

# Adolescent interview assignment

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The period of physical and psychological development from puberty to maturity is referred to as adolescence. It is at this point where individuals between the ages of 11 to 22 begin a distinct and unique stage of the life cycle. The transformation can be the most difficult stage in development that an individual will endure. According to our text, " Adolescence is characterized by significant physical change, increase hormone production, sexual maturation, improved cognitive functioning, formative identity development and increased independence. " (Hutchinson & Contributors, 2011).

It is at this time when an individual forms their own sense of identity. Challenging and confusing is what comes to mind when I recall growing up during this crucial time. My adolescent interview took place in a library on a Saturday afternoon. Before I began, I advised the adolescent that this interview was strictly for a college course assignment and would be kept confidential. I explained that I would not use her real name or those of anyone else that she would share. She understood that she had the right not to answer any question that made her feel uncomfortable.

My interviewee, Rebecca, is 17 years old and Caucasian. She wears glasses and is a senior in high school. The age of Rebecca's mother is 41 and her father is age 42. Rebecca's mother is a stay-at-home mom. The constant security of knowing that a parent is home when they return from school is a staple in security and stability. According to Schneider and Young (1996), " Adolescents with attachment to parents during adolescence differs from other ages because it emphasizes emotional autonomy whilst maximizing levels of support. (p. 30) Rebecca explained that she is always happy to get <https://assignbuster.com/adolescent-interview-assignment/>

home from school and have her mother waiting for her. There is a sense of security knowing that she will not be alone and that one of her parents will always be there which gives her the more confidence in the things she does. In having one parent home while the other is outside of the home working is beneficial in stronger relationships, less emotional outbursts and breakdowns. Rebecca's father is classified as a "top executive" within the company he is employed in.

He has been employed with this same company for a number of years and has job security due to his knowledge in this field and experience. In this socioeconomic world that we live in, income is a major factor with emotional security, especially in the home. Mental health plays an important part in adolescent years and is overall improved with larger income families. "With adolescents and teenagers an improvement in their mental health was found in correlation with increased incomes in the family" (Schneider and Younger, 1996). Rebecca is the oldest of 4 children. She has two brothers, Robert and John.

She also has one sister, Charlotte. Rebecca is the first born of this family. Rebecca stated, that she moved to New Jersey when she was eleven years old. Rebecca said, "We lived in Florida and relocated to New Jersey because of my dad's job. I was angry that we had to leave my friends, school and our house." When asked about her siblings' reaction to the move, she said, "the move did not seem to affect them. I was the only one upset." Rebecca and her siblings relate to her emotions of leaving her friends and school. They would constantly tell her that she was overreacting.

She stated, " We would constantly argue and then my parents would get involved and then I would start crying and go to my room to calm down. " Removing yourself from an uncomfortable and emotional situation and being able to resort to an inner peace is a positive tool to self-soothing and healing. " Emotional independence might mean discovering your own way to overcome emotional turmoil. " (Hutchinson & Contributors, 2011). Sibling rivalry, which is normal within families, can be considered a communication tool and is also an emotional response for competition of dominance amongst the siblings, and for parental attention and support.

When discussing the move to New Jersey, Rebecca stated, " I am always thinking in the back of my mind that we might have to move again because of a new job or that my mom will not want to stay here any longer because she hates the cold weather. We had a great life in Florida. Our home was 10 minutes from the beach and we had sunshine and warm weather all of the time. I had never seen snow or felt freezing cold. The pictures on the news was all I knew about winter but now we are living it every season. " Over the past few years, Rebecca has noticed that her height and weight have changed significantly.

She has grown taller than most of her friends and has gained weight. She has no negative feeling towards her height but the weight gain is an issue for her. " Early maturing girls are the first individuals in their cohort to begin gaining weight, and the resulting female physical changes (such as increasing body fat) do not fit the valued image of the slim, androgynous fashion model. " (Eccles, 1999). She does not think that she is obese; however, she wants to lose 15 lbs. She understands that this is a natural occurrence and is part of

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puberty but she has a hard time accepting that her physical appearance has changed.

She admitted that she feels unattractive at times. " Appearance is most important for overall self-esteem, especially so among females. " (Steinberg & Morris, 2001). She is rectifying this unsatisfying feeling by faithfully going to the gym three times a week and dieting. " As body mass increases during puberty, adolescent females may develop a more negative body image and in turn, disordered eating and depression can occur. " (Steinberg & Morris, 2001). Eating disorders such as Anorexia and Bulimia Nervosa can be potentially life threatening especially during adolescence.

When asked how she would describe herself, she stated, " I am an easy going, fun loving person who likes to laugh and hang with my family and friends. I am extremely social and have an abundance of friends; I am an organized and structured person. Parents who do a good job of managing their lives, and who get along well with others, tend to have children who are also good at managing their lives and getting along with others. " (Harris, 1998). She also stated that she loves animals and likes to help people. Rebecca is not currently in any athletics or clubs at school. However, she did tell me about her softball experiences.

During seventh grade, she joined the softball team at school and she also played for the recreation department in her town. Her girlfriends were also on the team. They would have a great time with each other and always were supportive of one another. Then when they got into high positions. She made the team and so did some of her friends, however, it was not as fun as

compared to the past. It was completely different and she lost her desire to play. Rebecca is employed part-time in retail and is enjoying it. She has developed friendships at work and enjoys being independent.

She is working many hours and saving her money to buy a car and help pay for her college tuition. Her goal is to have enough money saved so that she can purchase a car by this upcoming Spring. " Work can provide an opportunity for social interaction and greater financial independence.

(Hutchinson & Contributors, 2011). She has been able to open a personal savings and checking account, separate from her parents, to feel more financially free from always asking her parents for money. She has also picked up a babysitting job once a week which pays extremely well in cash.

