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Adolescence Health Education Programme



Kerala State AIDS Control Society
State Council of Educational Research and Training

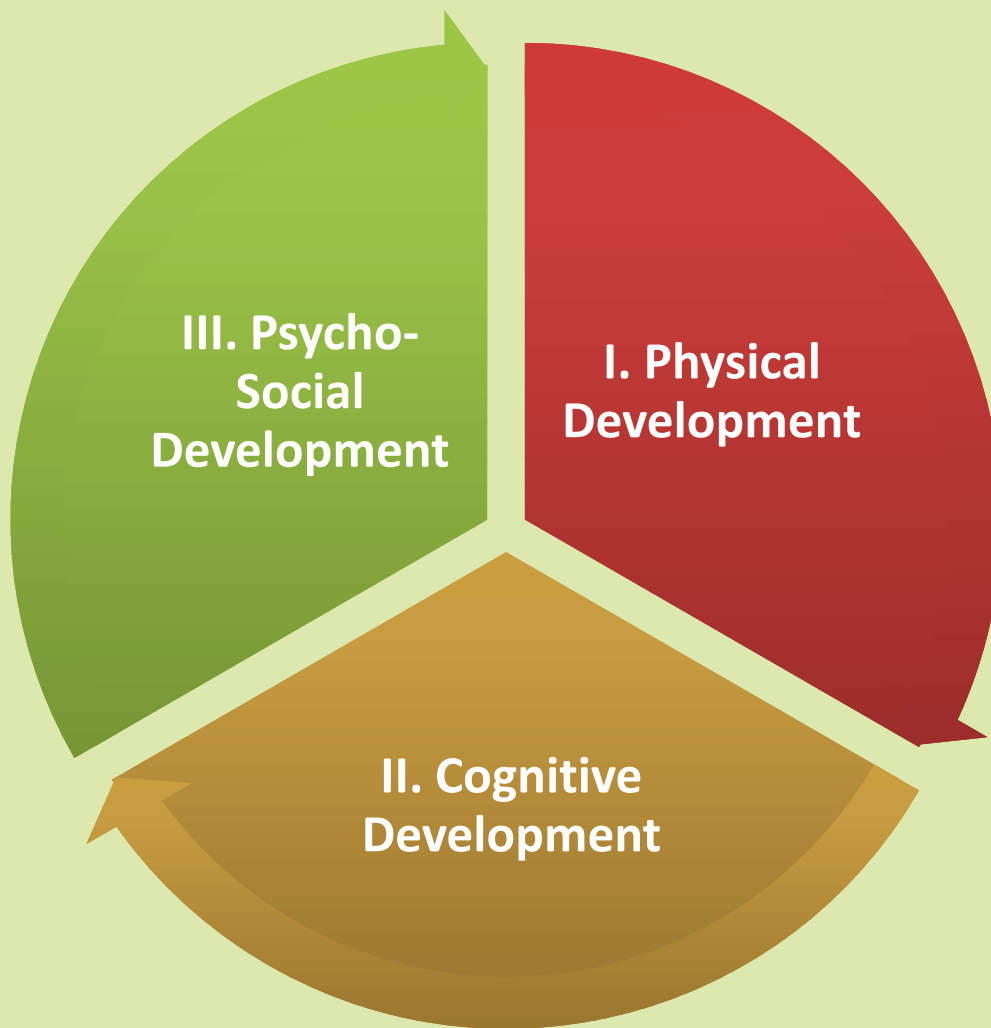


Period of Adolescence

- Rapid growth
- Interaction of physical, psychological, and environmental factors
- Off timing of systems
 - Puberty
 - Physical growth
 - Emotion and behavior regulation
- Importance of understanding interaction of all the systems;
- Transitions all occur sequentially but not necessarily at the same time



Presentation Overview



I. Physical Development

- Height & Weight Changes
- Secondary Sex Characteristics
- Continued Brain Development



Rapid Gains in Height & Weight

- 4.1 to 3.5 inches per year
- Girls mature about 2 years earlier than boys
- Weight gain = muscles for boys; fat for girls



