



Adolescent Psychology

What to be on the look out for...

General Overview

- Trying to understand how they relate to the world
- A teenager's development can be divided into three stages -- early, middle, and late adolescence.
- Growth during adolescence is greater than at any other period of life after birth.
- Each is distinct and unique in his or own way so processes vary from student to student

Early Adolescence 12-14 yrs

Movement Toward Independence

- Struggle with sense of identity
- Moodiness
- Improved abilities to use speech to express oneself
- More likely to express feelings by action than by words
- Close friendships gain importance
- Less attention shown to parents, with occasional rudeness
- Realization that parents are not perfect; identification of their faults
- Search for new people to love in addition to parents
- Tendency to return to childish behavior
- Peer group influences interests and clothing styles
- Increasing career interests
- Mostly interested in present and near future
- Greater ability to work

Middle Adolescence 15-16 yrs

Movement Toward Independence

- Self-involvement, alternating between unrealistically high expectations and poor self-concept
- Complaints that parents interfere with independence
- Extremely concerned with appearance and with one's own body
- Feelings of strangeness about one's self and body
- Lowered opinion of parents, withdrawal from them
- Effort to make new friends
- Strong emphasis on the new peer group
- Examination of inner experiences, which may include writing a diary

Career Interests

- Intellectual interests gain importance

Late Adolescence 17-19yrs

Movement Toward Independence

- Firmer identity
- Ability to delay gratification
- Ability to think ideas through
- Ability to express ideas in words
- More developed sense of humor
- Stable interests
- Greater emotional stability
- Ability to make independent decisions
- Ability to compromise
- Pride in one's work
- Self-reliance
- Greater concern for others

Career Interests

- More defined work habits
- Higher level of concern for the future
- Thoughts about one's role in life

Role of Teachers

- Effect Achievement in school and their motivation for learning
- Intergenerational exchange between adults and adolescent
 - Adolescents look to you as a role model for the “adult world”
 - Role as a mentor in some ways
- Important that they do not see you as a “peer”.

What can teachers do:

- Search for and identify what the student does well
 - Communicate to all students what areas they are doing well in
 - This does not mean to ignore negative behaviour or areas of weaknesses
- Create a classroom environment that is supportive of the adolescents learning.
 - Don't show favoritism
 - Reduce competition among students
 - Peer influences are important and can be used as a positive
 - Demonstrate positive behaviors. Adolescence model after adults that are around them.



What can teachers do (cont...):

- Continually seek to engage the students.
 - Remind them of the long term as well as short term goals i.e. improve skills as well as going to university
- Establish that *mastery* and *skill* development are the goals not *performance*.
 - Students focused on *performance goals* are concerned with demonstrating high ability relative to others, competing for grades, or gaining recognition for their abilities.
 - For these students, a sense of accomplishment is derived from demonstrating high ability or avoiding negative judgments of ability, regardless of the learning involved.

What can teachers do (cont...)

- Emphasis that the point of a drill or activity is not who is the best but mastering the skill for future use.
 - Establish a long term outlook on the learning
- Sexuality is of high interest . Male teachers may experience females liking them etc..
 - Be careful not to encourage this
 - Don't encourage "boyfriend-girlfriend" drama inside the classroom as it will be a distraction
- Stay positive in all that you do and always have a positive view of your students.
 - Evaluations and Testing
 - Even if they misbehave