

Chapter 12

Adulthood and the Family

Chapter 12

Lesson 12.1

Learning Objectives

Theory

- 1) List three stages of adulthood
- 2) Explain Schaie's theory of cognitive development in young and middle adults
- 3) Discuss Erikson's stages of psychosocial development in young and middle adults
- 4) List at least three functions of families
- 5) Describe the effects of divorce on involved persons

Adulthood as Continuing Change

- Adulthood begins at approximately age 19
- Growth and development continue throughout
- Divided into three segments
 - Young adulthood—ages 19 to 45
 - Achievement stage (Schaie)
 - Middle adulthood—ages 46 to 64
 - Responsibility stage, executive substage (Schaie)
 - Older adulthood—65 to death

Schaie's Theory of Cognitive Development

- Achievement stage
 - Needing to learn and successfully use your abilities
- Responsibility stage
 - Concerned with real-life problems, in charge of self and others
- Executive substage
 - Responsible for major corporations, the country

Erikson's Stages of Adult Psychosocial Development

- Young adult stage
 - Intimacy vs. Isolation
 - Want to give of themselves and to be committed to others
- Middle adult stage
 - Generativity vs. Stagnation
 - Willing and eager to help young people, their own children and grandchildren, and others in their community

Families

- A group of individuals who care about and for each other
- Provide structure in which children learn basic values and how to relate to others
- Remain important throughout life span

Functions of the Family

- Physical maintenance: providing life's essentials
- Protection: creating atmosphere for health and safety
- Nurturance: providing loving care and guidance
- Socialization: interacting with others
- Education: teaching about values and the world
- Reproduction: continuing the species
- Recreation: having fun together

Types of Families

- Nuclear: one or two parents and children
- Extended: parents, children, grandparents, and other relatives
- Step: one parent and child(ren) and a parent by marriage
- Blended: mother, her children; father, his children
- Partner: parents are same gender; children are from previous relationships, artificial insemination, or adoption

Historical Changes in Families

- Urbanization: rural families were self-sufficient and lived on farms; now only a small percentage of the population does so
- Mobility: families move with the job market; children may attend multiple schools, which affects extended families
- Size: is decreasing, affected by cost and contraception

Historical Changes in Families (cont'd)

- Using paid caregivers: nearly 70% of families have two wage earners; most single parents are employed
- Fathers' roles: men taking an increasing role in parenting and child care
- Increased longevity: life spans increasing; some families comprise four or five living generations

Divorce and Families

- Divorce ends 36% of marriages
- Children may be deeply affected; some may feel to blame for breakup and often feel guilty
- 25% of divorces in couples older than 40 years
- Divorce affects the couple and children but may also affect the extended family

Risk Factors for Divorce

- Bride and groom younger than 20 years of age
- Low economic circumstances
- Premarital pregnancy
- Children from a previous marriage
- Either partner has been divorced
- Knowing each other for a short time
- One or both did not finish high school
- No religious affiliation or different faiths
- One or both have divorced parents

Question 1

One problem facing adulthood and the family is divorce. Tom and Elisa are both 18 and have not completed high school. Both Tom and Elisa's parents are married. If Tom and Elisa get married, which of the following is *not* a risk factor for divorce?

- 1) Bride and groom younger than 20
- 2) Premarital pregnancy
- 3) Both did not finish high school
- 4) Both sets of parents are married, but married young

Question 2

In young adulthood, individuals are focused on all of the following *except*:

- 1) career exploration.
- 2) marrying and establishing a family.
- 3) maintaining healthy habits such as diet and exercise.
- 4) taking care of their aging parents.

Question 3

Sophia is a 25-year-old college graduate who is a new employee in a local law firm. She recently made an error at work and missed an important deadline. Which of the following behaviors does *not* indicate maturity?

- 1) She accepted responsibility for her actions.
- 2) She expressed regret and remorse.
- 3) She developed a daily schedule to ensure time management.
- 4) She turned in her resignation and began seeking employment elsewhere.

Chapter 12

Lesson 12.2

Learning Objectives

Theory

6) Describe the physical development and changes of young and middle adults

Clinical Practice

- 1) Design program to help adults maintain healthy lifestyle
- 2) Identify at least three health concerns of young adults
- 3) Identify at least four health concerns of middle adults
- 4) Explain how caring people can nourish the cognitive and psychosocial development of adults

Young Adults

- First 2 to 8 years of adulthood are time of transition
 - Completing the adolescent developmental process
- Major events in young adulthood
 - Achieving economic independence
 - Making decisions independently
- Growing toward maturity with philosophy of life based on belief system and personal ethics

Behaviors Indicating Maturity

- The ability to:
 - Acknowledge and express feelings with restraint
 - Laugh at yourself
 - Accept responsibility for your actions
 - Tolerate frustration
 - Accept diversity and individuality in others

Behaviors Indicating Maturity (cont'd)

- The ability to:
 - Trust others
 - Display self-confidence
 - Cope with stress
 - Discipline yourself
 - Handle problems without losing sight of your goals

Physical Development

- Strength, endurance, and energy are at high levels—at physical peak
- Skeletal development complete
- Dental maturity complete
- Physical and brain growth peak in the 20s
- Physically, the best years for reproduction
- Sexual preferences identified