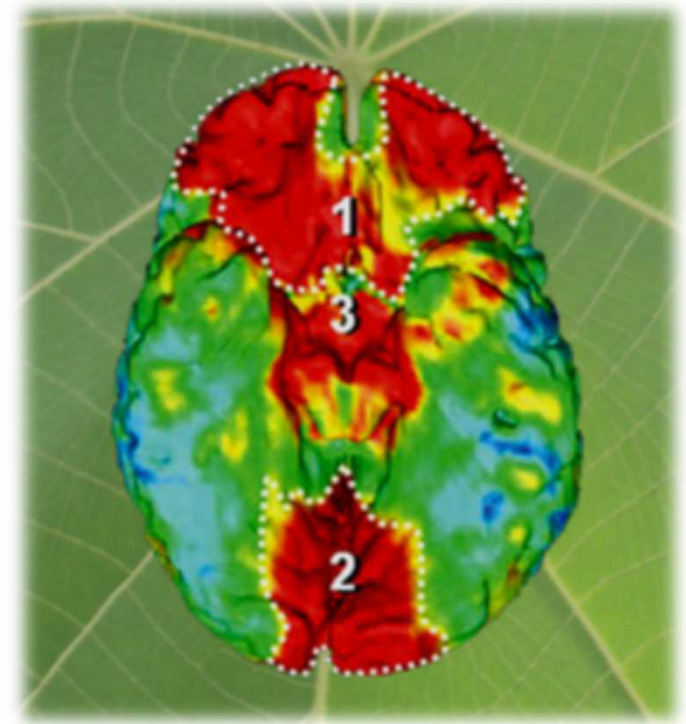
Secondary Sex Characteristics:

- Pubic hair
- Menarche or penis growth
- Voice changes for boys
- Underarm hair
- Facial hair growth for boys
- Increased production of oil, sweat glands, acne



