Adolescence
Canadian Edition

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Welcome to the Canadian edition of *Adolescence*. Over my years of teaching human development, I have come to realize that there is something special about what happens in the classroom during adolescent development courses. When reading the text, listening to lectures, or engaging in classroom discussions, students often have an “aha!” look when they recognize some tidbit of teen behaviour or thinking that most have so recently left behind. To introduce a Canadian context to the research and theories means that the text becomes that much more meaningful to these young adults, many of whom will go on to work with teens living in Canadian cities, towns, and rural enclaves. And the addition of material on emerging adulthood means that the text goes beyond adolescence to directly address the current concerns of students in the class.

The Puberty and Physical Development chapter of this edition features a discussion of the health habits of Canadian teens, including nutrition, exercise, and sleep patterns. The text provides updated information on physical changes to the brain associated with puberty and adolescence, as well as on the increasing cognitive skills evidenced in this age group. In addition, we discuss the paradox of these increasing cognitive skills co-existing with the high levels of risky behaviours found among many teens. Specifically, we highlight the work of Angela Prencipe and her colleagues on “hot” versus “cool” cognitive tasks.

In the Cognitive Changes chapter, we examine the factors—such as poverty, stigma, and inappropriate assessment methods—that may underlie the differential cognitive performance of some Aboriginal children. As well, we outline the Canadian work being carried out on self-regulation in the classroom.

The Families chapter includes descriptions of the variety of families found in Canada—including single-parent families, same-gender-parented families, and families with a transsexual parent or parents—and the challenges some of these families face. There is also a recognition that families differ from one cultural group to another, a significant variable in Canada’s multicultural population. The importance of authoritative parenting, regardless of culture, is also discussed in this chapter.

In addition to parents and siblings, peers represent an important influence in the development of teens. The Peers chapter features Leanna Closson’s work on peer status and aggression, as well as the growing problem of bullying (and cyberbullying) among Canadian adolescents.

School plays a central role in the life of adolescents. Our School and Work chapter presents research on school and class size in a Canadian context, along with research about student and parent perceptions of Toronto’s “black-focused” school. The chapter also highlights the strategies that are being employed to increase school engagement and connectedness, particularly for Aboriginal youth.

Another central influence in the lives of teens is, of course, media. The text gives an overview of Canadian teens’ use of media, including video games, and the potential pitfalls associated with excessive use of such technology. Canadian teens are embedded in the broader community, but the context of any particular teen may involve marginalization owing to ethnocultural status, poverty, or both.

A further challenge for Canadian teens is the pervasive influence of gender roles, and how gender stereotypes affect how teens view themselves. And in our discussion of identity development, we present research showing that Canadian teens with a strong sense of their ethnocultural identity fare better than those teens who lack this connection.

The Intimacy chapter includes an examination of the factors related to dating violence. As well, we discuss the relationship difficulties of shy and/or rejection-sensitive teens. Canada’s success in reducing teenage pregnancy rates is also highlighted, along
with the challenges represented by the relatively high rates of some sexually transmitted infections. We present research demonstrating the continuing stigmatization of GLBTQ youth, along with the many initiatives that schools and communities are embracing in an effort to reduce such stigmatization.

In the Challenges chapter we examine substance-abuse rates among teens, as well as the kinds of problems that result in either externalizing or internalizing behaviours among Canadian youth. Finally, in the Positive Prospects chapter, we feature research on those factors that not only encourage avoidance of negative outcomes but also allow teens to thrive.

**KEY THEMES**

Two overarching themes are explored throughout this text:

1. Adolescent development involves individual, social, and cultural systems.
2. Positive adolescent development is the norm, even though the media—and research—frequently concentrate on adolescent problems.

Adolescent development does not occur in a vacuum or laboratory, and so this text takes an ecological systems approach to adolescence. For the individual, adolescence brings fundamental changes in biological, cognitive, and self systems, each of which acts upon, and is acted upon, by the others. The individual in turn is situated within embedded social contexts, especially the parents and family, the peer group, the school, the community, and the larger culture. Each of these contexts is potentially affected by the others and by relationships among the others. For example, community beliefs about a particular school can affect a student’s self-esteem and cognitive achievement, the peers the student interacts with, and parental commitment to the school and to learning itself. All of these may in turn tend to confirm or disconfirm the community beliefs.

