

Child development: 13 to 18 years old



All teens grow and develop at different rates. Your teen gives you clues about the way their body and mind develop as they grow. This includes:

- The way they learn, act, play and speak.
- Their milestones, which give you an idea of your teen's progress.

Common issues teens may face

- The need for privacy. Give your teen space to help them become more independent.
- Concern about body image. Your teen may worry about the way they look because of changes in their body.
- Building independence. Your teen is becoming an adult. They may feel the need to make their own choices.
- Learning to think like an adult. Your teen thinks about things that cannot be seen or touched, such as faith, beliefs and the future. Their brain is still growing even though they may feel like an adult.
- Mood swings. Your teen has not yet learned how to handle feelings and stress. Their moods may change quickly.
- Friendships. Your teen may worry about fitting in with others. Friends are important to your teen as they learn to build relationships.
- Peer pressure. Your teen may often feel internal pressure to do things they think their peers are doing, when in reality their peers are not doing these things.
- Developing self-identity. Your teen is figuring out what they believe and how they fit into their own world.

How to help your teen grow and develop

- Help your teen sleep for about 9 hours each night:
 - Limit cell phone, computer and TV use for 1 hour before bedtime.
 - Provide a quiet evening routine.
 - Limit drinks with caffeine, such as tea and sodas.
- Make sure your teen is active and exercises or plays each day.
- Know your teen will need personal space.
- Talk and listen to your teen about their views without judgment. Take time to calmly discuss your own views.
- Help your teen find school activities they enjoy.
- Praise your teen.
- Get to know your teen's friends and what they are doing.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.