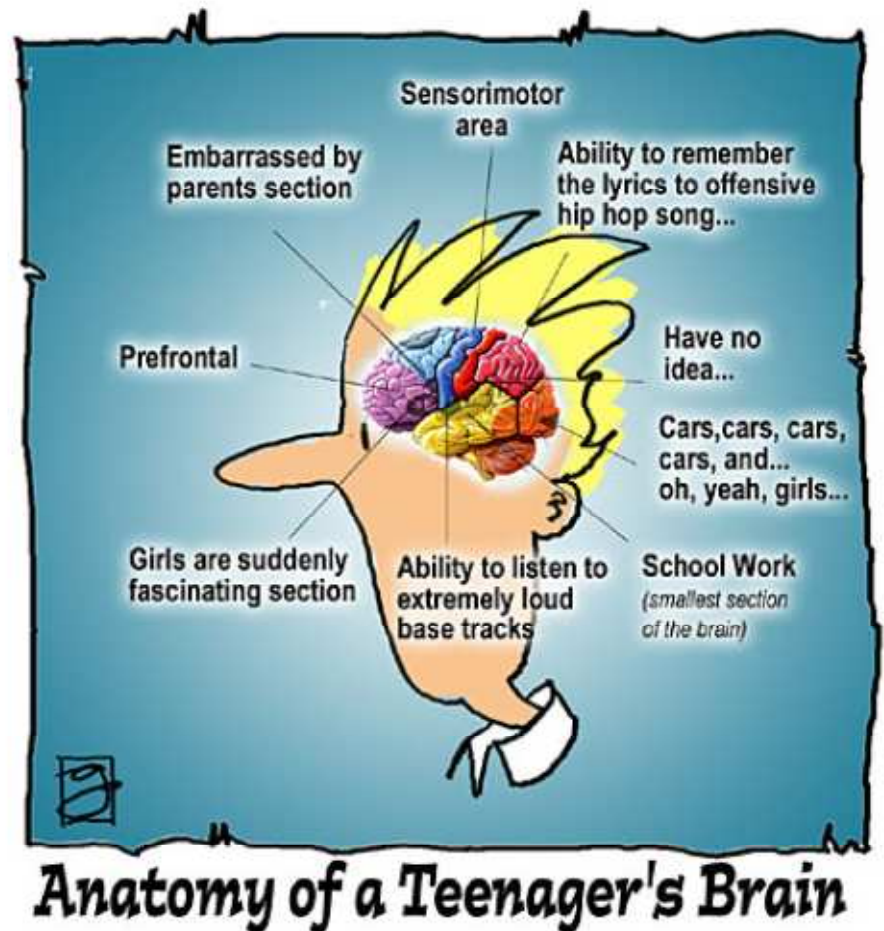
Continued Brain Development

- Not completely developed until late adolescence
- Emotional, physical and mental abilities incomplete
- May explain why some seem inconsistent in controlling emotions, impulses, and judgments

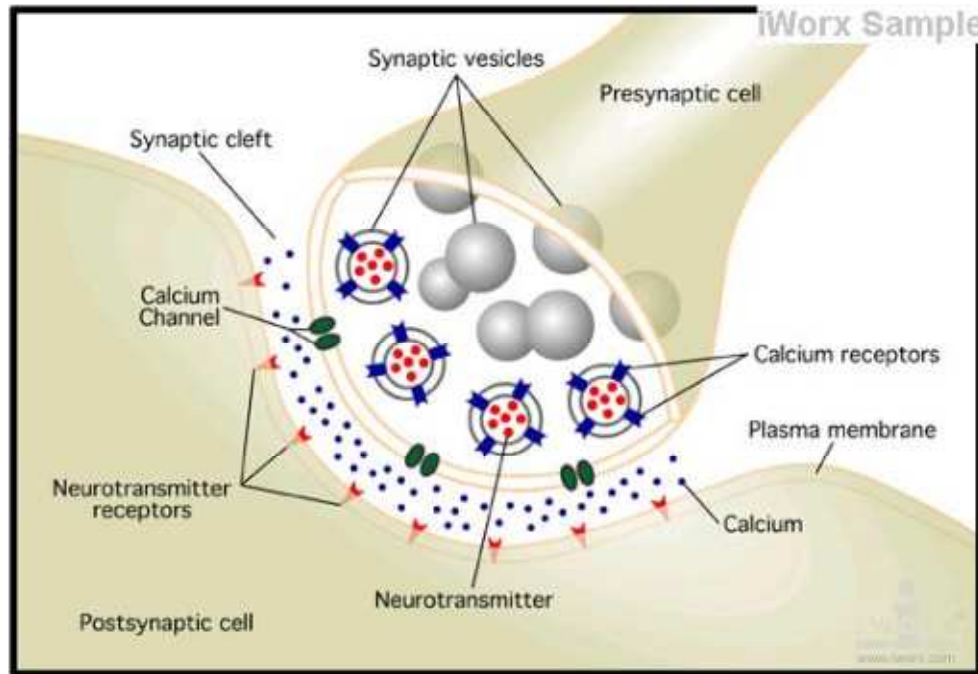


Understanding the Adolescent Brain

- Advances in brain imaging allow for better understanding of what occurs
- Evidence for frontal lobe delays
Inability to delay gratification;
impulse control
- Suggestion that puberty represents a period of synaptic reorganization and as a consequence the brain might be more sensitive to experiential input at this period of time in the realm of executive function and social cognition
- Prefrontal cortex of interest