The adolescent experience today is profoundly affected by cultural diversity and globalization. Some aspects of adolescence are universal or nearly so, but many others are specific to a culture, subculture, or social group. In Canadian society, ethnic diversity has become more a norm than an exception. Adolescents everywhere are affected by the tensions between the specifics of their cultural and historical setting and the influences of globalization. It may seem at first glance that an unbridgeable gulf separates a snowboarding teen in Whistler, a 12-year-old militia member in Somalia, a street kid in a Rio de Janeiro favela, and a teenage bride in Sri Lanka. All, however, represent important aspects of adolescence at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The concept of stage–environment fit is also central to the book’s portrayal of adolescence. As adolescents themselves change, so do their relationships with parents, peers, proximate institutions, and the culture. The same parental approach, for example, is likely to meet with very different responses from adolescents of ages 13, 15, and 17. Often there is a mismatch between adolescent stage and environment. For instance, just as young adolescents begin to strive for greater autonomy and to look for nonparental adult models, they are transferred into schools that typically put greater stress on rules and authority and greater distance between students and teachers.

Much of the research on adolescence, like much of the discussion of adolescence in the media, concentrates on adolescent problems—from drug use, early sexual behaviour, and delinquency to eating disorders, depression, and suicide. Certainly it is vital to gain an understanding of these problems and to learn about ways to treat or prevent them. It is at least as crucial, however, to emphasize positive development. How can parents, teachers, and community leaders help adolescents become confident, productive, caring, and involved participants in the life of their family, school, neighbourhood, and society? These questions are of critical importance to us all.
GUIDING PHILOSOPHY

This text implements learning pedagogy that is intended to help students get the most out of their study of adolescent development. The guiding philosophy is that students learn best when they

1. Practise active learning and deep processing.
2. Focus on the practical applications of what they are studying.
3. Think critically and become educated consumers of the research.

Students derive greater educational benefits from active learning and deep processing. When we think about material in more meaningful ways and associate it with information that is already encoded in long-term memory, we remember it better. The more deeply new material (ideas, concepts, facts) is processed, the more likely it is to be recalled later. One of the most effective forms of deep processing is to link new information to oneself. When we engage with new facts and ideas and bring them into relationship with our own personal experience, we give them longer, more complete consideration and organize them more fully. This text makes a strong effort to foster deep processing through illustrative examples that connect to students’ life experiences.

An understanding of adolescence has important practical applications. Students enroll in adolescence courses for reasons that range from intellectual curiosity and a desire for self-knowledge to a need to satisfy departmental requirements. A great many do so because they aspire to careers working with adolescents—as teachers, counsellors, providers of social services, and in other ways. Many also anticipate being parents of adolescents some day and hope that what they learn will help them when the time comes. Throughout the book, the implications that concepts and findings hold for the reader’s actual practice are pointed out in the body of the text and explored in greater depth in special boxes.

Students benefit by becoming educated consumers of social science. The media continually trumpet astonishing theories, remarkable discoveries, and putative facts about adolescence. How can an ordinary layperson keep a sense of balance under all this buffeting? One important tool is a broad knowledge of the theories and basic findings in the field, which helps the student distinguish the truly new and significant from the faddish. Acknowledging the complexity of the questions that still need to be answered reminds students to be critical consumers of both media reports of teen behaviour and research on adolescence.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The way the book is organized grows directly out of its emphasis on an ecological systems approach.

**Part One: Introduction** surveys the territory and provides a foundation for the rest of the book. *Chapter 1: Adolescence: Understanding the Past and the Present, and Planning for the Future* introduces students to the history of adolescence and describes demographic, economic, and social factors that affect its present and future.

**Part Two: Adolescent Changes** presents the biological, physical, and cognitive developments that are common to adolescents in general. *Chapter 2: Puberty and Physical Development* describes the hormonal, physical, and sexual changes that help define adolescence and the ways individual adolescents, their parents, and their culture respond to these changes. *Chapter 3: Cognitive Changes* explores approaches to understanding adolescent thinking that include Piaget’s cognitive developmental theory and its recent variants, information processing, ideas about intelligence, and metacognition.

**Part Three: Adolescent Contexts** moves outward from the individual adolescent to the successively embedded contexts in which development takes place. *Chapter 4: Families* explores the position of adolescents within the family system, the effects of parenting styles, attachment, and conflict, the role of siblings, and family diversity in today’s society. *Chapter 5: Peers* examines the growing importance of peers and peer influence during
adolescence, explores the nature of social status and popularity, and describes the evolution of social groups such as cliques and crowds. Chapter 6: *School and Work* examines the effects of educational policy, school size and climate, teacher attitudes and expectations, racial segregation, and school choice; describes the role of extracurricular programs and activities; and weighs some pluses and minuses of teen employment. Chapter 7: *Community, Culture, and the Media* discusses the ways in which community values and cultural attitudes affect adolescent development; examines the effects of minority status, social class, and poverty; and describes the rapidly growing impact of media on adolescents.

