

THE PURPOSE AND UNDERSTANDING OF PATHFINDERS

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WHAT WE INTEND TO ACCOMPLISH

- Understand the issues faced by Pathfinder age (10-16) children
- Understand the purposes behind the Pathfinder program
- Understand how these purposes relate to the needs of this particular age group



ADOLESCENCE

- The term adolescence comes from the Latin verb *adolescere*, which means “to go into adulthood.”
- Transition between childhood and adulthood
- From about the ages of 11-19
- Adolescence is a period of rapid physical, cognitive, sexual, social and emotional changes.
- It is an adjustment period for the adolescent, their parents, and those who are in frequent contact with them.

Childhood
(dependent)



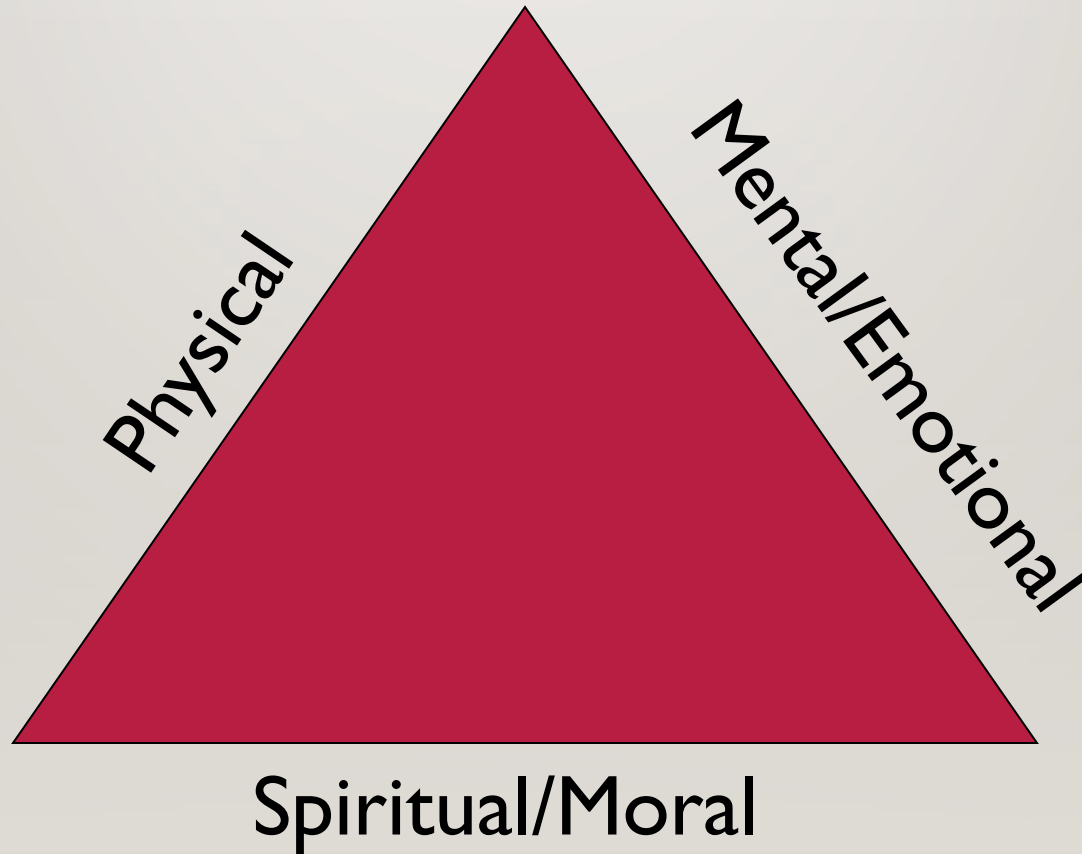
Adolescence



Adulthood
(independent)



THE ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT





THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOLESCENCE

- Rapid, irregular growth
- Undergo body changes that may result in awkwardness, lack of coordination
- Have varying maturity rates, with girls tending to mature 1.5-2 years earlier (on average) than boys
- Experience restlessness and fatigue due to hormonal changes
- Need daily physical activity because of increased energy



THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOLESCENCE (CONT.)

- Increased sexual awareness
- Concerned with body changes that accompany sexual maturation
- Have a propensity towards junk foods but need good nutrition
- Many lack good physical fitness (poor physical strength, endurance, and flexibility)
- This is the age where experimentation with risky lifestyles occurs (sex/drugs/alcohol/tobacco etc)



THE MENTAL/EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOLESCENCE

- Display a wide range of intellectual development
- Transitioning from concrete to abstract thinking
- Are curious and dabble in a wide range of pursuits, few of which are sustained
- Prefer active over passive learning activities
- Prefer interaction with peers during learning activities



THE MENTAL/EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOLESCENCE (CONT.)

- Respond positively to opportunities to participate in real life situations
- Often preoccupied with self
- Have a strong need for approval and are easily discouraged
- Developing an increased understanding of personal abilities
- Are inquisitive about adults, often challenging their authority, and always observing them



THE MENTAL/EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOLESCENCE (CONT.)