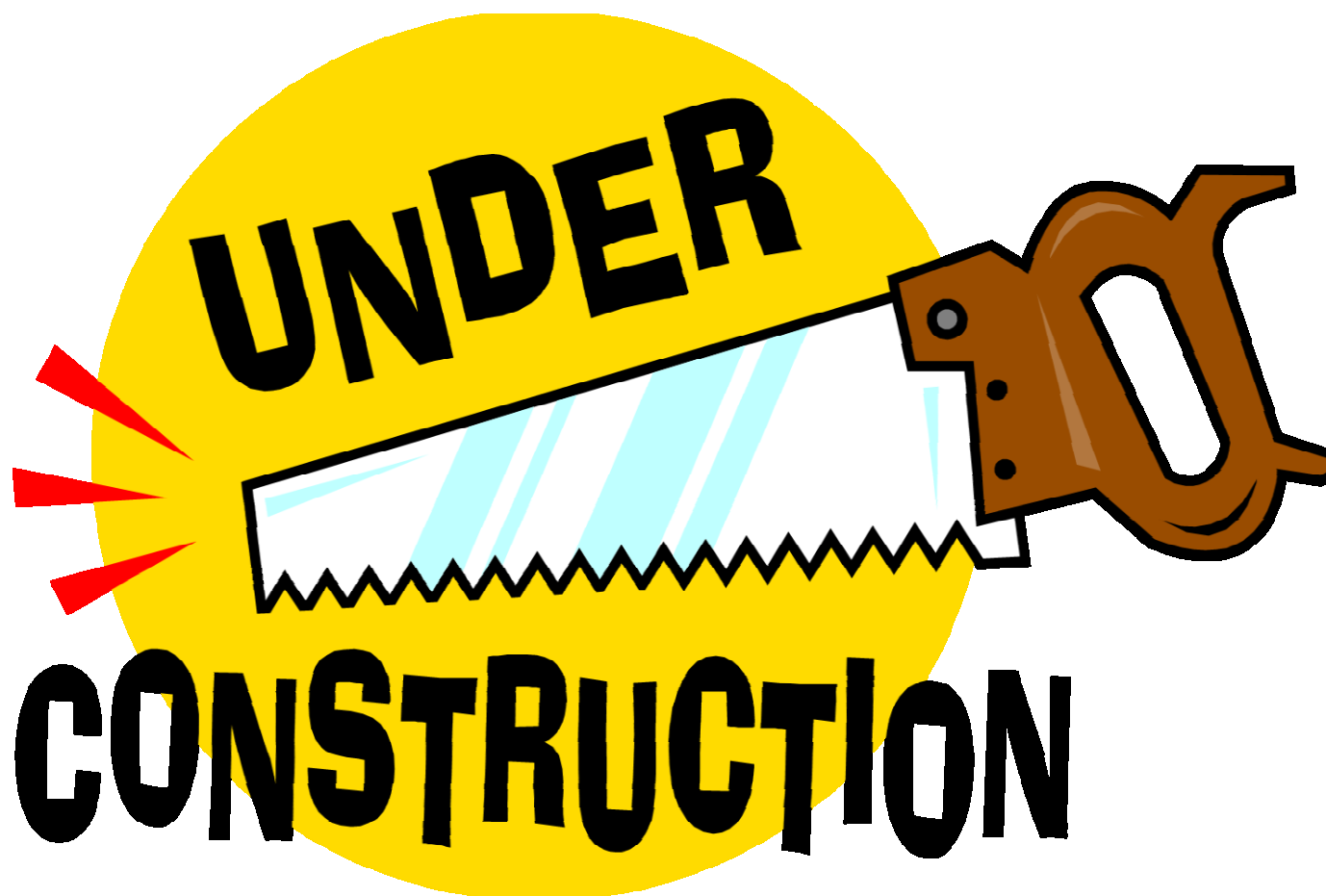


Brain: Developmental Changes



- Synaptogenesis: proliferation of synapses
- Myelination: insulation around synapses
- Synaptic pruning: frequently used connections are strengthened, infrequently used connections are eliminated

Bottom Line?



How do these change affect teens?

- Adolescents are uniquely vulnerable to risk taking
 - Novelty & sensation seeking increase dramatically at puberty
 - Development of self-regulation lags behind
- Risk taking as group behavior (Steinberg, 2004)



How Do These Changes Affect Teens?

- Frequently sleep longer - 9 1/2 hours
- May be more clumsy because of growth spurts-body parts grow at different rates
- Girls may become sensitive about weight - 60% trying to lose weight
- 1-3% have eating disorder



How Do These Changes Affect Teens?

