

CHAPTER 11

ADOLESCENCE

Chapter at a Glance

SECTION 1: Physical Development

- During the adolescent growth spurt, which lasts two to three years, the average teenager grows 8 to 12 inches in height.
- Many physical changes take place during adolescence.
- Maturation rates vary among adolescents.

SECTION 2: Social Development

- Adolescents typically experience a great deal of stress during their teen years, due both to biological and psychological causes.
- Relationships with parents change during adolescence.
- Adolescents turn increasingly to their peers for support during adolescence.

SECTION 3: Identity Formation

- One of the main psychological tasks of adolescence is finding an identity—a sense of who one is and what one stands for.
- There are four categories of adolescent identity status.
- Issues of gender and ethnicity play a major role in the formation of identity.

SECTION 4: Challenges of Adolescence

- Adolescents face many challenges during their teen years.
- Eating disorders can be one of the big problems of adolescence.
- Substance abuse can cause many diseases.
- Many issues surround adolescent sexuality.

employers can avoid paying taxes or minimum wages. Other teens work too many hours, late hours, or at hazardous job sites.

Research also shows that the groups of teens who are working has changed. In the past, teenagers from low-income households were more likely to work than wealthier teens. Teens from low-income families often worked to help support their families. Today employment is more common among middle-class adolescents. One reason might be that middle-class families tend to live nearer to the locations where teens can easily find jobs, such as suburban malls.

Many middle-class adolescents do not work for the same reasons that teens from low-income families do. Teens from low-income families tend to work to help support their families or to save money for college. In contrast, most middle-class teens use their income for personal purchases, including clothing, music, sports equipment, TVs, and cars.

Working can benefit teens. By holding a job, adolescents can develop responsibility, learn the value of money and education, and acquire good work habits.

However, working can also have negative effects. Teens who work long hours sometimes report lower grades, higher rates of drug and alcohol use, more delinquent behavior, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of psychological problems.

You may have a job or may be considering getting one. Working and the problems that can come with a job are among the challenges facing adolescents today.

What do you think?

1. How has adolescent employment changed in the United States?
2. Do you think the benefits of teens working long hours during the school year outweigh the disadvantages? Why or why not?

Physical Development

Before You Read

Main Idea

Adolescence is a time of great change, especially in terms of physical development.

Reading Focus

1. What are the three age category labels between childhood and adulthood?
2. What is the adolescent growth spurt?
3. What does sexual development encompass?
4. What differences in maturation rates occur among adolescents?

Vocabulary

adolescent growth spurt
puberty
primary sex characteristics
secondary sex characteristics
menarche



Use a graphic organizer like this one to take notes on sexual development.

Sexual Development	
Changes in males	Changes in females

A Big Appetite



PSYCHOLOGY CLOSE UP

Why am I always hungry? Jeremy, in the comic strip "Zits," is in many ways a typical teenager, experiencing a growth spurt and all that such a spurt implies. Jeremy has a big, indeed insatiable, appetite. He requires enormous quantities of food to fuel his growth spurt. For this reason, he and his friends like to patronize a restaurant that features an all-you-can-eat buffet. In addition to his big appetite, Jeremy has big feet, gangly limbs, and long, flailing arms that seem to be barely under his control.

Big biological changes occur in adolescence—bigger changes than at any time since infancy. Different parts of an adolescent's body grow at different rates. The nose, ears, or feet can grow bigger before the rest of the body has had time to catch up.

These changes can be stressful for the person experiencing them—which is why a sense of humor can come in handy in weathering the stresses of adolescent growth. You will read more about the adolescent growth spurt, sexual development, and maturation in this section. ■

From Child to Adult

In earlier times in Western societies (and in some developing countries today), the period of transition from childhood to adulthood was very brief. Most people took over the responsibilities of adulthood—going to work, caring for children, and so on—shortly after they reached sexual maturity. The transition to adulthood was often marked by an elaborate ceremony that symbolized the passage from childhood to adulthood.

Starting in the 1900s, however, that changed. In Western societies today, required education has been extended, and the status and duties of adulthood have been delayed. As a result, adolescence has come to cover most of the teen years and a little beyond. Today the period known as adolescence is sometimes subdivided into smaller categories. These categories include early adolescence (ages 11 through 14), middle adolescence (15 through 18), and late adolescence (18 through 21).

The biological changes that occur during adolescence are greater than those of any other time of life, with the exception of infancy. In some ways, however, the changes in adolescence are more dramatic than those that occur in infancy—unlike infants, adolescents are aware of the changes that are taking place and of what the changes mean. But no teenager can ever be quite sure how all these physical changes will turn out. There are many variables to consider. Different adolescents begin their growth spurts at different ages, and they grow at different rates. Even the different parts of an adolescent's body grow at different rates. Most adolescents worry about the final shape and size of their growing bodies.

Reading Check **Recall** What are the years of the three age categories of adolescence?

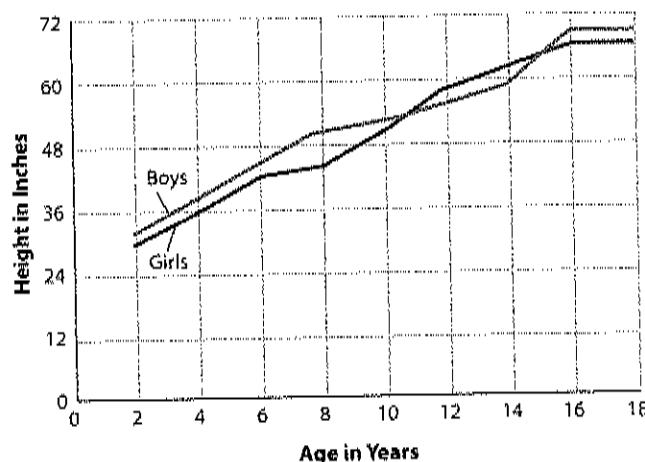
The Adolescent Growth Spurt

During adolescence the stable growth patterns in height and weight that mark early and middle childhood come to an end. Stability is replaced by an abrupt burst of growth. This **adolescent growth spurt** usually lasts two to three years. During this time of rapid growth, most adolescents grow 8 to 12 inches in height.

Statistically Speaking...

Physical Growth in Adolescents Throughout childhood, girls and boys are similar in height. At puberty, girls surge ahead. At about age 14, boys surge back ahead of girls.

AVERAGE GROWTH RATES FOR BOYS AND GIRLS FROM CHILDHOOD THROUGH ADOLESCENCE



Source: Tanner, J.M. (1978). *Fetus into man: Physical growth from conception to maturity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (p. 118)

girls 8-11/boys 10-14

Age range during which growth spurt starts

girls 3.2"/boys 3.7"

Height gained in inches in growth spurt

girls 8-14/boys 9-14

Age range during which puberty begins

Skills Focus **INTERPRETING GRAPHS** At what two ages do the growth lines intersect for boys and girls?

Differences Between Boys and Girls Girls typically begin the adolescent growth spurt a little earlier than boys. For most girls, the growth spurt usually begins at about the age of 10 or 11. For boys, the adolescent growth spurt begins about 2 years later. As a result, girls tend to be taller and heavier than boys during early adolescence.

SEXUAL CHANGES

QUICK
FACTS

Both males and females undergo major physical changes in adolescence. These changes are caused by hormones.

Changes in Males

Testes increase output of testosterone.

Sexual organs grow.

Voice deepens.

Hair on face and chest; growth of pubic and underarm hair

Broader shoulders, thicker body

More muscle, larger heart and lungs

Larger heart and lungs.

Changes in Females

Ovaries secrete more estrogen.

Growth of breast tissue.

Growth of supportive tissue in hips and buttocks.

Pelvic region widens.

Hips become rounder.

Growth of pubic and underarm hair

Menstruation

Skills Focus

INTERPRETING CHARTS What causes sexual changes?



