

Implications

1. Adolescents have three developmental tasks associated with physical and sexual development:
 - i. Positive feelings about physical appearance
 - ii. Positive feelings about sexuality
 - iii. Ability to express their sexuality in healthy and appropriate way

What behaviour would we expect to see in young people who have not adequately completed each of these tasks?

2. Use the following as a checklist to see how well you help young people achieve the developmental tasks:
 - I accept teens as they are and do not relate to them on the basis of how they look.
 - I do not draw attention to physical traits or performance, even in a light hearted way.
 - I offer genuine and sincere compliments and reassurance to young people as appropriate.
 - Our youth group discusses and exposes society's unrealistic standards for physical appearance.
 - We teach young people about the physical and sexual changes that occur during adolescence.
 - We discuss sexual activity and responsibility and offer Biblical guidelines.
 - We do not have frequent activities that disadvantage or embarrass less well developed teens.
 - We do not reinforce cliques based on appearance in the groupings we have within our programmes.

What areas do you personally or we as a group need most to work on?



Session 1:

Physical and Sexual Development

The Challenges of Adolescence

1. Take a few minutes to think back to when you were 13 years old. What were the concerns and worries you faced. What was important to you at the time?

2. Dr James Dobson has said,

“The thirteenth and fourteenth years commonly are the most difficult twenty four months in life.”

Based on your experiences and observation, how true is that statement? What makes those years so difficult?

3. Many societies have ceremonies at which a child becomes recognised as an adult. In your opinion, what should that age be in our society?

The concept of “adolescence” as a time between childhood and adulthood is a product of our western society and is only about 100 years old. What factors do you think have led to its existence and recognition?

The Physical & Sexual Development of Adolescents

1. Divide in to male/female groups and list the physical/sexual changes that occur during adolescence (10-18 yrs), along with the ages these changes commonly occur. Share your answers with the other group.

Boys:

Girls:

Behavioural Characteristics

1. What behavioural characteristics would you regard as “normal” for young people undergoing these physical and sexual changes?

2. Discuss the particular challenges/advantages/disadvantages of the following.

Early maturing boys:

Late maturing boys:

Early maturing girls:

Late maturing girls:

3. Which do you think have the more difficult time and why?