

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 non-cohabiting 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

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

Sexuality

- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs): 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)

Sexuality

Sexually Transmitted Infections

STI	Description/causes	Incidence	Treatment
Gonorrhea	Commonly called the "drip" or "clap." Caused by the bacterium <i>Neisseria gonorrhoeae</i> . Spread by contact between infected moist membranes (genital, oral genital, or anal genital) of two individuals. Characterized by discharge from penis or vagina and painful urination. Can lead to infertility.	500,000 cases annually in U.S.	Penicillin, other antibiotics
Syphilis	Caused by the bacterium <i>Treponema pallidum</i> . Characterized by the appearance of a sore where syphilis entered the body. The sore can be on the external genitalia, vagina, or anus. Later, a skin rash breaks out on palms of hands and bottom of feet. If not treated, can eventually lead to paralysis or even death.	100,000 cases annually in U.S.	Penicillin
Chlamydia	A common STI named for the bacterium <i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i> , an organism that spreads by sexual contact and infects the genital organs of both sexes. A special concern is that females with chlamydia may become infertile. It is recommended that adolescents and young adult females have an annual screening for this STI.	About 3 million people in U.S. annually	Antibiotics
Genital herpes	Caused by a family of viruses with different strains. Involves an eruption of sores and blisters. Spread by sexual contact.	One of five U.S. adults	No known cure but antiviral medications can shorten outbreaks
AIDS	Caused by a virus, the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which destroys the body's immune system. Semen and blood are the main vehicles of transmission. Common symptoms include fevers, night sweats, weight loss, chronic fatigue, and swollen lymph nodes.	More than 300,000 cumulative cases of HIV virus in U.S. 25–34 year olds; epidemic incidence in sub-Saharan countries.	New treatments have slowed the progression from HIV to AIDS; no cure
Genital warts	Caused by the human papillomavirus, which does not always produce symptoms. Usually appear as small, hard painless bumps in the vaginal area, or around the anus. Very contagious. Certain high-risk types of this virus cause cervical cancer and other genital cancers. May recur despite treatment. A new HPV preventive vaccine, Gardasil, has been approved for girls and women 9–26 years of age.	About 8.6 million new cases annually; considered the most common STI in the U.S.	A topical drug, freezing, or surgery

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
 - 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
 - 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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