These two photographs of the same person show the changes that occur between childhood and adolescence.

Then, during middle adolescence, most boys catch up and grow taller than their female classmates. However, the exact time when this growth will occur for any individual—boy or girl—is difficult to predict.

The Awkward Age This period of sudden adolescent growth can be awkward for both boys and girls because different parts of their bodies grow and mature at different rates. This growth spurt may cause adolescents to feel as if their hands or feet are too big or to worry that they “just don’t look right.”

Although some teenagers may feel that they look awkward, they actually tend to be well coordinated during adolescence. As adolescents become older and complete the growth spurt, their bodies usually reach their correct proportions.

Sometimes adolescents don’t eat enough of the right foods to support the growth spurt. For example, calcium in the diet is important for proper bone growth. Menstruating girls need sufficient iron in their diets. For reasons such as this, proper nutrition is important during the adolescent years.

Reading Check

Define What is the awkward age?

Sexual Development

Adolescence begins with the onset of puberty. **Puberty** refers to the specific developmental changes that lead to the ability to reproduce. This biological stage of development ends when physical growth does.

During puberty the reproductive organs of both males and females develop and dramatically change the adolescent body. Characteristics that are directly involved in reproduction are called **primary sex characteristics**. Characteristics that are not directly involved in reproduction, **secondary sex characteristics**, also develop during puberty. These secondary sex characteristics include changes such as the growth of hair on certain parts of the body, the deepening of the voice in males, and the rounding of the hips and breasts in females. These changes are linked to changes in hormone levels.

Changes in Males In boys, hormones from the pituitary gland cause the testes to increase output of the hormone testosterone. This causes boys’ sexual organs to grow, their voices to deepen, and hair to grow on their genitals, faces and later on their chests.

During the period of rapid growth, boys develop broader shoulders and thicker bodies. They also develop more muscle tissue and larger hearts and lungs.

Changes in Females In girls, hormones from the pituitary gland stimulate the ovaries to secrete more estrogen. Estrogen spurs the growth of breast tissue and supportive tissue in the hips and buttocks. As a result, the pelvic region widens and the hips become rounder. Girls also produce small amounts of androgens, which are similar to testosterone, in the adrenal glands. Androgens stimulate the growth of pubic and underarm hair. Estrogen and androgens work together to spur the growth of the female sex organs.

The production of estrogen, which becomes cyclical in puberty, regulates the menstrual cycle. The first menstruation, or **menarche**, is a major life event for most girls, and most societies consider it the beginning of womanhood. It usually occurs between 11 and 14.

Reading Check **Recall** What are primary sex characteristics?

Differences in Maturation Rates

Some adolescents reach physical maturity at a relatively early age, while others reach it later. Research suggests that boys who mature early have certain advantages over boys who mature later. They tend to be more

popular and to be leaders within their circle of friends. Their greater size and strength may give them a competitive edge in sports. They also tend to be more self-assured and relaxed. This may boost their self-esteem.

However, boys who mature early physically are not necessarily more mature than their peers in how they approach and handle problems. Also, coaches, friends, and others may pressure them to perform beyond their abilities. Although early-maturing boys may have some advantages over their peers who develop later, these advantages seem to fade over time. Some studies indicate that boys who mature later show better adjustment as adults. Of course, not all early maturing boys have problems, either as adolescents or as adults.

Early maturation is somewhat different for girls. Girls who mature early may feel awkward because they are taller than their classmates, both male and female. They may be teased about their height and secondary sexual characteristics.

Needless to say, not all girls who mature early encounter problems. In any case, the differences between early- and late-maturing girls usually do not last long. Once their peers catch up to them, the issue of differences in maturity generally disappears.

Reading Check **Find the Main Idea** What happens to the advantages of early maturation?

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

cyclical
recurring or moving
in cycles

SECTION 1 Assessment

Reviewing Main Ideas and Vocabulary

- 1. Describe** Which age period does adolescence cover?
- 2. Define** Give another name for the adolescent growth spurt.
- 3. Summarize** What are some examples of secondary sex characteristics?

Thinking Critically

- 4. Compare and Contrast** Name some of the main differences in the adolescent growth spurt between boys and girls.
- 5. Finding the Main Idea** What are some long-term effects of early maturation for girls and for boys?

- 6. Analyze** Using your notes and a graphic organizer like the one below, explain sexual development changes in males and females.



FOCUS ON WRITING

- 7. Narrative** In a journal entry, write a paragraph in which you tell a brief story about why adolescence is the "awkward age." The story may be true or fictional.

The Adolescent Brain

The adolescent brain is a work in progress. Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) studies have shown that the teenage brain continues to grow and develop through the teen years. With MRIs, researchers can see how the brain really works. They can see what parts of the brain use energy when performing a particular task.

One of the leading pioneers in research on the teenage brain is Dr. Jay Giedd at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in Bethesda, Maryland. Giedd also works with colleagues at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. Their research has confirmed that young people's brains are not fully developed until they reach their early twenties (Giedd et al., 2008).

Dr. Giedd studied the brains of 145 children using MRIs every two years during their childhood and adolescence. (MRIs do not require dyes or radiation and so are ethically acceptable.) Previously, most experts

thought the brain's structure was pretty much set by the age of 5 or 6. But Giedd and other researchers have discovered changes in the structure of the brain that appear later in development (Spinks, 2003). Giedd's studies were longitudinal studies that followed some subjects from the age of three to the age of thirty.

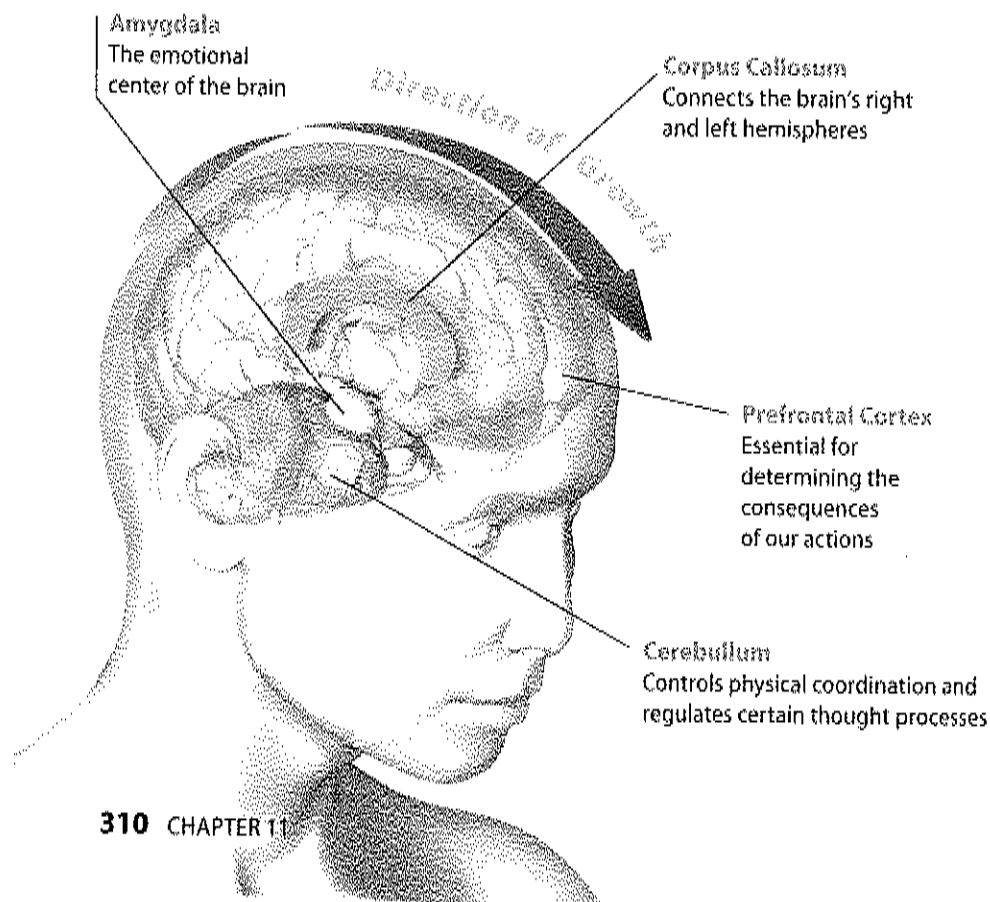
Giedd and his colleagues found that the prefrontal cortex appears to grow again just before puberty. The prefrontal cortex is sometimes described as the CEO of the brain, controlling overall planning, impulse control, and judgment. Although adolescents are typically strong

physically, the late development of the prefrontal cortex is one element in their relatively high rates of injury and accidents (Casey et al., 2008).

