

Parenting Teenagers:
How to prepare them to be young
adults

Overall Theme

- Teenagehood as a time for preparation
- Therefore: parents should take “long term” view of parenting role and objectives

Physical Development and Health Issues for Adolescence

Puberty

- The period of rapid physical maturation involving hormonal and bodily changes that take place primarily in early adolescence

Psychological Effects of Physical Changes

- Body image becomes important
 - Increase in self consciousness and awareness of societal standards
 - Females generally more self critical

Health Issues for Adolescence

HEALTH

- Adolescence: A Critical Juncture in Health

Adolescence is a critical juncture in the adoption of behaviors that are relevant to health

(Neumark-Sztainer & others, 2006; Patton & others, 2006).

Many of the behaviors that are linked to poor health habits and early death in adults begin during adolescence.

Common Threats

- Drug abuse
- Violence
- Unprotected sexual intercourse
- Dangerous driving

Risk Taking Behavior

- Contributing factors
 - Experiential
 - Sensation seeking
 - Need for high stimulation
 - Role modeling
 - Mass media
 - Peer pressure
 - Lack of self regulatory skills (decision making)

Forming Unhealthy Life Habits

- Eating habits
 - not eating breakfast, not eating regular meals
 - relying on snacks as our main food source during the day
 - eating excessively
- Substance abuse
 - Smoking moderately or excessively
 - Binge drinking
- Failure to exercise,
- Not enough sleep

Sports

Recent studies confirmed the positive benefits of organized sports for adolescents:

Adolescents who participated in sports were less likely to engage in such risk-taking activities as truancy, cigarette smoking, sexual intercourse, and delinquency than non-sports participants (Nelson & Gordon-Larsen, 2006).

Eleventh-grade students who participated in organized sports were more likely to be successful academically and less likely to take drugs than their counterparts who did not participate in organized sports (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006).

Brain and Cognitive Development

- Amygdala (faster development)
 - Emotional intensity
- Prefrontal Cortex (slower development)
 - Reasoning
 - Decision making
 - Self control:
 - development continues till adulthood

Creative Thinking

- Is possible to teach creative thinking?

Developing Expertise

- Deliberate practice
 - Identify specific skills needed to accomplish a task
 - Devise practice plan
 - Each practice session: develop specific targets and goals
 - Get constant feedback from multiple sources
 - Repeat practices until process become automatic
 - The 10 year rule

Elements that Distinguish Deliberate Practice

- Level of consciousness/awareness
 - What you are currently doing
 - What you want to do
 - What needs to be done differently
- Level of intentionality
 - Not incidental
 - Orchestrated, structured, manufactured practice opportunities

- Level of feedback
 - From multiple sources
 - At regular intervals

Metacognition

- Thinking about thinking
- Do we know how we are learning?
- What is our learning process?
- Do we know how we complete an assignment?
- What steps in that process can we change or improve?

- Self regulatory learning
 - Managing your own learning process
 - Managing
 - Emotions and motivations
 - Goals and expectations
 - Study processes
 - Study environment

Egocentrism

- The imaginary audience
 - Overestimate to what extent other people notice them
 - Extremely self conscious
 - Assume that others notice the flaws and weaknesses they observe in themselves

- Personal fable
 - Sense of personal uniqueness and invulnerability
 - being the “star” of the show
 - Feel that others do not fully understand them
 - May explain reckless behavior

The Dynamic Nature of Self

- Differentiation and Contradictions
 - Beginning to understand that they possess different characteristics in different contexts
 - “At home, I’m still daddy’s little girl, all sweet and nice, but with my friends I can be a bit of a wild girl who wants to have fun.”
- Yet they still struggle to come to terms with this fluctuation (barometric self)

Shift in Understanding



Childhood

- Understanding of self as consistent and one dimensional
- “I am a kind person”
- “I am a cheerful person.”

Adolescence

- Gradual understanding and appreciation of the multi dimensional and erratic nature of self
- “I can be kind but sometimes I can also be cruel”
- “I have different moods.”

Self Esteem Levels in Teens

- Drop in self esteem during adolescence
 - Lower than children and young adults
 - Linked to rise in personal standards and expectations
 - Especially among females
 - Linked to body image issues
- Males higher than females
- High in 90's compared to 60's
 - Reflect popular culture

- Self esteem correlated with
 - Physical appearance (.65)
 - Academic performance (.48)
 - Social acceptance (.46)
 - Behavioral conduct (.45)
 - Athletic competence (.33)

 - (Harter, 2006)

Self Esteem Interventions

- Elements of successful youth self esteem interventions
 - Identifying talents (domains of competence) = linked to redefining self concept
 - Social recognition and acceptance
 - Achievement
 - Competency skills (self efficacy)
 - Setting achievable goals and providing “scaffolding”

Identity

Erikson

- Identity versus Role Confusion
- The goal = deciding who they are; determining their identity for the long term
- Psychosocial moratorium: between states of childhood security and adult stability

- Psychosocial moratorium: characterized by:
 - Experimentation
 - Fluctuation
 - Rebellion

4 Statuses of Identity

- Marcia
- Identity diffusion
 - Not yet experienced identity crisis
 - Have not engaged meaningfully in life choices
 - Characterized by apathy

- Identity foreclosure
 - Made choices that are externally driven
 - Have not experienced identity crisis for themselves: have not thought through their own decisions
 - No ownership of decisions

- Identity moratorium
 - Experience of identity crisis
 - As defined earlier: a search for self

- Identity achievement
 - Come through the identity crisis and made a commitment about who they want to be

Enablers of Identity Achievement

- 3 enablers
 - Parental support
 - Established sense of industry (discipline and self-mastery)
 - Self reflective stance towards the future

Adolescent Relationships

Family and Peers

Relationship with Family

Changes in Parent-Teen Relationships

- Rising levels of conflict
 - Teens ability rationalize and question
 - Emotional intensity
 - Self consciousness
 - Expression of independence

- Teenagers spending less time with parents
 - 35% = 10 year olds
 - 14% = 18 year olds

Evolving Role of Parents

- From babysitters to managers
 - Less direct supervision but monitoring
 - Focus on talent and vocational management
 - Preparation for adulthood

Parenting Styles

- Authoritarian
 - Authoritative
 - Neglectful
 - Indulgent
-
- Are the effects of authoritarian parenting negative in Asian settings? The issue of perception

Autonomy

- Defining autonomy
 - Self direction and independence
 - Emotional autonomy
 - Greater personal responsibility
 - Financial

- Cultural Differences

- Asian teens seek autonomy later

- May reflect importance of extended family norm

Dating

- An artifact of cultural change
 - Greater freedom of adolescence to shape their own social life

Evolving patterns and functions of dating

- Early teens
 - Shorter duration (on average 2 months or less)
 - Functions
 - Test of their own attractiveness
 - Enhance social status
 - Satisfy basic infatuation

- Late teens
 - Longer duration
 - Functions
 - Need for companionship
 - Sexual needs

Emotion and Romance

- Romantic relationships intensify already intense period
 - Agony and Hope
 - Joy and Sadness

Perceptions of Love

- Focus on feelings: infatuation
 - Analysis of popular love songs and stories
 - May explain short life span of relationships
- More egocentric
 - Focus on how relationship can meet their own emotional and social needs
- Believe in destiny
 - Finding the “one”

- gohcl@help.edu.my