Having two jobs cuts into her family time, however, she makes it up where she can. "... distancing in parent-adolescent relations has a functional value for adolescents in that it fosters their independence, prompts them to try more things on their own, and develop their sense of efficacy. " (Eccles, 1999). When I asked Rebecca what was her idea of an important friendship she replied, " a true friendship consists of love, honesty, support, trust, respect and forgiveness. Rebecca's best friend is Samantha and she described her as the best friend anyone could ask for.

She is fun loving, easy going, and they both have an enormous list of things in common. "... adolescents are likely to select friends that are similar to them in gender and interests.... (Hutchinson & Contributors, 2011). Sam is also smart and funny. They go everywhere and do everything together. She knows that she can count on her for anything. They met in church and then

found out that they were attending the same school. Interactions with peers become particularly important during adolescence and have a significant effect on their maturity and their identity development.

Rebecca also has a group of friends that she calls “ her soccer friends. ” They share the commonality of being athletic and are in the high honors classes together. They have the appreciation of the sport they are playing and perform at a higher academic level than their average peers. “ By mid-adolescence, the peer group is organized around common interests . ” (Hutchinson & Contributors, 2011). They go out as a group during the weekends and have a rotating sleep-over routine. They enjoy each other’s company. When asked about a boyfriend, Rebecca’s reply was that she just recently had her first boyfriend.

She did not want to mention his name. They dated for about six months and in the beginning things were spectacular. She looked forward to every second they were together. When they were together it made her feel warm and fuzzy inside like she had never felt before. They were friends first in biology class. She always thought he was cute but said that he was a nerd. When I asked what a nerd was she replied, “ a little dorky, for example, his clothes were different, they always matched. Then one day he started to talk to her and each day it increased. He was a senior and she was a Junior.

He asked her out in May and at the end of summer, he went off to college. They had agreed to continue to date exclusively. She said that he would send her texts every day, ten times a day, stating how much he missed her and that he couldn’t handle being away from her. Then in October, he sent

her a text during school and broke up with her. She stated that it was for no apparent reason. simply told her that he did not have any feelings for her and that she needed to move on. She exclaimed, that “ this was the worst experience of my life. I loved this person and I thought he loved me. She was in a state of confusion, emotional breakdown and rejection. According to Hutchinson, “ Furrow and Wehner (1997, cited Newman & Newman, 2009, p. 243) suggest that romantic relationships meet four needs: affiliation, attachment, caregiving, and sexual gratification. ” (2011). Rebecca confided in me that they never had a sexual encounter; however, there was an affiliation, attachment and caregiving. “ Children who have close friendships in middle school have been found to be more likely to have romantic relationships in dolescence (Newman & Newman). ” (Hutchinson & Contributors, 2011).

When asked about school and how it’s going, she replied that “ school is great. ” She is looking forward to the end of the year. She told me that she has not decided where she will attend college; however, she awaiting acceptance letter from the eight universities that she applied to. I asked her to describe one of her best teachers and she without hesitation, stated that, “ My favorite teacher is Mr. Bellotti. He is my psychology teacher. He is personable, outgoing and can really relate to the class. He is always eady to talk about anything that is on our minds and always has a positive attitude. He is by far my all time favorite teacher throughout my high school career. ” She also stated that her parents are fond of him as well. “ Children spend less time under the supervision of their parents and come increasingly under the influence of teach and activity leaders. ” (Eccles, 1999). It is encouraging <https://assignbuster.com/adolescent-interview-assignment/>



to hear that teachers are still appealing to adolescents and that they are earning the respect and appreciation they deserve. I asked Rebecca if her parents pressure her about schoolwork. She replied, " My parents are always telling me how important it is to get good grades in school.

They ask me daily how school is, do I have any homework or do I need help with any of my subjects. Sometimes it is irritating but I know that they want me to do well in school and not to fall behind. I do get good grades and I am organized with my homework and assignments. Rebecca's parents have always told her that college was not an option; it was what she was going to do. When I asked her how this made her feel, she replied " I agree with them because I know that in today's society you must have a formal education and college is the only way to get there.

In this struggling economy, the only way you will have an edge above someone else is if you have a college degree. Rebecca's parents respect her individualism and encourage her to always be the best that she can be. They support her in choices and give her the time and attention she needs. "... The authoritative parenting style has been found to be associated with academic achievement, self-esteem and social competence. " (Hutchinson & Contributors, 2011). When asked about how important do you think it is for parents to be strict with their teenager?

She replied, I don't think they have to be very strict. There is a fine line with being strict and being irrational. Teenagers need to make mistakes and they need to learn and grow from them. " She told me that her parents give her respect and listen to what she has to say and it is the same way for her. My

parents have confidence in me that I will make the right decisions and be responsible. They are not overbearing and trust me enough to give me freedom to make decisions on my own. I know that my parents love me and want looking out for me and they have my best interest in mind.

She told me that they have a very close relationship and that she is extremely lucky to have such wonderful parents. " The parent's behavior also affects the way the child feels about the parent. " (Galdwell, 1998). Their relationship is one that there is nothing that they cannot talk about. They value her opinion and input. She said that their family has always been extremely attentive to one another and affectionate. She stated, " there is a lot of love in our family that I do not see in other homes. " The fact that she shared that statement signaled how different she was compared to her peers.

Children who are treated with affection and respect tend to do better at managing their lives and their personal relationships than children who are treated harshly. " (Harris, 1998). Overall my interview with Rebecca was extremely enlightening that an adolescent was positive, confident, had firm self-esteem, passionate, respectable and responsible. She is a positive role model for those associated with her and I wish her much success in all of her future endeavors. References Hutchinson, E. and Contributors (2011).

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