**Part Four: Adolescent Issues** takes a detailed look at three social/psychological issues that assume particular importance during adolescence. Chapter 8: *Gender* describes current ideas about gender development, examines gender differences in adolescence, and discusses how different social contexts influence gender. Chapter 9: *Identity* discusses the ways adolescence promotes the development of the self-concept, self-esteem, and a coherent sense of identity; and describes the evolution of moral judgment and a moral identity. Chapter 10: *Intimacy* considers three crucial aspects of personal involvements during adolescence: close friendships, romantic relationships, and sexuality.

**Part Five: Adolescent Challenges and Prospects** presents both the difficulties and the positive opportunities that are characteristic of adolescence. Chapter 11: *Challenges* examines the causes, prevalence, and ways of dealing with externalizing problems, such as delinquency and substance use, and internalizing problems, including eating problems, depression, and suicide. Chapter 12: *Positive Prospects* discusses the importance of coping and resilience, examines the internal and external resources that promote thriving and positive development, and considers the question of how adolescents can become happier.

**FEATURES OF THE BOOK**

Each chapter includes special features designed to reinforce major themes of the book and make it easier for students to absorb and master the material.

**Applications in the Spotlight** presents concrete, practical suggestions for putting the ideas and findings of adolescent research to use in the family, the classroom, and the community.

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**APPLICATIONS IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

**Supporting Parents**

Parents and teens do have conflicts during the teen years, even if it is not the time of “Storm and Stress” it was once thought to be. How might the parents of teens get help? Parents of young children are frequently in contact with one another, and may even form close friendships. Parenting advice is frequently sought, or dispensed, even sometimes without a request being made for advice! Parents of teens, however, do not generally plan their child’s play dates anymore, and so may be in less contact with other parents of teens.

The guidelines for behaviour are a bit less clear as well. A toddler should not be allowed to do dangerous things. Teens however, want, and need, to branch out and become more independent. Should you allow your teen to take the transit system to a sketchy area downtown on a Friday night to hang with friends, or not? And if you say no and your teen goes anyway, what should you do?

Many communities offer support and resources to parents who feel overwhelmed by the challenges of parenting, and some of these services are targeted at the parents of teens. One example is the Parent Support Association of Calgary. Operating for over 30 years, the PSA offers support specifically for the parents of teens, in several ways.

Parents can attend a Foundation Session, which reviews the PSA groups available, the expectations of group members, and the types of skills that can be learned in the groups. The groups themselves are led by a parent mentor, and are structured so that parents can learn to identify the central challenges they are having as parents, and with the group’s support, start to strategize about how they might approach these issues. Parents can also attend more intensive Parenting Workshops on a variety of topics, or call in for support from other parents, or to get a referral for professional counselling services.

Research has shown that social support is an important factor in ensuring that parents, especially those under a lot of stress, are able to parent effectively (McConnell, Brietzke, & Savage, 2011). The PSA’s parent mentor approach may make it a very approachable source of assistance withparenting teens, and provide the social support that some parents may be missing.
RESEARCH IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Attachment, Bullies, and the Bullied

In this chapter we have been examining the role of parenting in the lives of teens. In the next chapter, we will discuss the serious issue of bullying between peers. Is there any link between the relationship between parents and teens and the relationships between teens?

A great deal of research on attachment seems to indicate that there are strong links between the attachment status of the child or teen, and how they interact with others, including peers (Moss, St. Laurent, Dubois-Comtois, & Cyr, 2005). What about the specific behaviour of bullying? So far, research in this area has been contradictory (Coleman, 2003; Troy & Stroufe, 1987), and has not really been focused on attachment to the primary caretaker, nor has it included a look at being a bully and/or a victim of bullying (Walden & Beran, 2010).

Laura W. Walden and Tanya Beran (2010) at the University of Calgary measured attachment and bullying behaviours in a sample of boys and girls in Grades 4, 6, and 8 in a middle-class school. The students were asked to fill out a questionnaire called the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA; Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). This questionnaire measures how students feel about their trust, communication, and anger in relationships, in this case with their mothers or other primary caregiver. The students were also asked about bullying and victimization (Olewas, 1996).

Results showed that students with good attachment to their mothers, or to another primary caretaker, were much less likely to be bullied, and less likely to bully others. Specifically, lots of communication and trust, and low levels of alienation, were related to less bullying and less being bullied. These relationships were found at all grade levels, and for both boys and girls. The implication of these findings is that parents need to be included in efforts to reduce bullying. In addition to having parents coordinate with the school with regard to supporting bullied students and following through on consequences for the bullies, support can be offered to parents so that they better understand that an improved parent-child relationship may be the best protection for their child from bullies or from becoming a bully.

