

Characteristics of Early Adolescents

Humor

- Girls turn into women. Boys turn into bigger boys!!
- If an adolescent girl accidentally burps, she will usually be embarrassed. If a boy accidentally burbs, he will follow it with a dozen fake burbs!
- A teenager is a one who is well informed about anything he doesn't have to study.

- A successful parent is one who raised a child who grows up and is able to pay for his/her own psychoanalysis. (Nora Ephron)
- The place of the father in the modern suburban family is a very small one, particularly if he plays golf. (Bertrand Russell)
- In 1900, fathers would count on children to join the family business. Today, fathers pray their kids will soon come home from college long enough to teach them how to work the computer.

- In 1900, fathers shook their children gently and whispered, “Wake up, it’s time for school.” Today, adolescents shake their fathers violently at 4:00 a.m. shouting, “Wake up, it is time for hockey practice.”
- Before I got married, I had 6 theories about bringing up children, now I have six children and no theories.
- When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But, when I got to 21, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years.” (Mark Twain)
- If mom is not happy, nobody’s happy. (Girl, age 13)

- When your mom is mad at your dad, don't let her brush your hair. (girl, 12)
- When your mother is mad and asks you, "Do I look stupid?" It is best not to answer. (girl, 12)
- My mother can say more in a sentence than a college professor can say in an hour and a half. (girl, 14)

- When teachers are old, like over 55, they are in a bad mood.
- The greatest teacher is not the one who talks all the time, but the one who listens.

Adolescents

- Adolescents are trying to grasp a sense of self and answer the question, “Who am I?”
- As they search for the answer they must tread through sexual, political, social, career, academic, and many other roles that society deems important.
- This can result in a great deal of confusion and anxiety for early adolescents.

Physical

- Rapid, erratic growth
- Awkward, lack of coordination
- Can't sit still
- Bizarre eating habits
- Girls mature before boys
- Puberty begins
- Display mysterious energy source

Intellectual

- More worldly and smarter than previous generations
- Mind changing from childlike to adult
- Shallow thinking
- Short attention span and disorganized
- Challenge authority
- Think in the present time (NOW!)

Emotional

- Fragile self-concept
- Easily embarrassed and sensitive
- Easily distracted
- Pre-occupied with self
- Spontaneous and loud
- LOUD

Social

- Peer influence
- Need to belong to a group
- Need for independence
- Resist adult authority
- Need for positive strokes
- Have multiplying and short-lived interests
- Sensitive to criticism

Elements of a successful middle school

- Teams
- Advisory program...
- Flexibility in scheduling...
- Time during the day to deal with pent up energy...
- Opportunity for students to explore and try new things
- A building that supports the middle school philosophy
- **STAFF WHO WANT TO BE THERE!!**