
Aspects Of Adolescence Development

Adolescence is the period following the onset of puberty during which a young person develops from a child into an adult. Youth enters this developmental stage with the body and mind of a child, later on in life it exits with the body and mind of an adult. This paper includes six dimensions of development as a child transitions into an adult, which are physical, cognitive, emotional, psychosocial, moral, and sexual. Theories of certain specialists and psychologists will be used to deepen the discussion of adolescent development. The goal of this report is to inform the readers of the obstacles and changes that occur during the adolescent progression.

Adolescence is the {Period following the onset of puberty during which a young person develops from a child into an adult. Because adolescence occurs for a long period of time, it is broken down and explained in terms of early, middle, and late adolescence. Moving from childhood to adulthood is a big developmental hardship for each person.

These teens go through a process in which they find out their identity as an individual, passing through few stages along this path. Entering the adolescent years, the desire for independence becomes bigger. According to G. Stanley Hall, adolescence was described as new birth in which, following the metaphor, the old child dies, only to be reborn as a new man or woman (1904). Similar to any child rearing process, this is consisted of i own stress. He also mentioned that during this stage of life, young people “might swing between extremes” (1904). To illustrate, sometimes they want to be around people, sometimes the do not. Also, sometimes they want to become good people but do not make the appropriate or right decisions.

Physical Development

Adolescents go through major changes in their physical growth and development. This fast physical development starts during the prior developmental stage called puberty and continues during adolescence. However, the individual teenager will develop according to his or her own body's timetable (n.a. 2017). With that being said, some teens may develop more slowly than their peers. As a result, they will feel self-conscious about their bodies' lack of maturity, compared to others. This eventually leads to feelings of irritation or thoughts that something is wrong with them because their bodies did not mature as fast the others. Conversely, some teens that mature quicker than their peers, may also feel frustration. They may receive more attention to their bodies than desired.

During the child-to-adult transition, most growth in height widely occurs during one, single growth period or what is called growth spurt. Females usually begin their growth period between eight and thirteen years old; with the fastest growth in occurring between the years of ten and thirteen (O, 2019). Females are said to reach their adult height between ten to sixteen years old. Females begin their growth period earlier than the males. Males, on average, begin their growth period between ten and sixteen years old, with the quickest growth between twelve and fifteen years old. Majority of the males hit their adult height between the years of thlrteen and seventeen. Males still tend to grow taller than females although they begin little later than them (Allen, 2019). With that being said, the average height for adult females is 5'5", and the average height of adult males is 5'10". Genetics and good nutrition can have a positive and a

huge impact on height development.

Cognitive Development

Cognitive development is the development of a person's ability to reason, agree with, and think. Children from ages six to twelve years old have the capability to think in concrete or visible ways. For instance, they were taught how to solve simple and basic mathematical equations and set certain things in order. This is concrete because it is solved right before their eyes. Adolescence however is the beginning development of more complicated or complex thinking process such as viewing things from different perspectives of a situation or by debating ideas or opinion. Therefore, during the process of adolescence, the developing teenager "acquires the capability to suppose systematically about all logical connections within a problem" (Packard, 2018).

Adolescents develop more advanced reasoning skills, including the ability to explore a full range of possibilities inherent in a situation, think hypothetically of contrary-fact situations, and use a logical thought process. John Piaget, a well-known and an influential child development specialist, once mentioned that "the adolescent years are outstanding due to the fact that youngsters move beyond the constraints of concrete mental operations and increase the ability to suppose in a greater summary manner" (O, 2019). Piaget concluded in his theories of cognitive development that there are many factors that can affect children's cognitive development which include the following: quality and quantity of formal schooling or training, family traditions, several medical disorders, and physical or emotional trauma.

Adding on, as these children become adults, they are able to think abstractly. They transition from being visual thinkers, who can only have ideas when they are in contact with a certain item, to abstract thinkers, who does not need to have contact but can use imagination or experience. Because of this, adolescents are able to show affection, or participate in more advanced problems-solving activities. To Piaget, this cognitive-development stage theory is known as form/operations. Those who stay at the level of visual thinkers concentrate mostly on physically real objects in problem solving events. (Arnett, 2006).

Emotional Development

G Stanley Hall once mentioned in his book Adolescence that storm and stress is a universal and significant part of adolescent development (1904). For majority of the adolescents, the adolescent period is like a whirlwind of many distinguished emotions existing all at once. For some, they are said to be overreacting to certain life events or situations, which may eventually cause them an unexpected amount of stress. This naturally happens when the teenager is learning to deal with a much bigger series of new and unfamiliar situations. While adolescents are beginning to learn how to deal with the new challenges in their way, they should expect experiencing different emotions throughout a couple of days or weeks.

Social Development

Social relationships become complicated during adolescence. As children grow up, they start to gain new and many different types of relationships. With these relationships, they can become more intimate. However, when they were young, their social circle mainly consisted of

family members, some friends, and teachers but this circle begins to expand to many and different types of relationships during adolescence, mainly through social media. Therefore, “adolescent social development involves an effective change in the quantity and quality of social relationships” (O, 2019).

As adolescents’ emotional maturity begin to develop more, relationships with their friends alter as they become more vulnerable to them. For this reason, trust is needed among these so-called friendships. During the adolescent year therefore, teens turn to each other for refuge or in times of need, instead of their own blood. This dependence on friendships is one-way adolescents show their idea of gaining independence. Wanting to fit in and accepted by a peer group, adolescents start to change the way they dress up, speak, or behave in order to become like their friends (P, 2018).

This comparison or similarity among certain groups of people gives them a sense of satisfaction that they belong somewhere and are accepted in this desired peer group. This developmental step is known as a crisis of identity vs. identity confusion.