Health Concerns of Young Adults

- Risky behavior
 - Chemical abuse, overeating, inadequate sleep, inactive lifestyle, sexual promiscuity
 - Motor vehicle accidents primary cause of death in white males; homicide is the leading cause of death in African-American males
- Stress-related illness
 - Headaches, gastric ulcers, hypertension

Health Concerns of Young Adults (cont'd)

- Early disease
- Development of cancer
 - Women: perform monthly breast self-examinations (mammogram every 2 years starting at age 40) and see physician for annual Pap smears
 - Men: perform regular testicular self-examination
- Periodic TB testing

Cognitive Development

- Intelligence applied to higher education and career development
- Young adults more able to reason, solve problems, and set reasonable goals
- Cognitive development is aided by support of others

Continuing Education

- Higher education can help people understand their world, learn to manage their time, and prepare for a career
- One or two years of higher education, even if career goals unclear, can help young adults learn more about themselves and the world

Careers and Work

- Ability to earn a living important accomplishment
- Gives sense of identity; increases self-worth and respect
- Young adults want work to:
 - Be interesting and pay adequately
 - Use their skills
 - Provide the opportunity for advancement
- Career vs. family may cause conflict

Psychosocial Development

- Independence from parents
- May become boomerang children
- Intimacy vs. Isolation (Erikson)
- Personality continues to develop

Developmental Tasks

- Marriage
 - Whether to marry is a major concern in young adulthood
 - Requires mutual respect, sharing, and commitment
 - Fear of making a poor choice is one reason people decide to cohabit before or instead of marrying
- Single adults
 - Independent with their time and money
 - Responsible for their own decisions
 - Many report loneliness

Developmental Tasks (cont'd)

- Parenting
 - Becoming a parent occurs for many people during young adulthood
 - Some women delay having children in favor of career development
 - Childbearing is only the beginning of parenting
 - Day care, discipline, and other child-rearing aspects continue for years

Developmental Tasks (cont'd)

- Home management
 - Tasks in making life run smoothly need regular attention (e.g., buying groceries)
- Developing a social group
 - Friendships beyond the extended family valuable
- Community responsibility
 - Reach beyond own needs; concerned with others

Middle Adulthood

- Ages 46 to 64 years
- Viewed as the best years of life
- Viewed as leaders
- Expansion of social and personal development
- May be reluctant to admit to being middle-aged

Physical Development

- Changes apparent in middle years
- Middle adults often seek ways to slow aging
- Weight redistribution
 - Men add inches to their waist
 - Women add inches to hips and thighs
- Presbyopia, presbycusis
- Menopause, decreased libido
- Graying hair, thinning skin

Health Concerns

- Those who take care of themselves are generally healthier than those who do not
- Screening for diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, colon cancer at regular intervals
- Leading causes of death in the 50s and 60s:
 - Heart disease
 - Cancer
 - Vascular disease
 - Accidents

Health Concerns (cont'd)

- Major health problems include:
 - Accidents, alcohol abuse
 - Obesity, diabetes
 - Heart disease
 - Hypertension
 - Mental illness

Cognitive Development

- Early signs of illnesses may cause the impression of slight mental declines
- People who are active and use their intellect remain bright and interested in life
- Middle adults often need to work harder at remembering things

Work Life

- Satisfaction with work part of cognitive development
- Increased income and responsibilities accompanying career growth explain increased satisfaction
- Adults may make a conscious decision to make a midlife career change
- Middle adults forced to make changes may have a difficult time adjusting

Lifelong Learning

- Many adults discover that returning to college is rewarding and challenging
- Education may fulfill a lifelong goal, it may be to keep a job, or it may be to prepare for a career change
- Women who chose to raise a family are especially likely to prepare for new jobs

Psychosocial Development

- Marriage
 - Some improve as children leave home and child-rearing responsibilities lessen
 - A couple who has been unhappy for years may decide to divorce when the children are gone
 - Changing roles and responsibilities can create or intensify marital problems
 - Empty nest syndrome
 - Children have gone, causing a sense of loss and sadness
 - Affects some who have centered their lives on their children

Friendships

- Need for close friends in middle adulthood
- New importance in relationships with siblings

Parenting

- Middle adults gain satisfaction in realizing that their child is a responsible young adult
- Grandchildren add another dimension to the family
- Grandparents usually enjoy baby-sitting and inclusion in the younger family's life

Generativity

- Generativity vs. Stagnation
- Concerned for others and want to contribute
 - Through social activities, leadership roles in community/religious organizations, career
- Mentors (teachers or coaches) to younger adults
- Accept that life is not simple and that they cannot control very much in it

Caring for Parents

- Middle adults often the “sandwich” generation
 - Care for dependent children at home and aging parents who need caregiving
 - May be a cause for increased stress
- Daughters and daughters-in-law often become primary caregivers for elderly parents
- Community support is available in some communities and may be helpful

Question 4

Vicki is 53, a middle-aged adult. She has learned all of the following *except*:

- 1) menopause means the end of the reproductive years for women.
- 2) middle adults often have greater responsibilities and may earn more money.
- 3) middle adults are focused on themselves only.
- 4) middle adults accept that life is not simple and that they cannot control very much in it.

Question 5

John is 58 and a hard-working engineer. He realizes the leading causes of death during one's 50s and 60s are all of the following *except*:

- 1) heart disease and vascular disease.
- 2) suicide.
- 3) cancer.
- 4) accidents.