

# UNIT-1

## Psychology of Adolescents





# What is Psychology?

- **The scientific definition of Psychology:**

Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes.

- **Why study Psychology?**

The study will give you new ways to look at and interpret your world and the people who inhabit it.

# WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY?

- The term psychology has its origins in the Greek words psyche (soul or self) and logos (logic, science).
- It is a science that stresses careful observation and experimentation in the quest for objective evidence to back up its claims.
- Behavior refers to anything an organism does whether it can be observed directly.





psychoanalysis



functionalism



gestalt



behaviorism



**Schools of  
Thought in  
Psychology**

structuralism



humanism



cognitivism



# TABLE 1.2 THE MOST IMPORTANT APPROACHES (SCHOOLS) OF PSYCHOLOGY

School of psychology	Description	Important contributors
Structuralism	Uses the method of introspection to identify the basic elements or “structures” of psychological experience	Wilhelm Wundt, Edward B. Titchener
Functionalism	Attempts to understand why animals and humans have developed the particular psychological aspects that they currently possess	William James
Psychodynamic	Focuses on the role of our unconscious thoughts, feelings, and memories and our early childhood experiences in determining behavior	Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Erik Erickson
Behaviorism	Based on the premise that it is not possible to objectively study the mind, and therefore that psychologists should limit their attention to the study of behavior itself	John B. Watson, B. F. Skinner
Cognitive	The study of mental processes, including perception, thinking, memory, and judgments	Hermann Ebbinghaus, Sir Frederic Bartlett, Jean Piaget
Social-cultural	The study of how the social situations and the cultures in which people find themselves influence thinking and behavior	Fritz Heider, Leon Festinger, Stanley Schachter

# Adolescence- Definition by World health Organization

- Adolescence is the phase of life between childhood and adulthood, from ages 10 to 19.
- It is a unique stage of human development and an important time for laying the foundations of good health.
- Adolescents experience rapid physical, cognitive and psychosocial growth. This affects how they feel, think, make decisions, and interact with the world around them.
- Despite being thought of as a healthy stage of life, there is significant death, illness and injury in the adolescent years.
- Much of this is preventable or treatable.
- During this phase, adolescents establish patterns of behaviour – for instance, related to diet, physical activity, substance use, and sexual activity – that can protect their health and the health of others around them, or put their health at risk now and in the future.

- To grow and develop in good health, adolescents need information, including age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education; opportunities to develop life skills; health services that are acceptable, equitable, appropriate and effective; and safe and supportive environments.
- They also need opportunities to meaningfully participate in the design and delivery of interventions to improve and maintain their health.



# Stages of Adolescence



- Concrete, black-and-white thinking
- Egocentric, self-conscious
- Increased need for privacy

- Able to think in abstract terms
- See big picture
- BUT may lack ability to apply in the moment
- Romantic and sexual interest

- More impulse control
- Better gauge of risks and rewards
- Values identification
- More stable relationships



# Stages of adolescence

The stages of adolescence can be categorized as follows:

## 1. Early Adolescence (Ages 10-13):

- **Physical Changes:** Puberty begins, leading to the development of primary and secondary sexual characteristics (e.g., growth spurts, the onset of menstruation in females, and voice changes in males).
- **Cognitive Development:** Concrete thinking begins to shift toward more abstract reasoning, but logical thinking may still be developing.
- **Emotional Changes:** Increased mood swings, heightened sensitivity, and a desire for independence.
- **Social Development:** Peer relationships become more important, and there is a growing interest in friendships and belonging to groups.



