

SURVIVING ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence is a period of rapid changes. Between the ages of 12 and 17, for example, a parent ages as much as 20 years....Author Unknown

WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ Adolescence is a time of intense cognitive, emotional, and physiological changes
- ❖ It is unlike any other developmental period in life
- ❖ Within a short few years, children become adults
- ❖ It is a time when adolescents think they know it all and can manage their own lives
- ❖ Teenagers must overcome body change, identity clarification, separation from the home
- ❖ The development of sexual impulses coincides with increasing needs for individuation
- ❖ It is a time to leave the dependency upon family and reach out to larger social context
- ❖ The most obvious change is physical; there is sudden growth and change in bodies
- ❖ It is a time for reexamination, reevaluation, and clarification of personal values
- ❖ It is a time of strong desire for group acceptance and vulnerability to peer pressure.
- ❖ There is frequent exposure to alcohol, pot, and other drugs
- ❖ It is a time of true sexuality where the world is seen through a sexual filter
- ❖ Intellectually, thinking jumps to a new level where there is greater understanding
- ❖ There can be greater concern about school performance and future careers
- ❖ It is a time of feeling more empowered and more entitled
- ❖ It is a time of less obedience, less graciousness, and less appreciation
- ❖ For the parent, it is a time to adjust to decreased influence and greater independence
- ❖ It is a time of vulnerabilities where teenagers still need our support and guidance

ISSUES FACING ADOLESCENTS

- ❖ Divorce and adjustment to living in 2 worlds
- ❖ School with grades often falling because of the importance of social life
- ❖ School with pressures to succeed and to have impressive college applications
- ❖ Sex which occurs earlier and more casually, causing problems in trust and intimacy
- ❖ Drugs/drinking which are easily accessed, are cheap, and "everyone does it"
- ❖ Suicide which can be impulsive reactions to situations when no other solution is seen
- ❖ Competition occurs to be cool and better than others
- ❖ Material possessions become important in defining coolness and importance

WHAT TO DO

- ❖ Have an understanding of what pressures teenagers face during adolescence
- ❖ Even though you may disagree, show respect for them and validate their opinions
- ❖ Show concern for their welfare and unconditional positive regard for them
- ❖ Allow them the opportunity to ventilate their feelings in an accepting, non-critical forum
- ❖ Offer suggestions rather than telling them what to do
- ❖ Provide boundaries to help them navigate through this turbulent time
- ❖ Do not condone the use of drugs or alcohol, even implicitly
- ❖ Be a good role model demonstrating respect for oneself and others, trust, and caring
- ❖ Seek professional help to change attitudes and behaviors at the first sign of a problem

WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at **KimmelPsychology.com**

Joel I. Kimmel, Ph.D. P.A. and Associates
5551 N University Drive
Coral Springs FL 33067