That is, because impulse control among adolescents is still relatively immature, adolescents make some unwise decisions. These decisions can result in injuries, violence, substance abuse, unintended pregnancies, and sexually transmitted diseases.

Giedd's studies help to explain why adolescents and young adults engage in riskier behavior than do younger or older people. Puberty pushes adolescents toward risky behavior and thrill seeking before the control system in the brain that regulates risky impulses has had time to fully mature. One of the most surprising findings of Giedd's work is that the production of gray matter in the brain does not stop in childhood but continues into the teens and even the twenties (Spano, 2002).

Some of the characteristic behaviors of adolescence, such as increased risk taking and poor judgment, may have as much to do with developmental events in the brain as with the hormonal changes of puberty. All this has produced an appreciation for the dynamic nature of the brain.



Thinking Critically

- 1. Categorize** Why do adolescents sometimes make unwise decisions?
- 2. Discuss** What are some of the areas in which you think adolescents should be able to make their own decisions and judgments, based on what you have just read about brain development, impulse control, and risky behavior in adolescents?

Social Development

Before You Read

Main Idea

Adolescence is a challenging time during which teenagers must learn new social skills and ways of interacting with others.

Reading Focus

1. What two factors make adolescence a time of stress and storm?
2. What is the main reason that relationships with parents change during adolescence?
3. Why are relationships with peers so important to adolescents?

Vocabulary

cliques
crowds
peer pressure

TAKING NOTES

Use a graphic organizer like this one to take notes on adolescent relations with parents and peers.

Relations with parents	Relations with peers

Clueless OR COOL?

PSYCHOLOGY CLOSE UP

Why are relationships so difficult sometimes?

Probably at some time in your life you've wanted to join a particular group, club, or team. And you may or may not have been successful in gaining acceptance into the group. Teenagers typically choose friends who are like themselves in background, goals, and attitudes. Shared interests—such as sports, a favorite author or band, or hobby—may be enough to override differences in background or attitudes.

The unpleasant experiences of adolescence, such as bullying, teasing, and feelings of being excluded by in-crowds and cliques, are typical of the teenage years and are nearly universal. On the other hand, such experiences don't last forever, and with time most people manage to find a group of friends who are more accepting and less judgmental. ■



Storm and Stress

About 100 years ago, G. Stanley Hall, the founder of the American Psychological Association, described adolescence as a time of *Sturm und Drang*. These are German words that mean “storm and stress.” Hall attributed the conflicts and distress some adolescents experience to biological changes.

Biology and Adolescence Research suggests that the hormonal changes of adolescence do have some effect on the activity levels, mood swings, and aggressive tendencies of many adolescents. However, contemporary studies suggest that cultural and social influences may have more of an effect on adolescent behavior than hormones do.

Psychology and Adolescence Adolescence is a psychological concept as well as a biological concept. Psychologically, the adolescent period ends when people become adults and take on adult responsibilities. How long adolescence lasts varies with each individual. For some people, adolescence may be quite extended; for others, it is quite short.

Certainly, adolescence can be a challenging time of life. Some teenagers may experience difficulties at home or at school that lead to psychological and social problems. Nonetheless, the vast majority of teenagers face the many challenges of adolescence and cope with them successfully. They form new friendships, increase their knowledge, build their self-awareness, and develop personal and social skills that enable them to become successful and competent adults.

Reading Check Define What do the German words *Sturm und Drang* mean?

Relationships with Parents

During adolescence, parent-child relationships undergo redefinition. However, the picture of adolescence as a state of constant rebellion against parents and society is exaggerated. The truth is that most of the changes that occur during adolescence are positive.

The Quest for Independence As adolescents strive to become more independent from their parents, however, some conflicts may arise. This striving for greater freedom often results in bickering, especially in early

adolescence. Conflicts typically center on such issues as homework, chores, money, appearance, curfews, and dating. Arguments sometimes arise when adolescents maintain that personal choices, such as those that have to do with clothes and friends, should be made by them, not their parents.

The adolescent quest for independence may lead to less time spent with family, greater emotional attachment to people who are not family members, and more activities outside the home. In one study, children ranging in age from 9 to 15 carried electronic pagers for a week so that when signaled they could report to researchers what they were doing and with whom. The study showed that the older the children were, the less time they spent with their families.

A Lasting Bond Greater independence from parents does not mean that adolescents withdraw emotionally from their parents or fall completely under the influence of their peers. Most adolescents continue to love, respect, and feel loyalty toward their parents.

Adolescents who feel close to their parents tend to show greater self-reliance and independence than those who are distant from their parents. Adolescents who retain close ties with parents also tend to fare better in school and have fewer adjustment problems.

Despite a certain amount of parent-adolescent conflict, parents and adolescents usually share similar social, political, religious, and economic views. For example, adolescents tend to share the religion of one or both of their parents. Rarely will a teenager break completely with his or her family and adopt a different religion. Therefore, while there are frequent parent-adolescent differences of opinion about behavior and rules of conduct, conflict between the generations on broader issues is less common.

Adolescents tend to interact with their mothers more than they do with their fathers. Most adolescents also see their mothers as more supportive than their fathers, as knowing them better, and as more likely to tolerate their opinions. Teenagers are also more likely to seek and follow advice from their mothers than from their fathers.

Reading Check Summarize Why do adolescents often spend less time with their families?

Adolescents on Television

A variety of television shows feature adolescent characters. Some are supporting characters. Others are the main characters on shows that deal primarily with adolescents and the issues they face.

PROCEDURE

1. Keep a log for a week of adolescent characters that you observe on television.
2. Record in your log the qualities and defining characteristics of these characters.
3. As you watch a number of shows in order to observe television's portrayal of adolescents and their world, record the names of the shows.

ANALYSIS

1. Make a list with your classmates of the shows that you observed and the names of the characters on these shows.
2. Make another list of the defining qualities of adolescents as portrayed on television.
3. Discuss with the class whether they think the portrayal of adolescents on television is accurate and fair. If the class feels that the portrayal is inaccurate or unfair, discuss why you think such a portrayal persists.

Relationships with Peers

The transition from childhood to adolescence involves an increase in the importance of peers. While most adolescents maintain good relations with parents, peers become more important in terms of influence and emotional support.

Adolescent Friendships Friendship is a very important part of adolescence. Most adolescents tend to have one or two "best friends," but they have other good friends as well. Adolescents may spend several hours a day with their friends. When teenagers are not actually with their friends, they are often talking with them on the phone or texting them on their cell phones.

Adolescents value loyalty as a key aspect of friendship. They say that true friends "stick up for you in a fight" and do not "talk about you behind your back." In other words, having friends means more to adolescents than just having people to spend time with. Close friends provide support and understanding.

Adolescents usually choose friends who are similar to themselves in age, background, educational goals, and attitudes toward drinking, drug use, and sexual activity. In addition, adolescents' closest friends are usually of their own sex. The friendships of adolescent girls tend to be closer than those of boys. Girls are

more likely than boys to share their secrets, personal problems, and innermost feelings. While boys also have close friendships, they tend to spend time together in larger, less intimate groups. These gender differences in patterns of friendship continue into adulthood.