## **Middle Adolescence (Ages 14-17):**

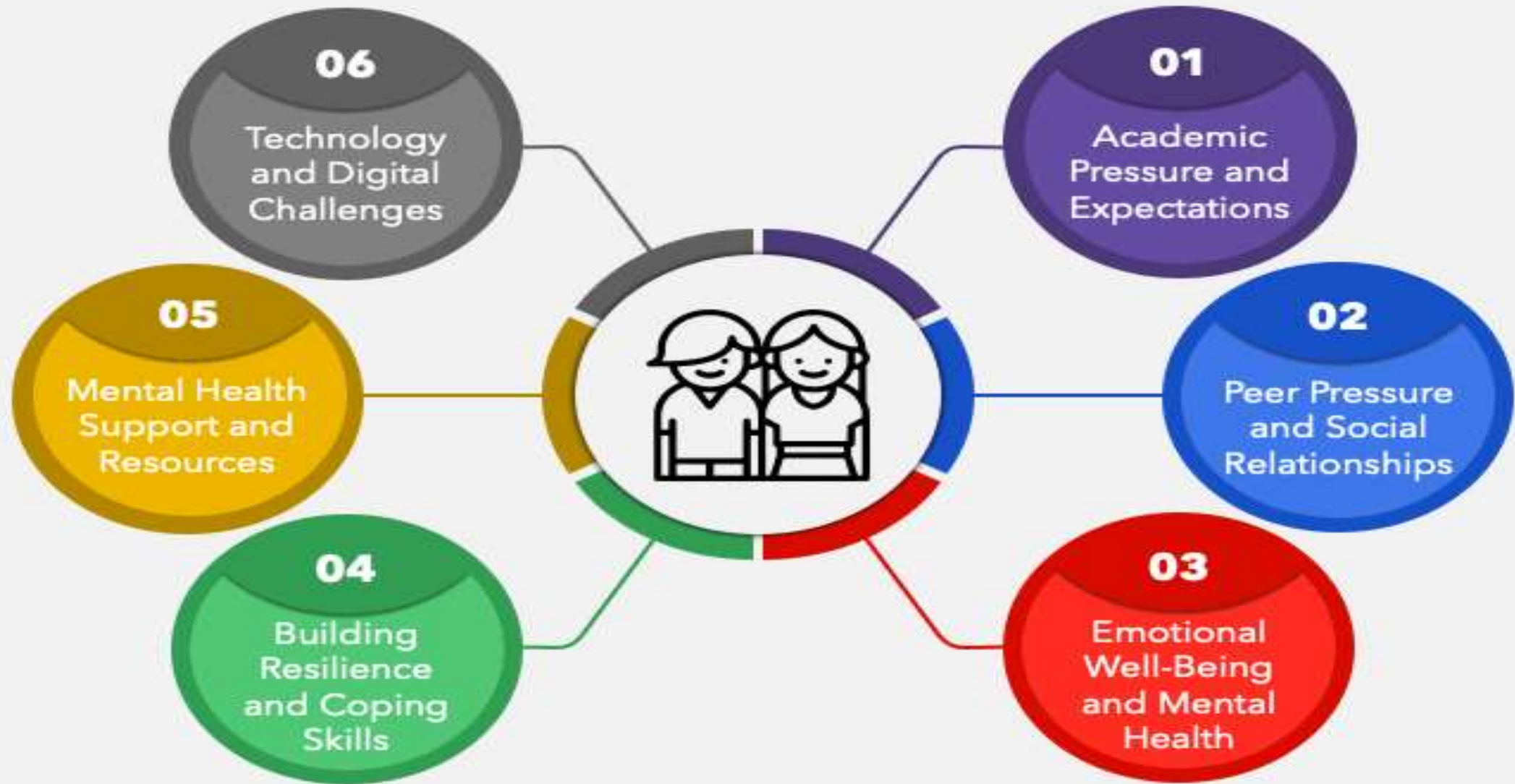
- **Physical Changes:** Growth continues, with the completion of sexual maturation for most individuals.
- **Cognitive Development:** Abstract and critical thinking continues to evolve. Teens develop better problem-solving skills and are capable of considering multiple perspectives.
- **Emotional Changes:** Stronger self-identity, but also more intense emotional reactions and struggles with self-esteem.
- **Social Development:** Peer relationships take on a central role, and there is often a desire to assert independence from parents. Romantic relationships also become more common.
- **Risk Behavior:** Adolescents may engage in more risky behaviors (e.g., substance use) as they seek autonomy and self-expression.

## **Late Adolescence (Ages 18-21):**

- **Physical Changes:** Physical maturity is typically reached. Most of the biological growth (e.g., height) slows or ends.
- **Cognitive Development:** Mature thinking develops, and adolescents begin to form more solid ideas about their future. Decision-making becomes more reflective and responsible.
- **Emotional Changes:** Identity consolidation continues, and emotional regulation improves.
- **Social Development:** Relationships with peers and family may continue to evolve, with a focus on more adult-like friendships and deeper romantic relationships. There is a stronger sense of responsibility, often linked to career or educational aspirations.