- May show a disinterest in conventional academic subjects but are intellectually curious about the world and themselves
- Experience mood swings with peaks of intensity and unpredictability
- Need to release energy, often in sudden, apparently meaningless outbursts of activity
- Seek to become increasingly independent, searching for adult identity and acceptance
- Are increasingly concerned about peer acceptance



THE MENTAL/EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOLESCENCE (CONT.)

- Tend to be self conscious, lacking in self esteem, and highly sensitive to criticism
- Increasingly behave in ways associated with their gender
- Are concerned with many societal issues as their personal value system develops
- Believe that their personal problems, feelings, and experiences are unique to them



THE MORAL/SPIRITUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOLESCENCE

- Often show compassion for those who are downtrodden or suffering
- Are moving from acceptance of adult moral judgments to development of their own personal values
- Are capable of participation in discussion of spiritual values
- They need and are influenced by trustworthy adult role models who will listen to them and affirm their positive spiritual values
- Are increasingly aware of and concerned about inconsistencies between the values adults talk about and the values they exhibit



WHY WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED WITH ADOLESCENCE

- Young Americans between the ages of 13 and 24 are still contracting HIV at the rate of 2 per hour. *Office of National AIDS Policy*
- Every year 3 million teens--about 1 in 4 sexually active teens -- get a sexually transmitted disease (STD). *American Social Health Administration*
- One-third of all smokers had their first cigarette by the age of 14. Ninety percent of all smokers begin before the age of 21. *American Lung Association*
- Individuals who begin drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to become alcohol dependent than those who begin drinking at age 21. *The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University*
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among youths ages 15 to 20. *National Center for Health Statistics*



THE PURPOSE OF PATHFINDERS



THE PURPOSE OF PATHFINDERS

1. Build relationships with Christ
2. Teach young Christians to witness
3. Grow Responsible citizens
4. Provide positive mentors
5. Build community
6. Create opportunities for fun and fellowship



BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHRIST

- Research shows that 70% of all Adventist children who eventually become church members make their decisions before age 14.
- Study of scripture
- Study of church history
- Study of God's creation



“TRAIN A CHILD IN THE
WAY HE SHOULD GO,
AND WHEN HE IS OLD HE
WILL NOT TURN FROM
IT”

PROVERBS 22:6



TEACH YOUNG CHRISTIANS TO WITNESS

- Witnessing is a lifestyle
- Outreach activities
- Full participation in local church ministry programs
- Pathfinders as a ministry to member and non-member children



“THE ADVENT MESSAGE TO ALL THE WORLD IN THIS GENERATION”

PATHFINDER AIM

“BUT IN YOUR HEARTS REVERE CHRIST AS LORD. ALWAYS BE PREPARED TO GIVE AN ANSWER TO EVERYONE WHO ASKS YOU TO GIVE THE REASON FOR THE HOPE THAT YOU HAVE. BUT DO THIS WITH GENTLENESS AND RESPECT.”

1 Peter 3:15



GROW RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

- Balanced growth (triangle)
- Growth in knowledge
- Training ground for leadership
- Principles of Christian citizenship





**“JESUS GREW IN WISDOM
AND STATURE, AND IN
FAVOR WITH GOD AND
MAN”**

LUKE 2:52



PROVIDE POSITIVE MENTORS

- Help Pathfinders understand that their church loves, needs, and appreciates them.
- Christian role models
- Help them learn what God has planned for their lives
- Someone to listen

“GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES
OF ALL THE NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM
IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF
THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,
TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL
THINGS THAT I HAVE COMMANDED
YOU”

MATHEW 28:19,20





BUILD COMMUNITY

- Learn to work with others to accomplish goals
- Understand that they are not alone
- Become part of the fabric of the club, church, and society

”I DO NOT PRAY FOR THESE ALONE, BUT ALSO FOR THOSE WHO WILL BELIEVE IN ME THROUGH THEIR WORD; THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE AS YOU, FATHER ARE IN ME, AND I IN YOU, THAT THEY ALSO MAY ONE IN US, THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE THAT YOU SENT ME”

JOHN 17:20-21



CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

- Provide a safe environment for getting to know others
- Have fun in a Christian context
- Lots of opportunities for fellowship with the greater Pathfinder community



” WE PROCLAIM TO YOU WHAT WE HAVE SEEN AND HEARD, SO THAT YOU ALSO MAY HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH US. AND OUR FELLOWSHIP IS WITH THE FATHER AND WITH HIS SON, JESUS CHRIST. WE WRITE THIS TO MAKE OUR JOY COMPLETE.”

I JOHN 1:3-4





CONNECTING THE DOTS



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IN SUMMARY

- Pathfinders is a ministry which is designed to deal with many of the issues facing adolescent children.
- It provides for a structured fellowship with fellow Pathfinders and adults
- It helps foster the development of values which provide a good foundation in adult life