Cliques and Crowds Adolescents not only have close friends; they also tend to belong to one or more larger peer groups. **Cliques** are peer groups of 5 to 10 people who spend a great deal of time with one another, sharing activities and confidences. Larger groups of people who do not spend as much time together but share attitudes and group identity are called **crowds**.

Adolescent cliques often include members of both sexes, which may lead to romantic relationships. Most young people also belong to a larger crowd with whom they go to parties, play basketball or baseball, and participate in other activities.

Some adolescents join certain cliques in their search for the stability and sense of belonging that come from being part of such a group. They may imitate their peers' speech and adopt some of their values. Teens in the same clique may follow similar fads in the way they dress or style their hair. They and the other members of the group may even become intolerant of "outsiders"—people not in the group.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

peers people who have equal standing with one another in rank, class, or age

Peer Influences Parents often worry that their adolescent children's needs for peer approval will influence them to engage in risky or unacceptable behavior. However, the assumption that parents and peers often pull an adolescent in different directions does not seem to be borne out by reality.

In fact, parental and peer influences often coincide to some degree. For example, research suggests that peers are more likely to urge adolescents to work for good grades and complete high school than they are to try to involve them in drug abuse, sexual activity, or delinquency.

Nevertheless, adolescents are influenced by their parents and peers in different ways. Adolescents are more likely to follow their peers in terms of dress, hairstyles, speech patterns, and taste in music. However, they are more likely to agree with their parents on issues such as moral values and educational and career goals.

In early adolescence, **peer pressure** is relatively weak, but it increases in middle adolescence, peaking at about the age of 15. Then, however, peer pressure seems to decrease after the age of 17.

Adolescents are strongly influenced by their peers for several reasons. They seek the approval of their peers and feel better about themselves when they receive such approval.

Peers provide standards by which adolescents can measure their behavior as they grow more independent of their parents. Also, because peers may share some of the same feelings, they can provide support in times of trouble or difficulty.

Dating and Romantic Relationships Many people begin dating during adolescence. Dating usually develops in stages. During the first stage, adolescents place themselves in situations where they will probably meet peers of the other sex—for example, at after-school events. In the next stage, adolescents participate in group dating, such as joining a mixed group at the movies. Finally, they may pair off as couples for traditional dating.

People date for several reasons. Obviously, people may date simply because they enjoy spending time with somebody they like. But dating may also help adolescents learn how to relate positively to other people. Furthermore, dating may help prepare adolescents for the more serious courtship activities that come later in life.

Among younger adolescents, dating relationships tend to be casual and short-lived. But in later adolescence, relationships tend to be more stable and committed.

Reading Check Summarize How do relationships with peers change during adolescence?

SECTION 2 Assessment

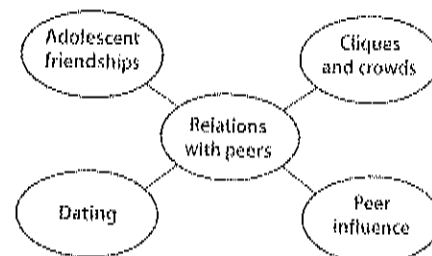
Reviewing Main Ideas and Vocabulary

1. **Summarize** When does adolescence end?
2. **Recall** With which parent are adolescents more likely to interact?
3. **Define** How is a crowd different from a clique?

Thinking Critically

4. **Draw Conclusions** Why are adolescents influenced by their peers?
5. **Evaluate** Why might adolescence be considered a time of storm and stress?

6. **Analyze** Using your notes and a graphic organizer like the one below, explain adolescent relationships with peers.



FOCUS ON WRITING

7. **Descriptive** Write a paragraph in which you describe what you feel is most stressful about adolescence.

Identity Formation

Before You Read

Main Idea

One of the main tasks of adolescence is the search for identity.

Reading Focus

1. How do psychologists view identity development?
2. What is identity status?
3. What roles do gender and ethnicity play in identity formation?

Vocabulary

identity crisis
identity status
identity moratorium
identity foreclosure
identity diffusion
identity achievement

TAKE NOTES

Use a graphic organizer like this one to take notes on identity status.

Identity Status	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

TURNING A Life Around

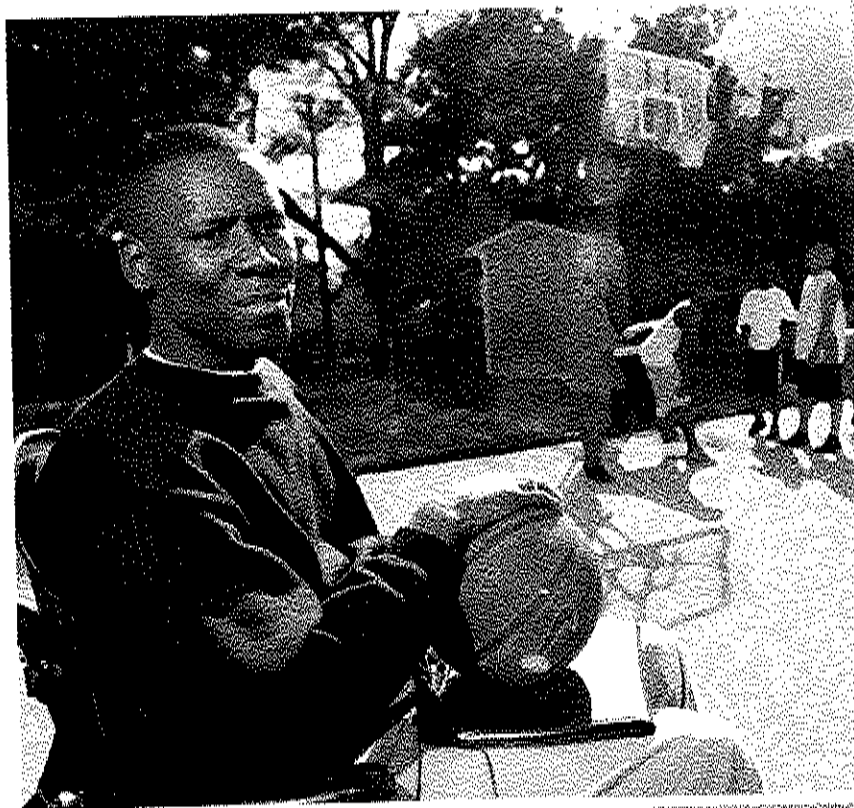
PSYCHOLOGY CLOSE UP

How did one young man's experiences have a positive impact on

his identity? Tyrone Flowers had a difficult childhood and adolescence. His parents were only teenagers when Tyrone was born. He was raised by relatives, along with his brothers and sisters. He did without new clothes, and meals were irregular. He became violent and spent time in mental hospitals and detention centers and eventually, he got into a fight and was shot three times. The shooting meant that he would spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair.

Then Tyrone made a choice to turn his life around. He went to a community college, then to a university, and eventually to law school where he earned a law degree. Then he founded Higher M-Pact, a nonprofit community group in Kansas City, Missouri, to help young people at risk. The group does such things as hand out school supplies to children who need them.

Although Tyrone Flowers's story is a highly dramatic example, most adolescents go through the experience of having their identity, a sense of who they are and what they stand for, shaped by their circumstances and the choices they make. ■



Tyrone Flowers overcame adversity and turned his life around by founding Higher M-Pact to help others.

Identity Development

Psychoanalyst Erik Erikson maintained that the journey of life consists of eight stages. At each stage, there is a task that must be mastered for healthy development to continue. Erikson said that young children must deal with issues of trust, autonomy (self-government), and initiative (taking the lead). Once children begin school, their main task becomes the development of competence, which is the sense that they can learn and achieve.

According to Erikson, the main task of the adolescent stage is the search for identity—a sense of who you are and what you stand for. Adolescents seek to identify their beliefs, their values, and their life goals. They also need to identify the areas in which they agree and disagree with parents, teachers, and friends.