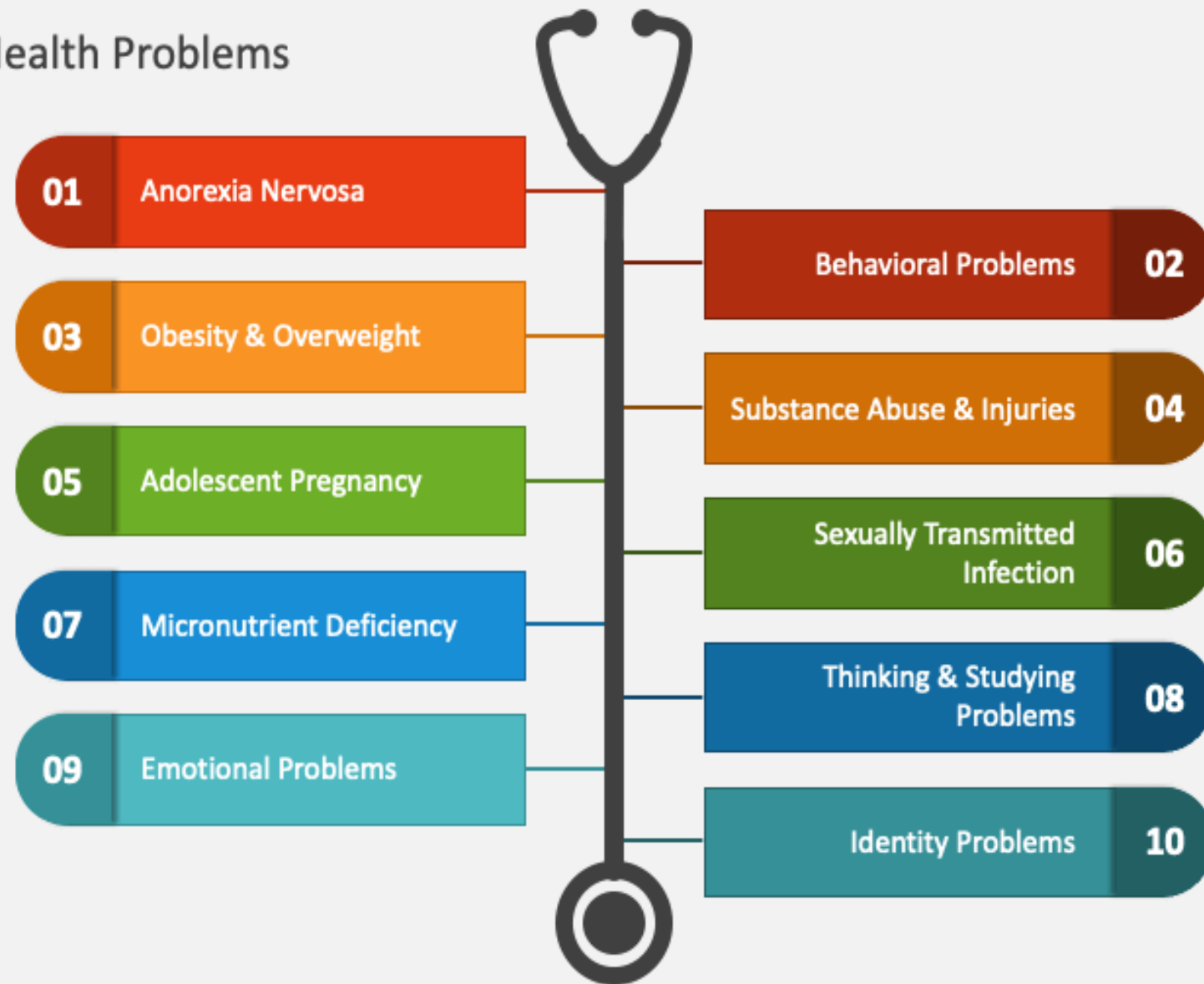


# ADOLESCENT CHALLENGES



# ADOLESCENT HEALTH

## Adolescent Health Problems



# ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH

## Mental Health Cycle

Reduced  
