

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

ECAP5007

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INTERPERSONAL
RELATIONSHIPS

Adolescent social relationships

Friendships and peer groups

Parents and family

Digital technologies

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BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY

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PEER GROUPS

Dunphy (1972) - first to write about peer groups (Australian youth).

Ryan (2001) - how well adolescents establish friendships partly reflects what they have learnt about close relationships at home.

Brown (2004) - difference between cliques and crowds.

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PEER GROUPS

Attachment theory

Social identity theory
(conformity or rejection)
(Tajfel, 1978)

Identity (Erikson, Marcia,
Kroger)

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FRIENDSHIPS

Groups need to contain certain homogeneity based on age, sex or gender, social class, leisure and interests:

- Companionship
- Sense of belonging
- Help & support
- Intimacy & emotional security
- Self-validation

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PEER INFLUENCE

Brown (2004):

Modelling

Structuring of opportunities

Normative regulation

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RELATIONSHIPS
WITH PEERS &
PARENTS

Relationship with parents seen as "vertical relationships".

Relationship with peers = "horizontal relationship".

Parenting styles (Durbin et al. 1993)

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HOW DO PEER
RELATIONS INFLUENCE
ADOLESCENT
DEVELOPMENT AND
BEHAVIOUR?

Positive

- Role models
- Identity formation
- Socialisation

Negative

- Socialisation in the 'wrong' crowd
- Involvement in criminal activities
- Involvement in risky behaviours

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DURING THE LIFESPAN PERIOD, AROUND WHAT AGE DO 'PEER RELATIONSHIPS' BECOME IMPORTANT?

During early years, friendships are the part of social skills development (e.g. sharing, playing together)

During puberty/early adolescence - same sex peer relations become important in terms of 'popularity'.

Cliques - same interest groups.

Early signs of separation from adults.

Mid-adolescence - crowd formation and mixed sex groups - 'Crucial element in 'identity formation'.

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WHAT OTHER FACTORS MAY INFLUENCE PEER GROUPING?

Family

Media

Perceived youth culture (group identity)

School environment

Neighbourhood or immediate communities

Economic conditions (poverty, deprivation, etc.)

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THE PEER GROUP IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Things are a lot faster, if I want to get hold of someone I'll just go on the computer, or if I wanted to talk I'd just like, text. You sort of rely on it so much that you don't even realise it. Because I lost my phone today, I haven't got it tonight, and even then I was just sort of coming home from school and I felt, like, completely vulnerable, and I was just, like, I haven't got anything to sort of, have! And it's just, like, what happens if I suddenly get lost, not that I would, you start to panic".

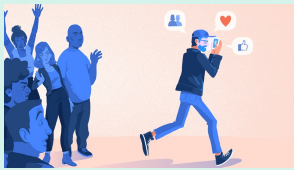
15 year old girl (Coleman, 2011, p.186)

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THE PEER GROUP IN THE DIGITAL AGE

- The use of mobile phones in young people has increased dramatically since 1999 (Coleman, 2011).
- The use of screen-based activities is continually developing and expanding in young people (Mesch & Talmund, 2010).

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THE PEER GROUP IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Studies that have explored the impact of digital media on those young people who are socially isolated in face-to-face communication have yielded mixed findings.

Consequently, Mesch and Talmund (2007/2010) concluded that the internet facilitates existing social contacts rather than undermines them, for all but those already socially isolated.

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THE PEER GROUP IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The digital age is making it easier and quicker for young people to stay in touch.

So whilst they are communicating in different ways with friends in the digital age, are they communicating more than in previous generations in terms of timing? (Coleman, 2011).

Parents of adolescence in the 1980's would complain about the amount of times young people use the landline phone to speak to their friends, now its Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.

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IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

In what ways can we support the development of healthy peer relationships?

What are the risks and opportunities of social media?

How would you initiate a conversation with an adolescent feeling distressed due to peer pressure?