Erikson believed that the task of establishing one's identity is accomplished by choosing and developing a commitment to a particular role or occupation in life. Accomplishing this task may also involve developing one's own political and religious beliefs.

To find an identity that is comfortable, adolescents may experiment with different values, beliefs, roles, and relationships. They may try out different “selves” in different situations. For example, the way they behave with their friends may be quite different from the way they behave with their parents. Adolescents who take on these different roles may sometimes wonder which of their selves is the “real” one. Adolescent identity is achieved when different selves are brought together into a unified sense of self.

Erikson thought that teens who do not succeed in forging an identity may become confused about who they really are and what they want to do in life. They may have difficulty making commitments and may drift from situation to situation. Since they do not create a solid sense of self, they may remain overly dependent on the opinions of others.

One key aspect of adolescent identity development is what Erikson called an identity crisis. An **identity crisis** is a turning point in a person's development when the person examines his or her values and makes or changes decisions about life roles. Adolescents can feel overwhelmed by the choices that lie before them and the decisions they must make.

In Piaget's four stages of cognitive development, the final stage is the formal-operational stage. It generally begins at puberty and continues through adulthood. Formal-operational thinking involves abstract thinking, such as hypothetical situations. It enables people to find reasonable solutions to problems and to predict the possible consequences of the decisions. Formal-operational thinking helps adolescents make important life choices. Because their thinking is no longer tied to concrete experience, adolescents can evaluate the options available to them even though they may not have personally experienced them.

Reading Check Recall According to Erikson, what is the main task of the adolescent stage of development?

Identity Status

According to psychologist James Marcia, the adolescent identity crisis arises as teenagers face decisions about their future work, moral standards, religious commitment, political orientation, or sexual orientation. Marcia studied the different ways that adolescents handle commitment and cope with the adolescent identity crisis. He concluded that there are four categories of adolescent **identity status**, or reaction patterns and processes. Adolescents do not remain in a single one of these categories throughout their entire adolescence, nor do they proceed through them in a particular order. Rather, they move in and out of the various categories, from one to another. The four categories are identity moratorium, identity foreclosure, identity diffusion, and identity achievement.

Identity Moratorium A moratorium is a “time out” period. Teens experiencing what Marcia termed **identity moratorium** delay making commitments about important questions. They are actively exploring various alternatives in an attempt to forge their identity. They may even experiment with different behaviors and personalities. Adolescents experimenting with different ways of life in their search for an identity may adopt distinctive ways of dressing or behaving.

Adolescents who remain in moratorium longer than other teens may become somewhat anxious as they struggle to find anchors

in an unstable world. But they are heading in a general direction even if they do not know where their journey will end. They may end up attending college, joining the armed services, or doing something completely different to reach their final goals.

Identity Foreclosure To avoid an identity crisis, adolescents in the **identity foreclosure** category make a commitment that forecloses (or shuts out) other possibilities. These adolescents make a definite commitment, but the commitment is based on the suggestions of others rather than on their own choices. They adopt a belief system or a plan of action without closely examining whether it is right for them. They may simply follow the model set by their parents, peers, teachers, or other authority figures in order to avoid uncertainty.

Although following a path recommended by an adult eliminates the need to make some hard choices, some adolescents become foreclosed too early. After they find themselves dissatisfied with the direction of their lives, they may switch to the moratorium category.

Identity Diffusion Adolescents in the category of **identity diffusion** seem to be constantly searching for meaning in life and for identity because they have not committed themselves to a set of personal beliefs or an occupational path. They lack goals or interests and seem to live from crisis to crisis.

Identity diffusion typically occurs in middle school and early high school. However, if it continues into the eleventh and twelfth grades, identity diffusion can lead to an "I don't care" attitude. Some adolescents in this category become angry and rebellious.

Identity Achievement Adolescents in the **identity achievement** category have coped with crises and have explored options. They have then committed themselves to occupational directions and have made decisions about important life questions. Although they have experienced an identity crisis, they have emerged from it with solid beliefs or with a plan, for example to pursue a course of study that leads to a particular career. Identity-achieved teens have feelings of well-being, self-esteem, and acceptance. They are capable of setting goals and working toward attaining their goals.

Many young people do not reach identity achievement until well after high school. It is normal to change majors in college and to change careers. Such changes, which may be made several times, do not mean that these people are indecisive or that they have made wrong decisions. The changes may simply mean that these individuals are continuing to actively explore their options. College, vocational training, and jobs are broadening experiences that expose people to new ways of life, career possibilities, and belief systems. It is common to adjust one's personal goals and beliefs as one matures and views the world from a new or broader perspective.

Reading Check Summarize What is an identity moratorium?

Gender and Ethnicity in Identity Formation

All adolescents struggle at some point with issues concerning who they are and what they stand for. However, the nature of the struggle is somewhat different for males and females and for adolescents from different ethnic backgrounds.

CASE STUDY CONNECTION

Work and Identity

The jobs that teenagers perform help them to achieve their identity. By trying out different jobs and tasks, adolescents learn which careers are best suited to their interests and abilities and which are likely to be fulfilling to them as adults.

IDENTITY STATUS CATEGORIES

QUICK FACTS

By studying how teenagers handle commitment and cope with the adolescent identity crisis, psychologist James Marcia identified four adolescent identity status categories.

Identity Moratorium

Searching for identity, exploring alternatives, delaying commitments

Identity Foreclosure

Conforming, accepting childhood identity and values, identifying with others, making commitments and plans without self-examination, becoming inflexible

Identity Diffusion

Making no commitment, no soul searching, no goals, angry and rebellious

Identity Achievement

Exploring options, committing to direction in life and occupation, finding own identity

Gender and Identity Formation According to Erik Erikson's theory, identity development during adolescence means embracing a philosophy of life and a commitment to a career. However, his views of the development of identity applied primarily to boys.

Erikson believed that people develop the capacity to form intimate relationships in the young adult stage of development. He also believed that the development of relationships was more important than occupational issues and values to women's identity.

Erikson, like Sigmund Freud, believed that women's identities were intimately connected with their roles as wives and mothers. Men's identities, on the other hand, were not assumed to depend on their roles as husbands and fathers.

Today many women work outside the home. Research shows that female adolescents are now more apt to approach identity formation like male adolescents. The concern of female adolescents about occupational plans is now about equal to that of males.

However, there is a difference. Female adolescents also express concern about how they will balance the day-to-day demands of work with those of family life. Their concern is well founded. Despite their involvement in the workplace, women in the United States still bear most of the responsibility for rearing the children and maintaining the home.

Ethnicity and Identity Formation Identity formation is often more complicated for adolescents from ethnic minority groups. These adolescents may be faced with two sets of cultural values. These two sets of values are those of their ethnic group and those of the larger society.

Sometimes these values are in conflict. In those cases, minority adolescents need to reconcile the differences and, frequently, decide where they stand.

Prejudice and discrimination can also contribute to the problems faced by adolescents from ethnic minority groups as they strive to forge a sense of identity. For example, the cultural heroes for these adolescents may not be recognized by members of other groups in society.

Adolescents whose father and mother are from different cultural backgrounds must also wrestle with balancing two cultural heritages. Parents from different ethnic groups may decide to spend their lives together. However, their cultures sometimes do not dwell contentedly side by side in the minds of their children. As a result of this discrepancy, the children may experience some degree of emotional conflict.

Reading Check Compare and Contrast For which group of adolescents is identity formation especially complicated?

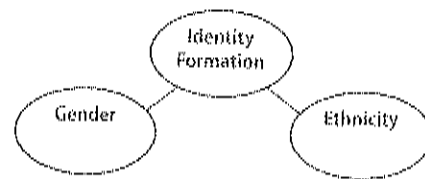
SECTION 3 Assessment

Reviewing Main Ideas and Vocabulary

1. **Define** What is an identity crisis?
2. **Summarize** What are the four main identity status categories?
3. **Recall** To which gender were Erikson's views of development intended to apply?

