

# A study on adolescent development behaviors



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Several theories explained adolescent's development behaviors such as psychosexual development stage of Sigmund Freud, psychosocial development stage of Erik Erikson, developmental task theory of Robert Harvighurst, and cognitive development of Jean Piaget.

Psychosexual development stages were developed by Sigmund Freud (Salkind, 2004). Freud's theory assumed that these stages occur universally, for all children everywhere. Psychosexual stages consisted of five stages:

1) The oral stage lasts from birth to 18 months. The focus of pleasure is the oral cavity (mouth, lips, tongue, gums). Sucking, eating, talking and biting are favorite activities.

2) The anal stage lasts from 18 months to three or four years old. The Focus pleasure is the anus. The function here is successful toilet training.

3) The phallic stage lasts from three are four to five, six or seven years old. The focus of pleasure is the genitalia. The major function of this stage is the healthy development of sexual interest, which is achieved through masturbation and unconscious sexual desire for the parent of the opposite sex.

4) The latent stage began around 7 to puberty around 12 years. During this stage, Freud believed that the sexual impulse was suppressed in the service of learning. This stage is thought to be a time of reserve in preparation for the hectic and demanding genital stage, which follow.

5) The genital stage begins at puberty, and represents the resurgence of the sex drive in adolescence, and the more specific focusing of pleasure in sexual intercourse.

According to Erickson, human life progresses through a series of eight stages. Each of these stages is marked by a crisis that needs to be resolved so that the individual can move on (Dacey & Travers, 2004; Muuss, 1996).

Erickson's eight psychosocial stages consisted of:

1) Basic trust versus mistrust (birth to the ages of 18 months). Infants should develop a sense of basic trust. It is the first requisite for later developing confidence, optimism, and a feeling of security. If they lack of trust, they may find expression in statements of self-debasement and may impair “capacity to feel identical” with others during adolescence.

2) Autonomy versus shame and doubt (between the ages of 18 months and 3 years old). Children develop motor ability and begin to gain control over their bodies. The children can develop a feeling of mastery for a job well done and a sense of autonomy of choice in regard to toilet training. The autonomy is one of the essential ingredients for the development of identity. Shame and self-doubt resulted from too many restrictions, unfair punishment, and the parents' inability to cope with the budding. Adolescents may become so self-conscious and lacking in autonomy. They may be unable to form an appropriate identity.

3) Initiative versus guilt (3 to 6 years old). Building on the ability to control themselves, children now acquire some influence over others in the family and begin to successfully manipulate their surroundings. In the process of

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developing initiative, goal setting emerges and activities become increasingly guided by a purpose. Children will also explore and manipulate their own bodies as well as those of friends because they have curiosity about sex organs. Social criticism and punishment may foster the development of guilt feelings in regard to sexual exploration. The sexual self-image and differentiation between masculine-making and feminine-catching initiative become important prerequisites for the sexual identity crisis during adolescence. If parents restrain, resist, and punish the newly developing initiative too much, the result may be a more permanent immobilization by guilt, inhibition by fear, role inhibition, role fixation, and over-dependence on adults. The negative outcome would contribute to emergence of identity diffusion in adolescence.

4) Industry versus inferiority (6 to 11 years old). This is the period of learning and mastering the more basic skills need in society. The children learn to win approval, recognition, and a feeling of success by producing things and doing a job well. The free play of the earlier period now becomes subordinated to rules and regulations and more structured activities. If the sense of industry is established successfully, the children will develop a sense of duty, a feeling for workmanship and work participation, and an attitude of wanting to do well that is based on industriousness and desire for success. If they fail in the task, they will have a lack of industriousness and a feeling of usefulness.

5) Identity versus identity confusion (12 to 18 years old). The main task of the adolescent is to achieve a stage of identity. The adolescent begins to select, define a role and prepares to handle the chosen position. Erickson believes that several social and behavioral problems adolescents encounter,

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for instance, substance abuse, suicide attempts, eating disorder and teenage pregnancy, can be viewed as reflecting earlier difficulties with mistrust, shame and doubt, guilt, and/or inferiority feelings. The successful way of coping with the challenges of adolescence, for example, academic mastery, dating, individuation, renegotiating relationships with parents, build on earlier experiences of trust, autonomy, initiative, and industriousness. If adolescents fail in the search for an identity, they will experience self-doubt, role diffusion, and role confusion. They will continue to be morbidly preoccupied with the opinion of others or may turn to drugs or alcohols in order to relieve the anxiety that role diffusion creates.

6) Intimacy versus isolation (18 to 35 years old). The individual faces new goals and tasks that directly involve other people, and during this period the individual is expected not only to develop and meet career goals, but also to begin the developmental process of forming intimate relationships with others. The intimacy includes sexual intimacy, genuine friendship, stable love, and lasting marriage. If intimacy is not based on a permanent identity, divorce and separation may result.

7) Generativity versus stagnation (35 to 65 years old). In this stage many people become mentors to younger individuals, sharing their knowledge and philosophy of life. Marriage, giving birth to children and guiding their growth are such creative, productive activities. If failure should occur at this stage, there would be no further development. The individual becomes egotistical, self-absorbed, and self-indulgent.

8) Integrity versus despair (65 years old and older). Ego integrity is based on self-discipline and results in the wisdom that can give old age its positive quality. Adults who have a sense of integrity accept their lives as having been well spent. They feel a kinship with people of other cultures and of previous and future generations. The negative outcome is confusion, helplessness, and a feeling that one's life was wasted of being finished.

Both the latent stage of Freud's theory and the industry versus inferiority of Erikson's theory are important periods for children because they are forming their identity. In those stages, children are learning about sex roles and sexuality which are significant identity issues because reproductively mature sex drive emerges during puberty and makes sexuality an identity issue. Moreover, children are developing physically. The researcher believed that both stages are a proper time to teach adolescents to understand their sexual role and prepare themselves for the next step as a teenager. Therefore, adolescent boys 10-13 years old were selected to participate in the prevention program.