

Worksheet – Changes in adolescence checklist

The list below contains *some* of the physical, social and emotional changes that young people experience during adolescence.

Not everyone experiences adolescence in the same way, so not all young people will relate to all of the changes listed.

Physical changes

Common to all

- Growth spurts (getting taller)
- Hair grows on legs, under arms and around the genitals
- Hair and skin may get oilier (may get spots/acne)
- Sweat glands develop and sweat starts to smell
- May feel hungrier



Female bodies

- Get periods (start menstruation)
- Produce a whitish vaginal discharge during the menstrual cycle
- Begin to ovulate (eggs released from ovaries)
- Hips widen
- Breasts develop

Male bodies

- Voice deepens
- Get facial hair
- Shoulders widen
- Get erections for no obvious reason
- Start making sperm
- Have wet dreams (ejaculate during sleep)

Thinking and feeling changes

- May have sexual thoughts and feelings
- May feel self-conscious about looks
- May be more interested in masturbating
- May feel things intensely (experience mood swings)
- May want to try out new things
- May have more arguments with parents
- May worry that other people are talking about them
- May want more independence from parents
- May be more interested in social issues (e.g. sexism, racism, homelessness, etc.)
- May be a bit clumsy
- May think more about who they are in the world
- May be a bit more disorganised and forgetful
- May be able to argue opinions more clearly
- May be able to work out more problems for themselves



Relationship and social changes

- Most adolescents want more independence from their family than they had as children
- Friendships are usually more important than previously
- May spend less time with parents and family
- May change friendship groups based on new interests
- May be with friends more, and organise their own social life rather than parents being involved
- May start a romantic relationship
- May try new ways of dressing, new pastimes, etc.