Thinking Critically

4. **Support a Point of View** Do you agree that the main task of adolescence is the formation of identity? Explain.
5. **Explain** What is Piaget's formal-operational stage of cognitive development?
6. **Analyze** Using your notes and a graphic organizer like the one below, explain the roles of gender and ethnicity in identity formation.
7. **Expository** Write a paragraph in which you explain what factors you think have been most important in forming your identity.



FOCUS ON WRITING

Rites of Passage

A rite of passage marks a person's entrance into a new stage of life. These ceremonies include baptisms, graduations, and marriages. For many people around the world, various rites such as school graduations and weddings signify the end of one period of life and the beginning of another.

Three Stages Most rites of passage are characterized by three stages. In the first stage, the participant is separated from his or her previous status. The next stage is a transitional stage in which the participant learns the behavior and ideas appropriate to his or her new status. In some African societies, for example, boys who are on the verge of adulthood are separated from others for days or even months while they learn tribal traditions and skills. After the completion of the second stage, the participant is formally admitted into his or her new status. This is often marked by an elaborate ceremony.

Graduation Ceremonies People often pass through the stages of a rite of passage as a group. For example, in many graduation ceremonies in the United States, the students sit together in a special area separated from families and friends. The walk

across the stage to receive a diploma symbolizes the transition from student to graduate. In some ceremonies in which the graduates wear academic caps and gowns, the graduates move the tassels on their caps from one side to the other to signify their entrance into the new group.

Quinceañera In some societies, teenagers celebrate certain birthdays as rites of passage. For example, the fifteenth birthday is an important occasion for many Hispanic girls. It is celebrated by the girl, her family, and community members in an event called *quinceañera*. A ceremony, usually involving a church mass, is followed by a party.

Bar and Bat Mitzvahs Jewish adolescents mark their entrance into the adult religious community with a special ceremony called (for boys) a bar mitzvah, which means "son of the

commandment," or (for girls) a bat mitzvah, which means "daughter of the commandment." When a Jewish child reaches age 13, he or she is expected to observe the religious customs and obligations of Jewish adulthood. After much preparation, Jewish teens read from the Torah.

Genpuku This was an ancient rite of passage—specifically, a coming of age ceremony—in Japan. Boys between the ages of 12 and 16 were taken to shrines where they were presented with a suit of armor, given an adult haircut, and also given an adult name.

Poy Sang Long This is a rite of passage among the Shan people of Myanmar and Thailand. Between 7 and 14 years of age, boys take vows as monks and participate in monastic life for a few weeks or months. The ceremony goes on for three days, with the boys being dressed up as princes in traditional clothes.

Thinking Critically

- Analyze** Besides the examples mentioned above, what are some other rites of passage for adolescents in the United States?
- Discuss** How do these rites of passage help in the process of identity formation?

In some Hispanic cultures, a girl's 15th birthday marks her passage into adulthood.



A young man reads the Torah in Hebrew as part of his Bar Mitzvah ceremony.



Challenges of Adolescence

Before You Read

Main Idea

Adolescence is a difficult time for most teenagers, with concerns about friendships, jobs, future careers, and body image among their many challenges.

Reading Focus

1. Why is adolescence a difficult time?
2. What eating disorders affect adolescents?
3. How can substance abuse be a challenge for adolescents?
4. What issues surround adolescent sexuality?
5. How does crime affect adolescents?

Vocabulary

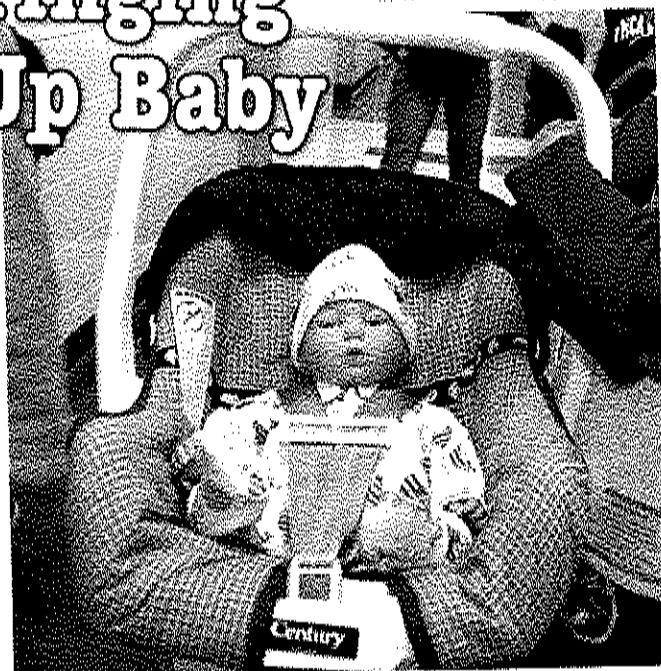
anorexia nervosa
bulimia nervosa
juvenile delinquency
status offenses

TAKING NOTES

Use a graphic organizer like this one to take notes on challenges of adolescence.

Challenges of Adolescence
Eating Disorders
Substance Abuse
Sexuality
Crime

Bringing Up Baby




PSYCHOLOGY CLOSE UP

How can a doll help prevent teen pregnancy?

RealCare Baby is a program that helps teenagers realize the amount of work and responsibility involved in taking care of a baby. The baby is, in fact, crafted to look like a real infant. It cries frequently, just like a real baby. The purpose of the doll is to imitate a real human infant's need for constant attention and care. In the United States, approximately 6 percent of sexually active teenage girls became pregnant in 2010, twice as high as rates in Canada (2.8 percent) and Sweden (3.1 percent) in the same

year. The rate of teen pregnancy has declined steadily since a record high of 11.7 percent in 1990, largely due to increased access to contraceptives and sex education. One of the main goals of the RealCare Baby program is to change these statistics in the United States.

A couple of days with the RealCare Baby doll usually helps most teenagers realize that they are not yet ready for the responsibilities of parenting. Issues revolving around sexuality and parenting are just some of the challenges that teenagers face in developing responsible behavior. 

A Difficult Time

Adolescence is a rewarding time of life for many young people. Yet, for others, adolescence is a difficult time. Some adolescents have problems that seem too large to handle. Nearly all teenagers know classmates who have school or family problems. Adolescents who are not accepted by their peers often experience loneliness and feelings of low self-esteem. Concerns about getting a good job, being able to support family members, and being accepted into college can be highly stressful.

Some young people may develop an eating disorder. Others may abuse alcohol or drugs. Still others may turn to crime and acts of mischief. Tragically, a few take their own lives.

Reading Check Summarize What are some causes of stress among adolescents?

Eating Disorders

The adolescent growth spurt makes it important that teenagers receive adequate nutrition. The average girl needs about 2,200 calories a day, and the average boy about 3,000. Adolescents also need protein, carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins, and minerals in their diet.

Adolescents who develop eating disorders get neither the calories nor nutrients their bodies need. Some teenagers starve themselves. Eating disorders affect many teenagers and young adults. More attention has been focused on eating disorders in recent years. The two main types of disorders are anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. In the United States the typical person with anorexia or bulimia is a young white woman of higher socioeconomic status.

Anorexia Nervosa A life-threatening disorder characterized by self-starvation and a distorted body image is called **anorexia nervosa**. Adolescents with anorexia usually weigh less than 85 percent of what would be considered a healthy weight. By and large, eating disorders afflict women during adolescence and young adulthood. Women with anorexia greatly outnumber men with the disorder.

In the typical pattern, an adolescent girl notices some weight gain and decides that it must come off. But even after she loses the “excess” weight, dieting—and, often,

exercise—continues even after she reaches an average weight, even after family members and others have told her that she is losing too much. Girls with anorexia usually deny that they are wasting away. Their body image is distorted. They focus on remaining pockets of fat—which may be nonexistent—while others see them as “skin and bones.”