WHAT’S NEXT? EMERGING ADULTHOOD

Cognition in Emerging Adulthood

Areas of the brain related to cognitive and emotional functioning are still changing during emerging adulthood (Burnett & Blakemore, 2009; Luna, Padmanabhan, & O’Hearn, 2010). In addition, there is evidence that further development takes place in terms of cognitive activities. In particular, there is evidence of a cognitive stage beyond Piaget’s formal operations, termed postformal thinking (Salathome, 2012). This type of thinking is characterized by both the ability to use logic and a related but separate ability to reason in a more pragmatic way. Emerging adults, through life experience or education, have learned that some problems cannot be solved using logic, and instead start to use dialectical thought in those situations (Basseches, 2005). Each side of the problem may have merit and must be examined as a possibility, and in the end neither is guaranteed to have a better outcome than the other. In addition, as they get older, individuals may rely more on heuristics, or mental short cuts, than on a purely logical process (Albert & Steinberg, 2011), and consider more carefully the influence of context on the problem to be solved (Mascal & Fischer, 2010). Some researchers have proposed that it is during emerging adulthood that wisdom is obtained, although perhaps not by everyone (Baltes et al., 2006; Sternberg, 2011).
What’s Next? Emerging Adulthood, a capsule discussion of the research on emerging adulthood in selected topic areas. Relationships with parents and romantic partners, sexual behaviour, cognitive advances, and development of a meaningful work role as part of identity are all highlighted. This gives students, many of whom are just entering their own emerging adulthood phase, a better idea of the issues and challenges they are facing. It also allows them to see connections between the development that occurs in adolescence and the outcomes in adulthood.

Chapter Summaries at the end of each chapter that are keyed to the Learning Objectives at the beginning of the chapter.

SUPPLEMENTS FOR INSTRUCTORS

The following supplements are available to qualified instructors.

Printable Test Item File

Direct input from the authors forms the basis for the text’s MyTest. Multiple-choice and essay questions include both informational and conceptual questions, keyed to page numbers in each chapter. The test bank contains approximately 700 questions—each referenced to the relevant page in the textbook.

MyTest

(www.PearsonMyTest.com)

Pearson MyTest is a powerful assessment-generation program that helps instructors easily create and print quizzes and exams. Instructors can do this online, allowing flexibility and the ability to efficiently manage assessments at any time. Instructors can easily access existing questions and edit, create, and store using simple drag-and-drop and Word-like controls. Each question comes with information on its level of difficulty and related page number in the text, mapped to the appropriate learning objective. The MyTest is available in electronic format with an integrated suite of test creation tools for Windows and Macintosh. For more information go to www.PearsonMyTest.com.

Instructor’s Manual

Prepared with direct input from the authors, the Instructor’s Manual includes detailed outlines, summaries, learning objectives, suggestions for class discussion, and writing topics for each chapter.

PowerPoint Presentations

Prepared with direct input from the authors, the PowerPoint slides provide a brief lecture outline for each chapter.

Image Library

The image library includes all figures and tables from the text.

peerScholar

Firmly grounded in published research, peerScholar is a powerful online pedagogical tool that helps develop your students’ critical and creative thinking skills. peerScholar facilitates this through the process of creation, evaluation, and reflection. Working in stages, students begin by submitting a written assignment. peerScholar then circulates their work for others to review, a process that can be anonymous or not depending on your preference. Students receive peer feedback and evaluations immediately, reinforcing their learning and driving the development of higher-order thinking.
skills. Students can then re-submit revised work, again depending on your preference. Contact your Pearson representative to learn more about peerScholar and the research behind it.

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SUPPLEMENTS FOR STUDENTS

MyVirtualTeen

MyVirtualTeen is an interactive web-based simulation that allows you to raise a child from birth to age 18, with a specific focus on the teenage years, and monitor the effects of your parenting decisions over time. This engaging application helps you apply the key concepts that you are learning in your adolescent development class. Visit MyVirtualTeen at www.myvirtualteen.com.

CourseSmart for Students

CourseSmart goes beyond traditional expectations—providing instant, online access to the textbooks and course materials you need at an average savings of 60 percent. With instant access from any computer and the ability to search your text, you’ll find the content you need quickly, no matter where you are. And with online tools like highlighting and note-taking, you can save time and study efficiently. See all of the benefits at www.coursesmart.com/students.

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