19</b> <b>Boys: 17 - 19</b>
<b>General</b> <b>(period of high moodiness)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mood Swings</li> <li>• Great highs and great depressions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mood Swings</li> <li>• Great highs and great depressions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mood Swings</li> <li>• Great highs and great depressions</li> </ul>
<b>Physical Development</b> <b>(Sexual Maturation)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Puberty: onset of physical and sexual development</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Sense of loss of control</li> <li>• Fear and Anxiety</li> <li>• Experimentation with body begins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are the “classical” teenagers</li> <li>• Body changes are in full swing</li> <li>• Intense sexual feelings develop</li> <li>• This is the stage of “puppy love”</li> <li>• Dating begins and becomes primary</li> <li>• Average age (16 or younger) by which 50% of adolescents have had first sexual experience</li> <li>• Risk of pregnancy is high</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical changes leveling off and ending</li> <li>• Less confusion regarding body and changes</li> <li>• Greater sense of self control</li> <li>• Better, more realistic sense of self; looks, body image, how one compares to others</li> <li>• Sexual behavior more prominent</li> </ul>
<b>Cognitive Development</b> <b>(How adolescents think)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time of concrete thinking</li> <li>• World is “here and now,” the present</li> <li>• The “future” is now, not tomorrow, or next week</li> <li>• Unable to plan or think into the future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abstract thinking begins</li> <li>• Connections between “today” and “tomorrow” begin</li> <li>• Intellectual curiosity develops</li> <li>• Period of experimentations</li> <li>• Period of idealistic thinking</li> <li>• Period of being a “know – it – all”</li> <li>• Feelings of omnipotence and no fear of death</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult thinking has developed</li> <li>• Future goals more clearly and realistically defined</li> <li>• Ability to think abstractly has developed</li> </ul>

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<b>Psycho-Social Development: Identity (personality)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Am I normal?”</li> <li>• “What am I turning into?”</li> <li>• “I’m not ready for this.”</li> <li>• Beginning to look outside of the family for self-definition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends, rather than parents, define who you are, what you do, and what’s “cool”</li> <li>• Egocentric – “I satisfy me!”</li> <li>• Identity changes from day – to – day, from friend – to – friend, and from groups – to – group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arriving at concept of self as an adult</li> <li>• Need to accept the self that has emerged</li> <li>• Reflecting back to earlier years to gain better picture of present self</li> <li>• Decreased importance of peer group; individual is now primarily self-identified and less other-identified</li> </ul>
<b>Psycho-Social Development: Integrity (Values)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Own values not defined; values are still those of parents, but beginning to be questioned</li> <li>• Right and wrong still seen as black and white issues; greys do not exist</li> <li>• Internal control not developed</li> <li>• Clear limits and boundaries are necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the time for developing and testing own values. To do this, kids must reject parental values; as a result, this is a time of great conflict with parents and other adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refining and clarifying of values – large swings and inconsistencies less common</li> <li>• Internal controls which are based upon moral principles and conscience are now more fully developed</li> </ul>

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<b>Intimacy</b> <b>(Sexual Relationships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same sex play begins</li> <li>• Intimacy is defined through “best friends” and peer group membership</li> <li>• Friends begin changing because of variations in rate of development</li> <li>• Cliques develop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pairing begins</li> <li>• Sexual activity begins</li> <li>• Friends and peer group are the core of life</li> <li>• “Love object” is the most important thing in the world</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pairing more realistic and less changeable</li> <li>• Mating begins</li> <li>• Relationships more stable and increasingly based upon “real” people and real qualities</li> <li>• Peer group membership is important but one – to – one relationships are more important</li> <li>• Movement from “I” to mutuality and real sharing</li> <li>• Satisfaction of other(s) can be as important as satisfaction of self</li> </ul>
<b>Independence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends begin becoming more important than family</li> <li>• Complaints about lack of privacy begin and increasing “alone” time (time away from parents) and time with friends begin</li> <li>• Fluctuation between clinging to adults and rebelling against them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classic rebellion against and conflict with family</li> <li>• Separation continues in earnest</li> <li>• Period where most parents feel that they “can’t win” and that they “can’t do anything right”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separation from parents becomes complete (Psychologically, if not physically)</li> <li>• Beginning of self-sufficiency and care</li> </ul>