Women with anorexia may lose 25 percent or more of their body weight in a year. Their overall health declines. A British study found that for many women, anorexia is a prolonged problem. Of women contacted 21 years after being hospitalized for the problem, only half had fully recovered within 10 years. About 4 to 5 percent of women with anorexia die from causes related to the problem.

Bulimia Nervosa Recurrent cycles of binge eating followed by dramatic measures to eliminate food, such as vomiting, are characteristic of **bulimia nervosa**. Binge eating frequently follows a pattern of severe dieting. As with anorexia, the great majority of people with bulimia are female. In addition to vomiting, girls may seek to compensate for what they have eaten by fasting, strict dieting, and vigorous exercise. Girls with bulimia tend to be perfectionists in their attitudes about body shape and weight.

Origins of Anorexia and Bulimia To understand anorexia and bulimia, let us return to the fact that so many more women than men develop these problems. Theorists account for the gender gap in different ways. Some psychodynamic theorists suggest that anorexia represents a woman’s effort to return to a stage before the onset of puberty and adolescence. Anorexia allows her to avoid growing up, separating from her family, and taking on adult responsibilities.

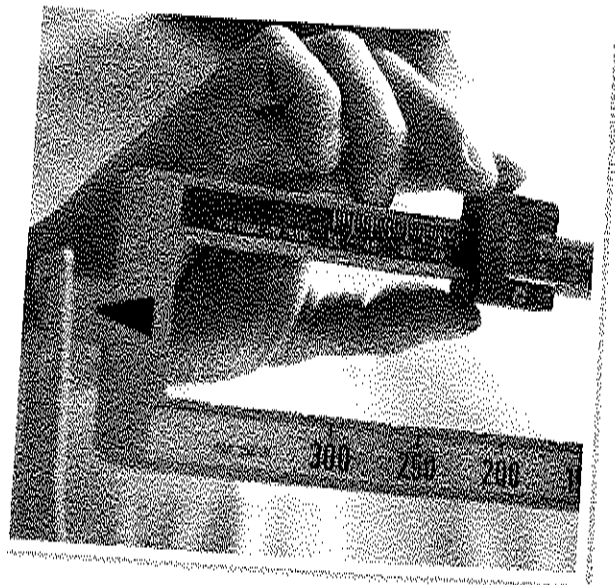
But the cultural aspects of eating disorders seem to be more important. Young people with eating disorders are often attempting to conform to an ideal body shape. Popular fashion models represent that ideal: they are taller and slimmer than the average woman. The feminine ideal has been becoming slimmer and slimmer. As the feminine cultural ideal grows thinner, some women with average or heavier-than-average figures can feel more and more pressure to slim down.

Eating Disorders

Definition: Eating disorders are life-threatening ailments characterized by self-starvation and a distorted body image, recurrent cycles of binge eating, and dramatic measures to eliminate food. They are especially destructive in adolescence because the growth spurt makes adequate nutrition vitally important.

Symptoms may include: excessive dieting and exercise, excessive weight loss, obsession with food

Behavior: bingeing, purging, fasting



Many men with eating disorders are involved in sports or jobs that require them to maintain a certain weight, such as wrestling, dancing, and modeling. Men are more likely than women to control their weight through intense exercise. Men are also under social pressure to conform to an ideal body image.

Families also play a role in eating disorders. Parents of adolescent girls with eating disorders are relatively more likely to have problems with eating and dieting themselves, to think that their daughters should lose weight, and to consider their daughters to be unattractive. Some researchers speculate that adolescents may develop eating disorders as a way of coping with feelings of loneliness. Some cases of anorexia nervosa may even reflect exaggerated efforts to remain healthy by avoiding intake of fat and cholesterol, which are widely publicized as risk factors for heart problems.

Anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa both tend to run in families. Researchers have found evidence pointing to genetic factors involving perfectionism as increasing the risk of these disorders. Even so, they believe there is a role for cultural influences. Perhaps genetic factors contribute to a perfectionistic personality and then cultural and family influences direct the perfectionism toward concern about body shape.

Treatment Whatever the causes, eating disorders are a severe health problem, and people who have them require professional assistance to overcome them. Often a school psychologist or counselor can suggest possible courses of action.

Sometimes health professionals will give students with eating disorders a choice—either to enter a treatment program (where their caloric intake is closely monitored) or to remain in school as long as they stop losing weight and receive counseling. They may have to see a psychologist on a regular basis and have their weight checked weekly.

Reading Check Define What are anorexia and bulimia nervosa?

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse usually begins with experimentation in adolescence. Reasons include curiosity, peer pressure, parental abuse, rebelliousness, escape from boredom or pressure, and a search for excitement or pleasure.

Prevalence of Substance Abuse A government survey of more than 15,000 teenagers across the United States found that use of drugs and cigarettes increased over the 1990s. Cigarette smoking was up slightly, with 35 percent of teenagers reporting lighting up in the previous month. The number of teens who reported smoking marijuana in the previous month nearly doubled from about 15 percent in 1991 to 27 percent in 1999. However, a survey conducted by the National Institute on Drug Abuse concluded that the use of cigarettes and marijuana declined from 2001–2007. In fact, a report from the same institute in 2015 suggests that the use of all illicit drugs, with the exception of marijuana, has remained stable or declined over the past decade. This research

Many delinquent acts do not lead to arrest and prosecution but still have serious consequences for the teen. Status offenses tend to be handled by school officials, social workers, parents, and other such authorities who can impose various punishments without the police or the courts.

When adolescents *are* arrested and prosecuted, they are often referred to mental-health agencies and are not formally labeled as delinquents. Nonetheless, between 25 percent and 30 percent of the serious crimes in the United States are committed by teenagers under the age of 18.

Factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency are similar to those that contribute to substance abuse. They include the following factors:

- low self-esteem
- feelings of alienation and estrangement
- lack of affection, lax discipline, and use of severe physical punishment in the home
- behavior problems that began early
- poor grades and lack of educational or vocational goals
- pressure from peers
- having a parent or sibling who has been convicted of criminal behavior

Most adolescents who have clear educational and vocational goals manage to steer clear of such problems. Adolescents who fear the onset of a particular problem are usually better off if they can talk things over with a trusted adult—that might be a parent or another relative, a teacher, or a guidance counselor.

Unfortunately, many troubled adolescents do not get into programs developed to deal with juvenile delinquency until after the behavior pattern has become well established. Then it is more difficult to help them.

The most successful delinquency-prevention programs are those that address the problems early. These programs provide classes and support groups for parents, make home visits to families, and provide other services. And they encourage parents to become involved in the activities of their children in and out of school.

Research shows that children who participate in prevention programs do better in school, are more likely to graduate from high school, go on to college, and get a steady job than those children who do not participate. They also seem less inclined to commit crimes.

Reading Check Summarize What are some examples of status offenses?

**ACADEMIC
VOCABULARY**

alienation

isolation, estrangement, dissociation

SECTION 4 Assessment

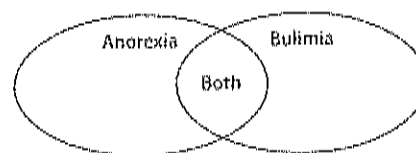
Reviewing Main Ideas and Vocabulary

1. **Recall** Approximately how many Americans die of smoking diseases each year?
2. **Summarize** Why do adolescents experiment with drugs?
3. **Contrast** How do status offenses differ from other acts of delinquency?

Thinking Critically

4. **Categorize** What are some of the types of challenges faced by adolescents today?
5. **Explain** What are three of the most common factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency?

6. **Analyze** Using your notes and a graphic organizer like the one here, explain the similarities and differences between anorexia and bulimia.



FOCUS ON WRITING

7. **Narrative** Write a dialogue in which you and a friend discuss the best method of treatment for another friend's eating disorder or substance-abuse problem.

