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Cognitive Development during Adolescence by Julia Bennet

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Understanding the mechanics and structure can be very useful in New York therapy. The prefrontal cortex, which plays a role in executive functioning, matures later than other brain structures (Klingberg, Vaidya, Gabrieli, Moseley, and Hedehus, 1999). Myelination, which is an indicator of greater conductivity, also continues to develop prefrontally during adolescence. Myelination also continues in other areas of the brain during this time (Schmithorst, Wilke, Dardzinski, and Holland, 2002). In addition, synaptic pruning is also evident during adolescence (Giedd et al., 1999). The portions of the brain responsible for executive functions, higher order cognitive processes, and effortful control continue to develop gradually during adolescence, while the portions of the brain related to emotions, the limbic system, have developed earlier in childhood (Rothbart, 1991). The more automatic processes of the limbic system may be further accelerated by the hormonal changes in adolescence. New York psychologists understand that this may result in a greater disparity during adolescence in the development of emotional, automatic responses, and more controlled, planned, and effortful responses. New York therapy can help your adolescent to learn to think and plan ahead, rather than reacting only emotionally.

Theories regarding adolescent cognitive development. Coinciding with these brain changes, adolescents experience changes in their cognitive style and abilities. This is why cognitive behavior therapy in New York can be so effective for adolescents. According to Keatingâ€™s (2004) chapter in Handbook of Adolescent Psychology, Inhelder and Piagetâ€™s 1958 publication of The Growth of Logical Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence is recognized as having launched the study of adolescent cognitive development. He describes this publication as having paralleled the trend of psychology in general shifting from studying intelligence psychometrically to attempting to understand cognitive structure and processes. Piagetâ€™s theory stated that the key transition for adolescence is from concrete to formal operations, or shifting from a class-based logic system to a more formal propositional logic system (Keating, 2004). As a New York psychologist, I understand that adolescents develop in their ability to think logically, evaluate consequences in the future, and think objectively about oneâ€™s self and consider the rights of others. Integrating this understanding into New York therapy allows me to best meet the needs of my clients. Similarly, Kohlbergâ€™s theory of the development of morality (1969) discussed the child moving from a present, self-centered concept of morality toward integrating oneâ€™s personal principles with those for the good of society. Keatingâ€™s (2004) account of the development of the study of cognition states that research then began focusing more on information processing approaches of cognition. However, looking at logic, processing, or even an increase in expertise with respect to adolescent cognitive development did not fully explain adolescent cognitive functioning. Keating (2004) then describes research looking at cognition as judgment and decision making and then as learning specific domains of knowledge, skill, or expertise. He states research has found that no one of these areas is sufficient to explain cognition; instead there are reciprocal interactions between these cognitive subsystems. Learning independent and effective decision-making is another skill your adolescent can learn in New York therapy. In addition, affective, social, and personality characteristics influence cognition, as well as metacognitive features such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and conscious control in the direction of cognitive activity. The social influences of peers on adolescent cognition and behavior have been extensively researched and will be further explored.

Written by Dr. Cortney Weissglass as part of Clinical Research Project submitted to the Faculty of the American School of Professional Psychology of Argosy University, Washington, DC Campus, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology. Dissertation chair: Ann Womack, PhD and Member: Jennifer McEwan, PhD. August, 2010.

For a full list of references, contact Dr. Weissglass .

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Julia Bennet - About Author:
Beginning in September of 2012, Dr. Weissglass will be providing a New York therapy. As a a New York psychologist, Dr. Weissglass will be offering psychological testing as well as therapy to clients of all backgrounds.

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