### Life-Span Development Thirteenth Edition

Chapter 13: Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Adulthood

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### The Transition From Adolescence to Adulthood

- Becoming an Adult
  - Emerging Adulthood: the transition from adolescence to adulthood
  - Occurs from approximately 18 to 25 years of age
  - Key Features
  - Identity exploration, especially in love and work
  - Instability, self-focused, and feeling in-between
  - The age of possibilities, a time when individuals have an opportunity to transform their lives

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### The Transition From Adolescence to Adulthood

- Becoming an Adult
  - Markers of Becoming an Adult:
    - Holding a full-time job
    - Economic independence
    - Taking responsibility for oneself

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### The Transition From Adolescence to Adulthood

- Becoming an Adult
  - The Transition from High School to College
  - Top-dog phenomenon
  - Movement to a larger school structure
  - Increased focus on achievement and assessment
  - Several positive features

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### Physical Development

- Physical Performance and Development:
  - Peak physical performance typically occurs between 19 and 26
  - Muscle tone and strength usually begin to show signs of decline around age 30

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### **Physical Development**

- · Health:
  - Emerging adults have twice the mortality rate of adolescents
  - Few chronic health problems
  - Increase in bad health habits
  - Positive health behavior equals positive life satisfaction

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## Physical Development

- Eating and Weight
  - Obesity:
  - Prevalence of obesity in U.S. adults is increasing
  - Factors Involved in Obesity
    - Heredity
    - Leptin: a protein involved in feeling full
    - Set point
    - Environmental factor

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# Physical Development

- Regular Exercise:
  - Helps prevent diseases
  - Aerobic exercise: sustained exercise that stimulates heart and lung activity
  - Exercise benefits both physical and mental health
    - Improves self-concept and reduces anxiety and depression

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### Physical Development

- Substance Abuse
  - Alcohol:
    - Binge drinking:
  - Increases in college
  - · Alcoholism: a disorder that involves long-term, repeated, uncontrolled, compulsive, and excessive use of alcoholic beverages and that impairs the drinker's health and social relationships
  - Environmental and genetic factors play a role

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## Physical Development

- Substance Abuse
  - Cigarette Smoking and Nicotine
  - Smoking linked to 30% of cancer deaths, 21% of heart disease deaths, and 82% of chronic pulmonary disease deaths
  - Fewer people smoke today than in the past
  - 50 million Americans still smoke today

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# Sexuality

- Sexual Activity in Emerging Adulthood

  - Patterns of Heterosexual Behavior include:
     Males have more casual sex partners, while females report being more selective
  - 60% have had sexual intercourse with only 1 individual in the last year
  - 25% report having sexual intercourse only a couple of times a year or not at all
  - Casual sex is more common in emerging adulthood than in young adulthood

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## Sexuality

- · Sexual Orientation and Behavior
- Heterosexual Attitudes and Behavior
  - Americans tend to fall into three categories:
    - 1/3 have sex twice a week or more, 1/3 a few times a month, and 1/3 a few times a year or not at all
  - · Married (and cohabiting) couples have sex more often than noncohabiting couples
  - Most Americans do not engage in kinky sexual acts
  - · Adultery is the exception rather than the rule
  - Men think about sex far more often than women do

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## Sexuality

- Sexual Orientation and Behavior
  - Sources of Sexual Orientation
  - Sexual orientation is a continuum from exclusive male–female relations to exclusive same-sex relations
  - Most likely a combination of genetic, hormonal, cognitive, and environmental factors

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## Sexuality

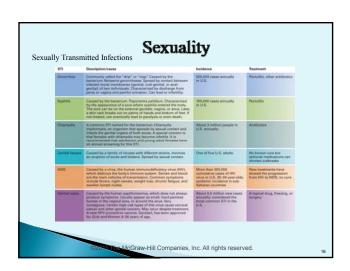
- Sexual Orientation and Behavior
  - Attitudes and Behaviors of Lesbians and Gay Males
  - Many gender differences that appear in heterosexual relationships occur in same-sex relationships
  - Lesbians have fewer sexual partners and less permissive attitudes about casual sex than gay men
  - Hate crimes and stigma-related experiences are a special concern

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# Sexuality

- <u>Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs):</u> diseases contracted primarily through sex
  - Affect about 1 of every 6 U.S. adults
  - HIV/AIDS has had the biggest impact on sexual behavior in the last several decades
    - HIV leads to AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome)

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## Sexuality

- Forcible Sexual Behavior
  - Rape: forcible sexual intercourse without consent
  - Most victims are women and are often reluctant to report the incident, although rape of men does occur
  - Males in the U.S. are socialized to be sexually aggressive, to regard women as inferior, and to view their own pleasure as most important
  - Date or acquaintance rape is an increasing concern today
  - Sexual harassment: a manifestation of power of one person over another
  - another

    Takes many forms

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### Cognitive Development

- Cognitive Stages
  - Piaget's View:
    - Adolescents and adults think qualitatively in the same way (formal operational stage)
      - Young adults are more *quantitatively* advanced because they have more knowledge than adolescents
  - Some developmentalists theorize that individuals consolidate their formal operational thinking during adulthood
    - Many adults do not think in formal operational ways at all

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## Cognitive Development

- Cognitive Stages
  - Realistic and Pragmatic Thinking:
  - As adults face the constraints of reality, their idealism decreases
  - Reflective and Relativistic Thinking:
  - Adults think in favor of reflective, relativistic ways
  - Is there a fifth, postformal stage?
    - Postformal thought
    - More reflective judgment, solutions to problems can vary, emotions can play a role in thinking

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### Cognitive Development

- Creativity
  - Creativity seems to peak in the 40s and then decline slightly
  - Extensive individual variation in the lifetime output of creative individuals

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#### Careers and Work

- Developmental Changes
  - From mid-twenties on, individuals often seek to establish their emerging career in a particular field
  - Finding a Path to a Purpose
    - Only 20% of 12 22-year-olds had a clear vision of where they want to go in life

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#### Careers and Work

- Monitoring the Occupational Outlook
- Be knowledgeable about different fields and companies
- The Impact of Work
  - Most spend 1/3 of their lives at work
  - Important consideration is how stressful the work is
  - Work During College
    - 81% of part-time U.S. college students are employed

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### Careers and Work

- The Impact of Work
  - $\blacksquare$  Unemployment
  - Unemployment produces stress and is related to physical problems, mental problems, marital difficulties, and homicide
  - Dual-Earner Couples:
    - Sometimes difficult to find a balance between work and the rest of life
  - Diversity in the Workplace
  - Women have increasingly entered the labor force

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