

Compassion Project

10/13/2020

Typical Adolescents

Myths and Wonders- normal behaviors

Emotional challenges

Peer group is very important

stress from school work

altered bed and wake up times

wanting independence from parents

ON SOCIAL MEDIA ALL THE TIME- on screen time in general a lot

Chiding parents about not letting them do the things their friends are (supposedly) allowed to do.

They spend less time with their family members, and more time alone or with friends.(start to break away from family)

Spending a lot of time on screens

Talk very mean to parents

Sleeping

Tired

Arguing about bedtime

Chores are a problem

Building argumentative skills

Procrastinating

Normal Adolescent Behavior

1. **Verbal Aggression-** normal (especially in boys), Hormonal changes can cause teens to lack out using words. When it becomes abusive or physical it is time to get help.
2. **Lack of frustration Tolerance-** Causes: hormonal changes, confusion about place in the world, bullying, low socioeconomic status, peer pressure, lack of support at home, difficulty making friends. Causes frustration that can lead to emotional/ aggressive outbursts.
3. **Low Impulse Control-** common in kids and teens but can have more dire consequences such as ditching school/ events, drinking alcohol to theft and dangerous drug use.
4. **Withdrawal from family-** Increase interaction with peers should be encouraged. Withdrawal from all social interaction (both with peers and family) may be cause for concern and are early signs of depression.
5. **Sleeping Harder and Longer-** Ages 14-17 teens grow very quickly and during growth spurts it is normal for teens to sleep more. If teens tend to sleep longer and harder without respite then there may be a problem. Notice low energy levels, loss of interest from activities they previously enjoyed, or other signs of withdrawal from the world then it may be a sign of depression.
6. **Increase in Appetite-** due to physical growth teens will tend to eat more, many times not always healthiest. If teens start constantly eating, gaining weight, or losing weight they may need to be checked by a doctor.

7. **Light Risk Taking-** Teens are not likely to think through consequences which can lead to light risk taking such as experimenting with alcohol at a party, or occasionally skipping. Light risk taking does not happen frequently. If teens are more passive they tend to be peer pressured more into taking risks. When it becomes dangerous you may need to seek help.
8. **Concerns About Physical Appearance-** As teens get older they care more about their opinions as they try to fit into the crowd. May become more pickier about clothes (off brand or not) worrying about weight, spending hours to get ready. If suddenly starts losing weight or drastically changes eating habits you need to get them into counseling for a possible eating disorder.
9. **Defiance and testing limits-** As teens fight for their independence they may become defiant and test their limits. It is normal for them to ignore/ argue about rules or even refuse to do what is asked of them. Although it may be frustrating it is normal and every teen goes through it.
10. **Low Self- Esteem-** Many teens have low self- esteem. This is more prominent when they are at the awkward stage where they don't feel like kids or adults. If teens become despondent, depressed, or withdrawn their low self- esteem may be developing into anxiety or depression.
11. **Abandoning Commitment-** Many teens will do previous activities to find what is important to them. This should not be a cause for concern but if they have little interest in anything they may be a sign of depression.
12. **Selfishness(self involved) -** Many teens only think of themselves rarely thinking of others. This is because they are trying to figure out who they are and their places in the world.
13. **Curfew Violation-** Although it may be frustrating or dangerous, missing curfew is normal. Teens often don't have a great sense of time especially at social engagements.
14. **Struggles with Sense of Identity-** Many teens go through phases. They may dress differently or gain/ lose interest in activities. Teens also commonly grapple with gender and sexual identity.
15. **Mood swings-** Hormonal changes affect the production of dopamine and serotonin, This causes frequent mood changes. They may go from being peaceful one second to crying the next. This is normal unless the mood swings are drastic, frequent, and extreme which can be signs of a mood disorder.
16. **Greater Interest in Privacy-** It is important to give teens their privacy. Part of their interest in privacy will be due to changes in how they think about sexuality. Teens will also keep their thoughts private more.
17. **Sexual Experimentation-** It is normal for teens to want to experiment with sex. This may have to do with the exploration with their own body, they may also be curious about sex with others. If your teen is sexually active and promiscuous you may need to seek professional help.
18. **Frequent Changes in Relationships-** Teens may change relationships frequently. If your teen is showing more concerning signs of adolescence when it comes to relationships they may need to see a therapist.

Mindfulness skills:

Wise mind: The mind is conceived of a venn diagram. One side of the venn diagram is the emotional mind (hot, mood- dependant, Emotionally focused) . The other side is the reasonable mind(cool, rational, task-focused). In the middle is the wise mind(the middle path, bringing left and right brain together, seeing value in both sides)

To find wise mine: Observe something, Describe something, Participate in activities in the current moment or something you feel like doing.

Taking Hold your “How” skills:

Nonjudgmentally: Do not evaluate as good or bad just of facts. Acknowledge your values and wishes but do not judge.

One-Mindfully: Be completely present in the moment with intention and without judgement. Do one thing at a time.

Effectively: Be mindful of your goals in the situation and do what is necessary to achieve them. Focus on what works, play by the rules, don't let emotion mind get in the way. Do what it needed for the situation you are in.

Takeaway for today: idea of venn diagram, push towards change, validating and supporting.