

ADOLESCENCE: CHARMS AND CHALLENGES

L.No	Title of Lesson	SKILLS	Activity
20	Adolescence: Charms and Challenges	Self Awareness, Empathy, Interpersonal Relationship, Effective Communication, Problem Solving, Decision Making, Coping with Stress and Coping with emotion	Understanding Adolescence and its phases

Summary

Adolescence is the transitional stage between childhood and adulthood. It is the age between 10-19 years. Though the timing and pace of changes may vary among individuals, these can be broadly categorised as **physical, emotional, social and cognitive development**.

Physical development: During adolescence, physical development begins with puberty, which means beginning of sexual maturity. Menstruation in girls and nocturnal emission in boys are natural phenomenon. There are many myths related to it. You should make informed and responsible choices rather than follow these myths blindly.

Emotional Development: It means developing an ability to manage emotions and to express them positive and responsible ways. Almost all adolescents go through a stage of rebelling against restrictions. Angry outbursts and mood swings are quite common in this stage.

Social Development: It refers to the interaction of adolescents with their family, peers and others. As children transform into adolescents and later to adulthood, their social relationships undergo many changes.

Cognitive development: This refers to the development of brain, which facilitates adolescents to perform more complex mental functions. For example:

- They are able to do abstract thinking, means, at this stage they can imagine the impossible.
- Personal fable: At this stage adolescents think that they are unique and nothing bad can happen to them.
- They are able to think systematically.

One of the main characteristic of adolescence is **idealism**. Adolescents imagine that everyone is watching them. They are influenced by social norms, culture of the world and mass media. They copy popular language, clothes, music and dance. Towards later adolescence comes the time when you need to choose and prepare for a career. Try to explore avenues available around you. You can get relevant information from parents and employees from specific fields, career guidance websites and weekly sections of many magazines and newspapers.

Principal Points

Adolescents start distancing themselves from their families. They start valuing their peers more than before. Besides being the responsibility of parents to make efforts for having good relations with adolescents, it is also the duty of adolescents to maintain good relationship with their parents. They should listen to their parents' opinions, think through their suggestions carefully and then put forth their views and feelings clearly and in a respectful manner.

They must share their feelings with parents and establish an open channel of communication. They must be courteous to their parents. For a healthy relationship, they need to understand their parents.

Build Your Understanding

Building of positive self concept is very important for the personality development.

Self concept means the way in which you see your strengths and weaknesses. Self concept is said to be low when you see only your weaknesses and it is high when you look at your strengths and want to improve yourself.

Self-esteem is your personal judgment of your abilities. In other words, if you have high self esteem, you have more belief in your abilities. Positive self concept leads to higher self esteem.

What's Important to Know?

Physical development: This period is marked by physical growth and changes in body shape.

Emotional Development: Adolescents feel as if they are sitting on an emotional seesaw, feeling up one minute and down the next; feeling mature on some days and child-like on others. Though each person is unique and has different responses to stress.

Social Development: Adolescents develop a strong sense of selfhood and have their own views and feelings about various issues. In their effort to become independent and develop their own identity, they slowly start taking their own decisions.

Cognitive Development: It is concerned with the development of a person's thought processes. It deals with the way these thought processes influence how we understand and interact with the world. Adolescence develop their thinking process through the following:

- *Abstract thinking:* At this stage, they can imagine the impossible.
- *Personal fable:* Adolescents think that they are unique and nothing bad can happen to them. This is one of the reasons for them to take risks. Adolescents are energetic and spontaneous in nature and try new things without fear.
- *Systematic thinking:* If asked to take a decision, adolescents are able to list and examine various alternatives and the consequences of each alternative, before choosing any one.
- *Idealism:* They have a strong sense of right and wrong. They develop awareness about themselves and their surroundings with a strong sense of pride.
- *Imaginary audience:* Adolescents imagine that everyone is watching them. They become more aware of their surroundings.

Did You Know?

- During adolescence, almost 75% of adult height and about 50% of adult weight is gained.
- Voice changes during adolescence because of the growth of Larynx. In a boy, it grows by about 60%. A bigger larynx makes a lower sound.
- A girl can get pregnant before her menstrual cycle begins as she releases an egg before her first period. Ovulation occurs when a mature egg is released from the ovary, pushed down the fallopian tube, and is available to be fertilized. This may happen before the first menstrual cycle, so the egg could be fertilized if sexual intercourse occurs close to your period.

Extend Your Horizon

There are various myths and misconceptions related to adolescence. List the ones stated in the chapter. Discuss them with your friends.

Evaluate Yourself

1. Sudha is very conscious of her dark complexion. She avoids interacting with people. Give four suggestions to Sudha which can help build a positive self esteem.
2. Cite a situation where you experienced a conflict between what you wanted to do and what was expected of you. How did you resolve the situation?

Maximize your marks

Read the case studies carefully and perform activities suggested in the lesson to build a clear understanding of the topic.