Psychosocial Development

As children transition into adulthood, Erik Erikson, a developmental theorist, theorized that these teens have entered the fifth stage of psychosocial development, that is identity versus role confusion (McLeod, 2018). It is during this stage that the question “Who am I?” becomes the main focus. Also, during this level, individuals seek for a sense of self and personal identity, through an intense exploration of personal values, beliefs, and goals. “In adolescence, identity is often shaped by their impression of what others think of them as well as their own view of themselves” (M, 2018). Because of their increased cognitive development throughout adolescence, these teens are able to view themselves from a psychological perspective rather than just visuals. Erikson stated that the adolescent may feel uncomfortable with their physical bodies until they are able to adjust to the new changes.

Moral Development

Morality is how people decide to live their lives while these decisions are governed by a set of guidelines which determines the good versus bad. Lawrence Kohlberg, a famous theorist of the mid-twenties, focused his works on a informative theory of children’s moral development. He developed a six stage theory of moral development and grouped into three, higher-order levels of development with two sub- stages each (Kohlberg, 1994). The Pre-conventional Level is consisted of the first stage, the punishment and obedience orientation, and second stage, the instrumental purpose orientation. The Conventional Level is consisted of the third stage which is the morality of interpersonal cooperation, and the fourth stage which is the social-order-maintaining orientation. The Post-Conventional Level is consisted of the fifth stage, the social-contract orientation, and the sixth stage the universal ethical principle orientation. Nonetheless, focusing on the adolescent development, individuals mostly begin at the second level which is conventional.

Theorist Kohlberg believed that in early adolescence, most individuals have been to the mid-level of moral reasoning known as the conventional level. On this level, adolescents’ morality is determined by rules or conventions agreed on by the majority amongst groups of certain

individuals. At stage of three of this level, moral decisions are made by how it is judged by other persuasive bunch of people. "As teens at this stage desire or determine to be considered a certain type of person or be judged in a favorable light, their moral decisions will be based on whether it would win the approval of those people whose opinions matter to them" (K, 1994). Stage four within the conventional level, social-order maintaining orientation is when morality is made based on what is considered best for more than half of the citizens. This is indeed when teens begin to understand that government policies were created to protect every person and that societies can function better when everyone obediently abides by the law. Also, these adolescents will begin to compare their daily choices to most people's choices as well.

The final level of moral development is also known as principled level because individuals make moral decisions based on a basic set of principles that represent most of their most important values and beliefs. Individually generally tend to suppose their values necessities in this stage. Stage five within the post-conventional level, social contract orientation, is when citizens fathom the idea that rules are methods intended to build justice and are made to promote the wellbeing of all individuals. Therefore, "the ideological values of social justice and humanitarian concern are considered to be important, not the rule or law itself" (Kahn, 1992). Adolescents at this level begin to recognize that policies or laws may also need some diploma of pliability and interpretation, and it may nonetheless want to be re-evaluated on occasion to ensure that its supposed motive continues to be being met.

Sexual Development

As teens transition into adult bodies capable of sexual reproduction, their sexual curiosity is prompted just as they are becoming interested and more curious in forming adult-like, romantic relationships. As such, the development of adolescent sexuality involves not only physical development but also the other four previous child to adult dimension developments. "Early childhood, between years of twelve to fifteen, is considered a uncertain time in adolescents' sexual development due to the inter- relationship between three developments: sexual, emotional, and cognitive" (Bailey & Pillard, 1991).

Teenagers begin to show interest in sexual subjects when they are about twelve to thirteen years of ages. As an outcome, they begin to please this new interest by researching or reading details about intercourse, and viewing footages of sexual content. Men will mostly feel continuous erections during early adolescence for this is sort of a normal and an automatic response of their bodies to sexual excitement. Erections however can still occur out of all the blue, as their bodies try to adapt to huge hormonal changes that occurs during puberty. Similar to this, "women may additionally find that they have produced vaginal secretions for no cause even they are not menstruating.

Other times, those secretions may be because of sexual arousal but, it can additionally arise due to ordinary fluctuations at some stage in their month-to-month duration" (Neale & Agyei, 1993). Teenagers at the ages thirteen to fourteen may start to experiment with showing their sexual thoughts when they are with other individuals at the same age. They will begin joking about sex or give hints regarding their own sexual development to grab others' reactions and interest to converse about sex.

When teens are in between the ages nineteen to twenty-two, they will carry on exploring

sexuality and to experience many kinds of sexual encounters. A few teens at this time will most effectively be interested in informal dating and informal sexual encounters even as other young people will restrict sexual pastime to emotionally intimate, loyal, monogamous relationships (B&P, 1991). As their emotional and cognitive development increases over various stages of adolescence, their sexual decisions will become wiser, needing no help or involvement from parents.

Conclusion

Adolescence is a period of time where children begin to physically, cognitively, emotionally, socially, morally, and sexually go through struggles and experiences of adulthood. During physical development, adolescent individuals start to reach their adult height, and their bodies start to change its sizes and composition. Cognitively, adolescents no longer think simple thoughts as children but more abstract and logical as adults. As their brain continues to develop, they begin to analyze problems and events in a more adult-like and logical manner. Emotionally, teenagers learn how to handle various emotions occurring at one time. They commence to learn how to adjust to certain situations with strong emotional reactions. Socially, adolescents begin to develop trust within their peer groups. They also start to form relationships many types of people on social media, at work, or at school. Moral development is when an individual's mental and emotional maturity develops. As mentioned by Kohlberg, adolescents will most likely set rules and values that they will abide by for their entire lives. Sexually, adolescents will begin to become aware of their sexual orientation and will be attracted to another being. Overall, adolescent youth experience extreme changes in every aspect of their lives as they make transition from childhood into adulthood.