

Adolescence
by Ian McMahan

Chapter 1
Adolescence: Past,
Present, and Future

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Themes and Approaches

- Ecological systems
- Stage-environment fit
- Cultural diversity
- Globalization
- Practical applications
- Positive development

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How Our Text Is Structured

- Describing and studying adolescence
- Physical and cognitive changes
- Ecological contexts of adolescence
- Family, Peers, School, Community
- Major issues for adolescents
- Achievement, Gender, Identity, Intimacy
- Problems and Positive Prospects

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Useful Learning Strategies

- **Active learning**
- **Rephrase material in own words**
- **Explain to a friend**
- **Deep processing**
- **Link new concepts to personal experience**

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Who Is An Adolescent?

- **Different boundaries in different contexts**
- **Physical growth spurt**
- **Sexual maturation**
- **Independence from parents**
- **Achievement of sense of identity**
- **Cultural/legal recognition as an adult**

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Two Sorts Of Transitions

- **Change after a balance is upset**
- ***Normative*: Happen to most at same age**
- **For example, puberty, high school graduation**
- ***Idiosyncratic*: Happen at individual, unpredictable times**
- **For example, illness, moving, parental divorce**

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The Phases And Tasks Of Adolescence

- **Adolescent phases linked to different tasks**
 - **Early adolescence (11–14), adapting to puberty**
 - **Middle adolescence (15–18), independence, intimacy**
 - **Late adolescence (19–22), work, relationships, values**

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Adolescence In Earlier Times

- **Adolescents treated differently in different eras**
- **Citizenship at adulthood in ancient Greece, Rome**
- **Life-cycle service in pre-industrial Europe**
- **Rousseau: We should cherish childhood, adolescence**
- **Child labor in 19th-century American industry**
- **Adolescence seen as a social problem**

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Adolescence In 20th Century America

- **“The Age of Adolescence”**
 - **Role of child labor laws and longer schooling**
 - **Age stratification**
 - **Social science discovers adolescents**
 - **Teenagers in novels, movies, and comics**
 - **“Baby boom” after World War II**

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American Teens Today

- **Stereotype of sex, drugs, rock, violence**
- **Effects of changing family structures**
- **Growing influence of peers**
- **Consumerism: Having to have the right stuff**
- **Mixed messages about adolescent sexuality**

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Adolescents In The Population Pyramid

- **Proportion of young varies greatly by region**
 - **Industrialized world: 22% under 18**
 - **East Asia, Latin America: 32%–38%**
 - **Sub-Saharan Africa: over 50%**
- **Higher proportions of youth socially costly**
 - **Require more food, housing, schools, jobs**

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Trends And Problems In Adolescence Today

- **Glamorization of teens in Western societies**
- **Fitting in with the crowd**
- **Schooling for all**
- **Virtuous and vicious cycles**
- **Benefits and dangers of moving to the city**
- **The scourge of HIV/AIDS**

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What Do Adolescents Need To Survive And Grow?

- **A caring relationship with at least one adult**
- **Social support systems — families, schools, communities**
- **Social competence and life skills**
- **Motivation for lifelong learning**
- **Ability to live with uncertainty and change**
- **Belief in a promising future**

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