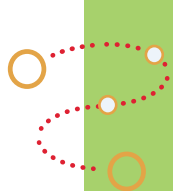


# TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ADOLESCENCE

## ADOLESCENCE IS A DYNAMIC PERIOD

of life bridging childhood and adulthood.

**It begins with the onset of puberty around age 10 and ends at age 25.**



# 74M

There are approximately 74 million adolescents in the United States—about one quarter of the U.S. population.

## TODAY'S ADOLESCENTS ARE MORE CULTURALLY AND ETHNICALLY DIVERSE THAN EVER BEFORE

In 2020, the adolescent population will be majority-minority—meaning that more than half will belong to a category other than non-Hispanic White alone.

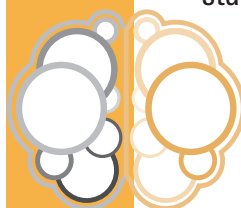


## ADOLESCENCE ENCOMPASSES EARLY ADOLESCENCE

(from the onset of puberty to age twelve), **middle adolescence** (ages 13–15), **late adolescence** (ages 16–18), and **young adulthood** (ages 19–25). These stages are defined by biological changes, like the onset of puberty, and social transitions, like moving from middle school to high school.

## THE ADOLESCENT BRAIN

is **uniquely fit** to meet the needs of this stage of life, allowing young people to explore new environments and build new relationships with the world and people around them.



## ADOLESCENTS FORM and reform their identities

—figuring out who you are, what you value, and what you aspire to—as they grow and gain new experiences.



## THE ADOLESCENT BRAIN

has exceptional **capacity for resilience**, making adolescence a **period of opportunity for intervention and healing** from past adversity.

## CHANGES IN BRAIN STRUCTURE

and function result in adolescents' **heightened sensitivity to rewards, willingness to take risks, and awareness of social status**—tendencies that are necessary for branching out and learning more about the world and themselves.

## DURING ADOLESCENCE,

young people learn to make decisions and take responsibility for shaping their lives, but **they still need guidance and support from adult caregivers**. Supportive and nurturing relationships with caregivers are just as important for adolescents as they are for young children.

## MANY YOUTH FACE INEQUALITIES IN OPPORTUNITY

because of **disparities in community resources** and **bias** that may exist in social systems, but these disparities can be changed.



### The Promise of Adolescence:

Realizing Opportunity for All Youth

Available for download or to read online at [www.nap.edu](http://www.nap.edu)

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