

Adolescence: Social & Emotional Development

Overview

The search for identity is one of the major tasks of adolescence. This search for a mature identity may be long and difficult for some. In the process of identity formation the adolescent may be in several categories at one time, each corresponding to a different aspect of their life - political, sexual, religious, and vocational.

Parents have a significant role in the adolescent's quest for identity and independence. Parenting styles affect the ease in which the roles of family members are adjusted to accept the gradual shift to the teenager's independence. The values and ideals of the parents surprisingly correlate with the adolescent on serious matters, but for music, dress, dating and social patterns the peer group dominates.

The identity within the peer group takes prominence because of the not-yet-achieved self identity of the adolescent. The peer group offers a solid front during this time and a chance for status within. As the individual matures the group changes in composition, with the inclusion of both sexes.

Questions To Consider

1. How are the questions of identity formation answered?
2. What influence do politics, schooling, gender, and culture have in identity formation?
3. In what ways do families influence identity formation?
4. Is adolescence a time of storm and stress?
5. How important are friends in the quest for independence?
6. How do different parenting styles affect adolescents?

Vocabulary

Read these terms with their definitions before viewing the program.

Authoritarian Parenting Style Parents are punitive, rejecting and scolding. Child's view is rarely taken into consideration.

Authoritative Parenting Style Warm, nurturing parents who control with explanations. Child's view is taken into consideration.

Diffusion Adolescent's apathy regarding defining who they are.

Foreclosure Premature identity formation.

Identity The attempt to define oneself as a unique person.

Independence Identity formation is an individual process.

Interdependence The individual and the family are part of the identity formation process and are included in the identity.

Moratorium A time out during which adolescents experiment with alternative identities.

Permissive Parenting Style Parents allow a great deal of freedom and impose few rules. May want a buddy relationship with child.

Rejecting/Neglecting Parenting Style Parents do not express emotional attachment to their children. Lack of communication with or support of children.

Instructional Objectives

When you have successfully completed this module, you will be able to:

1. Define the terms: Identity, foreclosure, moratorium, diffusion.
2. Describe the process of identity formation during adolescence.
3. Identify four types of identity.
4. Identify the factors which influence the relationship between adolescents and their parents.
5. Describe the socializing role of peers during adolescence.

Self-Test

After studying the objectives and watching the video, take the self-test to check your progress.

1. Next to each definition write in the appropriate term.

- _____ a. Adolescents experiment with different identities.
- _____ b. The adolescents are apathetic about defining who they are.
- _____ c. The attempt to define oneself as a unique person.
- _____ d. The adolescent does not question things but does what is expected of him by parents and society.

2. Describe how each of the following affects the process of identity formation:

- a. The supporting role of the family.

- b. Ethnic or traditional values which differ from mainstream culture.

- c. Conflict between original culture and mainstream culture.

- d. Attending college, joining military or peace corps.

3. Name four types of identity:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

4. Next to each statement place a T if true or an F if false

- ___ a. Adolescence is always a time of stress and struggle with parents.
- ___ b. Adolescents frequently become overcritical of their parents.
- ___ c. Adolescence should be seen as a time to renegotiate the relationship between parents and child.
- ___ d. Authoritarian parents are nurturing and warm towards their children.
- ___ e. Permissive style parents often form buddy type relationships with their children.
- ___ f. Adolescents in two parent families may try to play parents against each other.
- ___ g. Single parent families experience more conflict because adolescents are given less responsibility.
- ___ h. In low income communities parents who tend to monitor their adolescents always have more conflict with them.
- ___ i. Parents with less education may become frustrated by the endless debate teenagers favor.
- ___ j. By late adolescence most families have found harmony.

5. List the three main functions served by the peer group during adolescence:

- a.
- b.
- c.

Next to each statement write the letter of the phrase which best completes the statement:

6. Younger teens when compared to older teens

- a. place more emphasis on conformity.
- b. are more tolerant of individuality.
- c. are more likely to be in girl-boy friendships.
- d. are less concerned about peer acceptance.

7. Peer groups tend to

- a. be similar in all circumstances.
- b. be made up of friends who come from different social and economic backgrounds.
- c. differ within the larger community of adolescents.
- d. have little impact on self esteem.

8. In the dating process peers

- a. have little or no influence.
- b. rarely function as go-betweens.
- c. usually apply pressure to the couple to become intimate.
- d. often support the couple's decision to abstain from intimacy until marriage.