

Discussion Questions

How do you deal with friends or family members when they are angry?

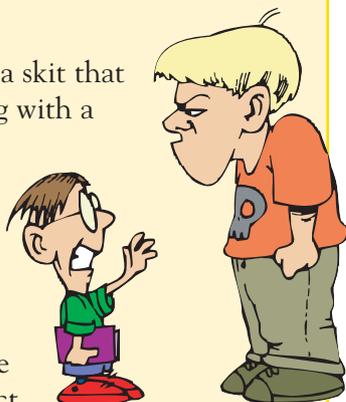
What are some common social problems that occur during adolescence?

Emotional and Social Changes During Adolescence

Activities

1. In groups, identify some of the most common moods and feelings during adolescence.

2. In groups, create a skit that has someone dealing with a form of positive or negative peer pressure. After you perform the skit, explain how this person's actions or ways of handling the situation might affect his/her life in the future.



3. Make a handout or slide presentation that details ways of dealing with the emotional and social changes of adolescence.

4. In groups, discuss how each group member chooses his/her circle of friends. As a group, write a list of characteristics that are important when selecting a friend. Share your list with the other groups.



Home Connection Talk about this Healthy and Wise article with your parents. How can you and your family use some of the ways of dealing with emotions to help your relationship? Work together to come up with ways to handle conflict or disagreements in your home. Write your results in your health journal.

During adolescence, the body is not the only thing changing; emotions in adolescents begin to change as well. These changes occur in each person differently. Some of these emotional changes can be very overwhelming to adolescents. An adolescent can experience extreme happiness one day and extreme anger or depression the next. Thankfully, most of these emotions will even out over time. However, if you or someone you know is having trouble dealing with these new emotions or feelings, it is important to talk to your parents, school counselor, or your physician.



Ways to deal with emotions in a positive way:

- ↑ Walk away from difficult situations until you are calmed down. This will help keep you from overreacting.
- ↑ Try to be physically active every day to reduce your stress.
- ↑ Calm down and think about the situation rationally. Brainstorm positive solutions to the problem.
- ↑ Talk calmly with the person or people involved. Listen to their point of view.
- ↑ Find a compromise.



Social changes also begin during adolescence. Peer pressure and its effects increase during adolescence. Peer pressure can be positive and negative. If you have friends that influence you in a favorable way, this could be considered a form of positive peer pressure. However, peer pressure that encourages you to drink alcohol, use drugs, skip school, have sex, or commit a crime is negative and can be detrimental to your health and future. While the need for social acceptance is high during adolescence, it is important that you stand up for yourself. Fitting in is not as important as standing up for what you believe in and for what you know is right. Choosing friends that support and respect your decisions can help you avoid negative peer pressure. If you ever feel uncomfortable or pressured to do something you don't want to do in a social situation, you should leave.