- Concern if not physically developing at same rate as peers - need to “fit” in (early vs. late maturation)
- Feel awkward about showing affection to opposite sex parent
- Ask more direct questions about sex - trying to figure out values around sex

What Can Adults Do?

- **Expect inconsistency in responsibility taking and in decision making**
- Provide opportunities for “safe” risk taking
- Avoid criticizing/comparing to others
- Encourage enough sleep
- Encourage/model healthy eating
- Encourage/model activity
- Provide honest answers about sex



II. Cognitive Development

- Advanced Reasoning Skills
- Abstract Thinking Skills
- Meta-Cognition



Beginning to Gain Advanced Reasoning Skills

- Options
- Possibilities
- Logical
- Hypothetically
- What if ?

Think Abstractly

- Can take others' perspective
- Can think about non-concrete things like faith, trust, beliefs, and spirituality



Ability to Think About Thinking

- Meta-cognition
- Think about how they feel and what they are thinking
- Think about how they think they are perceived by others
- Can develop strategies for improving their learning

How Do These Changes Affect Teens?



- Heightened self-consciousness
- Believes no one else has experienced feelings/emotions
- Tend to become cause-oriented
- Tend to exhibit a “justice orientation”
- “It can’t happen to me” syndrome

What Can Adults Do?

- **Don't take it personally when teens discount experience**
- Discuss their behavior rules/consequences
- Provide opportunities for community service
- Ask teens their view and share own

III. Psycho-Social Development

- Establishing identity
- Establishing autonomy
- Establishing intimacy
- Become comfortable with one's sexuality
- Achievement

Establishing Identity



- Erikson (1959): identity vs. identity diffusion
- Integrates opinions of other into own likes/dislikes—needs interactions with diverse others for this to occur
- Outcome is clear sense of values, beliefs, occupational goals, and relationship expectations
- Secure identities-knows where they fit

Identity Exploration Process:

		Commitment	
		present	absent
Exploration	present	Identity Achievement	Moratorium
	absent	Identity Foreclosure	Identity Diffusion

Establishing Autonomy

- Becoming independent and self-governing ***within*** relationships
- Make and follow through with decisions
- Live with own set of principles of right/wrong
- Less emotionally dependent on parents



Establishing Intimacy



- Learns intimacy and sex not same thing
- Learned within context of same-sex friendships; then in romantic relationships
- Develops close, open, honest, caring, and trusting relationships
- Learn to begin, maintain, and terminate relationships; practice social skills, and become intimate from friends



Becoming Comfortable with One's Sexuality

- How educated/exposed to sexuality largely determines if healthy sexual identity develops
- More than half of the folk get sexually active
- Mixed messages contribute to teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases

Achievement

- Society fosters and values attitudes of competition and success
- Can see relationship between abilities, plans, aspirations
- Need to determine achievement preferences, what good at, and areas willing to strive for success

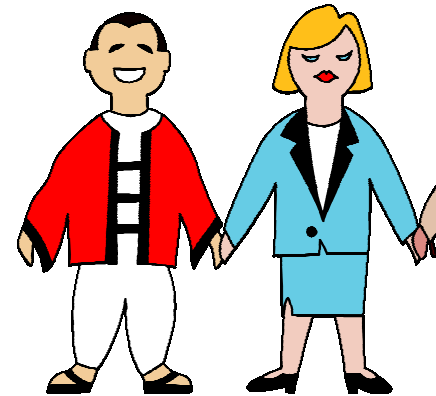


How Do These Changes Affect Teens?

- More time with friends
- May keep a journal
- More questions about sexuality
- Begin to lock bedroom door
- Involved in multiple hobbies/clubs
- More argumentative
- Interact with parents as people

What Can Adults Do?

- Encourage involvement in groups
- Praise for efforts and abilities
- Help explore career goals and options
- Help set guidelines/consequences
- Establish rituals for significant passages
- Know friends and what they are doing
- **Provide structured environment/clear expectations**



Thank you



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