



Early adolescence



(10 to 13 years)

Early adolescence marks a time of rapid changes. The early adolescent begins a journey of developing his or her own identity and begins to become more independent from parents. Below are some common characteristics of early adolescence.

- Young teens may grow a lot, seemingly overnight.
- Increased need for privacy.
- Increased importance of close friends.
- Concern with body changes.
- May spend extra time in front of mirror.
- Often dresses exactly like friends.
- May spend hours on the phone.
- Very sensitive to teasing.
- May not want to join family on outings.
- May not want parents around school or at social functions.
- Can rapidly shift moods.
- Often wonders, “Am I normal?”
- Everything is “boring.”



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Parent tips



- Your child still needs to see that you care.
- Continue to give hugs and tell them you love them.
- Spend at least one evening per week on family activities.
- Ask your child every day about what they are doing and what they think about.
- Eat family meals together.
- Model mutual respect in the family.
- Limit criticism and nagging.
- Do not allow teasing.
- Do not tolerate put-downs.
- Respect your child's need for privacy.
- Reassure your kids that they are normal.
- Look for teachable moments.
- Give your child space when they need it but let them know you're always available. Then, be available for them.

If you need more help with parenting teens, call TAMS at (612) 813-6125 or visit these helpful websites:

www.shouldertoshoulderminnesota.org

www.parenting.umn.edu

www.talkingwithkids.org



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