

Normal Development: 15 to 18 Years

Physical Development

- Most girls complete the physical changes related to puberty by age 15.
- Boys continue to mature and gain strength, muscle mass, and height. Sexual traits also continue to develop.

Emotional Development

- May stress over school and test scores.
- May have high expectations and low self-image.
- Seeks privacy and time alone.
- Worries that they are not physically or sexually attractive.
- May complain that parents try to keep them from doing things independently.
- Start to want both physical and emotional closeness in relationships.

Social Development

- Seeks friends who share the same beliefs, values, and interests. Friends become more important.
- Explores romantic and sexual behaviors with others.
- May be influenced by peers to take risks with alcohol, tobacco, sex, or other things.

Mental Development

- Is better able to set goals and think in terms of the future.
- Has a better understanding of complex problems and issues.
- Starts to develop moral ideals and to select role models.

Some attitudes, behaviors, and physical milestones tend to occur at certain ages. It is perfectly natural for a teen to reach some milestones earlier and others later than the general trend. The following are general guidelines for the stages of normal development. If you have any concerns about your teen's development, check with your healthcare provider.

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References

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