Simulation

Applying What You've Learned

Peer Pressure

Can you resist peer pressure and stand up for your beliefs even if it means risking an awkward situation or confrontation?



Reading and
Activity Workbook

Use the workbook to
complete this simulation.

1. Introduction

This simulation will help you practice different ways of responding to peer pressure in a positive way. You will work in small groups to write peer-pressure scenarios. Then you will discuss these scenarios and role-play a different scenario in front of the class. Finally, you will hold a class discussion on how accurate the simulations were and how successful people were in standing up to peer pressure. To complete this simulation, follow the steps below.

- Following your teacher's instructions, organize the class into groups of four students.
- As a group, review the material in this chapter on peer pressure.
- Next, discuss a realistic and appropriate scenario in which one or more teenagers use peer pressure to try to get a friend to do something they do not want to do. Then write it down. Be prepared to discuss your scenario with the rest of the class.
- As a class, role-play the scenario described on the next page. Then hold a class discussion on the effectiveness of refusal skills.

2. Writing Your Scenario

The goal of this part of the activity is to simulate an appropriate response to peer pressure by writing a plausible scenario. Working with your group, write a scenario that simulates a peer-pressure situation. Select one member of your group to write down the scenario as a dialogue. Your scenario should clearly identify the teen being pressured and the peer exerting the pressure. See the example on this page.

After your group is through writing the scenario, hold a class discussion about what each group wrote. How realistic were the scenarios? In the sample dialogues, what techniques were used by peers to try to influence people's behavior?

Here is an example of a sample peer-pressure scenario that includes dialogue.

Peer: Come on! Everyone's doing it! It's all over the school. Just try it!

Teen: I don't care! I don't like it! It's wrong! I don't want to mess myself up.

How would you respond to the peer's hectoring comments?

Peer: Ah, it won't do you any harm. Everyone's going to call you "chicken," you know. Cluck, cluck!

Teen: Stop it! I am not chicken! I just don't have to do it if I don't want to!

Peer: Yeah, yeah, sure, whatever. Cluck, cluck!

Teen: Stop it!

Peer: Just don't try hanging with us any more. That's all I got to say!

Teen: Come on! You're my friends!

Peer: Of course we are! And would we steer you wrong?

Teen: OK, I suppose.

found that marijuana use increased to 19.8 million users in 2013, up from 14.5 million in 2007. This increase may have been due, in part, to increased access to legalized medical and recreational cannabis. Alcohol is used occasionally by the majority of high-school and college students.

Adolescents often try alcohol and other substances because their peers recommend them or their parents use them. Adolescents also frequently turn to alcohol and other substances to cope with stress. In the short term, use of a substance may win the approval of peers or improve one's mood. It may also reduce unpleasant sensations such as anxiety and tension. But binge drinking and long-term drinking are connected to aggressive behavior, poor grades, and car accidents.

More than 430,000 Americans die from smoking-related diseases each year, including lung cancer, emphysema, and heart attacks. Cocaine narrows blood vessels, thickens the blood, and quickens the heart rate. These events have caused the sudden deaths of a number of athletes who used cocaine to try to boost their performance. Marijuana contains more tars than cigarette smoke—a factor in lung cancer. Marijuana also elevates one's heart rate and blood pressure. Marijuana can also make it more difficult to retain information—that is, it can make it more difficult to learn both in and out of school.

Regular use of alcohol and some other substances—particularly nicotine, cocaine, barbiturates, and heroin—can cause teenagers to become addicted to them. Addicts experience intense cravings for the substances when their

effects have worn off. They usually have to take more and more of the substance to achieve the same effects they once obtained with a small amount. The substance may eventually take control of the person's life.

Treatment Withdrawing from alcohol and other drugs can be a physically and psychologically painful experience for people of any age. After someone is admitted to a hospital or a treatment center, the first step in his or her treatment is detoxification—the removal of the toxic, or poisonous, substance from the body. During this process, the person is gradually and carefully taken off the drug.

Another important aspect of the treatment of adolescents with substance abuse problems is psychological. Therapists can help young people understand the meaning of their drug use and help teenagers recognize what is at the root of their problems.

Drug Prevention Most school drug-prevention programs are aimed at stopping the use of so-called gateway drugs. These drugs include alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana.

Research on the effectiveness of prevention programs shows mixed results. Attempts to scare students by warning them about the dangerous consequences of using drugs can backfire, possibly because scare tactics can arouse their curiosity and disbelief. Peer counseling is often effective because students are more willing to believe other students who have actually used the substances.

Reading Check: Recall What are some of the reasons that adolescents try alcohol?

Substance Abuse

Definition: Substance abuse is the use of alcohol, drugs, and other substances to alter mood, done to the point of physical or emotional damage. Addictions may be linked to genetics, but environment also plays a role. Not everyone who has a genetic inclination will develop an addiction, and not everyone who has an addiction is genetically predisposed.

Symptoms may include: addiction, aggressive behavior, accidents, impaired judgment, physical symptoms of specific diseases caused by different drugs, such as nicotine or alcohol

Behavior: aggression, forgetfulness, drunk driving, erratic judgment and actions



FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO TEENAGE PREGNANCY

Several factors contribute to the likelihood of teenage pregnancy.

Problematic relationships

- fights with parents or rebellion against parents

Emotional problems

- feelings of emptiness or loneliness

Problems in school

- lack of educational goals

Loosening of prohibitions

- portrayal of sexual themes in media

Peer pressure

- friends engaging in sexual activity

Lack of knowledge

- misunderstanding or ignorance about the facts of reproduction

Sexuality

Many adolescents struggle with issues of how and when to express their sexual feelings. But they receive mixed messages. Their bodies may be giving them a powerful “go-ahead” signal at the same time that their parents and other adults are advising them of the dangers of early sexual relationships and encouraging them to practice abstinence.

Yet other messages may come from media images—models in advertisements, television shows that revolve around sex, and popular songs with lyrics that contain powerful sexual messages. Many teenagers may assume that sexual activity is more widespread among their peers than it actually is. The truth is, however, that many adolescents are not sexually active.

People today often start dating and establishing exclusive relationships at a younger age than people of earlier times. Adolescents who begin dating early are more likely to engage in sexual relations during high school. About 6.8 percent of American girls between the ages of 15 and 19 become pregnant each year. This amounts to more than 750,000 pregnancies a year.

Teenage pregnancies can be devastating for adolescent mothers, their children, and society at large. Life for many teenage mothers is an uphill struggle. Teenage mothers are more likely to live in poverty and lack hope for their futures than teenagers of the same age who do not have children.

Half of all adolescent mothers quit school and go on welfare. Few receive financial or emotional help from the fathers of their children. The fathers—sometimes also adolescents—often cannot support themselves, much less a family. Most adolescents share the view that teenage parenthood is very undesirable.

Some adolescent girls intentionally become pregnant to try to strengthen relationships with their boyfriends or to fill an emotional void by having a child. However, the relationships with the fathers usually come to an end. Premature motherhood tends to make emotional problems worse, not better. It also has serious implications for the offspring. Teen mothers are more likely to give birth to premature babies and to babies who are below average in weight.

Reading Check Recall What percentage of American girls between 15 and 19 become pregnant each year?

Crime and Avoiding Problems

The term **juvenile delinquency** refers to many illegal activities committed by children or adolescents. The most extreme acts of delinquency include robbery, rape, and homicide, which are serious crimes regardless of the offender's age. Less serious offenses, known as **status offenses**, are illegal only when they are committed by minors. Status offenses include truancy (that is, unexcused absence from school), drinking, smoking, and running away from home.

Some people assume that teenagers from poor neighborhoods are more likely to break the law than other teens. However, this is not true. Research shows that low income is not a factor. Another common belief is that children whose mothers work outside the home are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior. Research seems to indicate that this is not the case, however.