Employment  
Opportunities

Developmental  
Problems

Behavioral  
Problems

Poor Educational  
Attainment

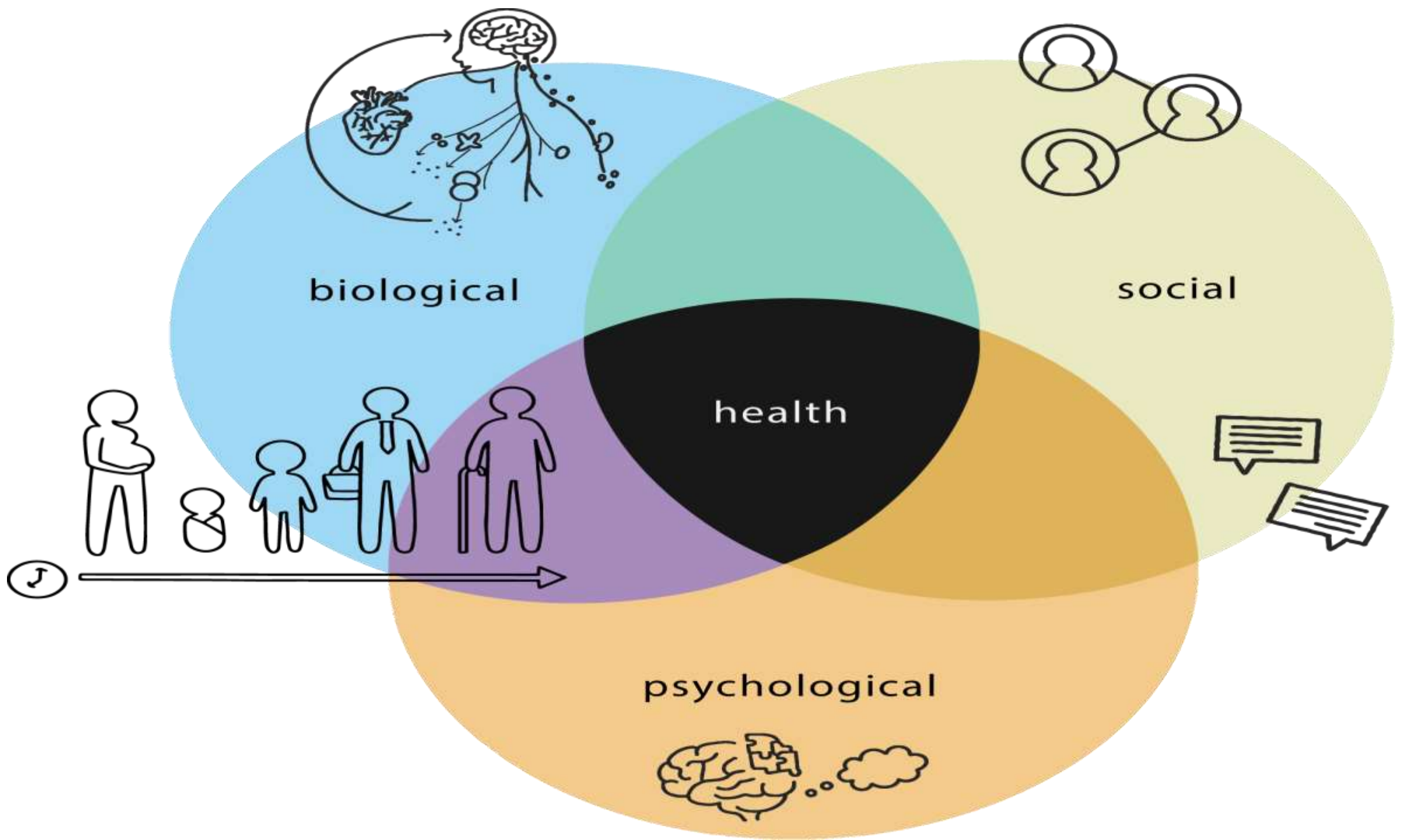
Risk-Taking  
Behaviors

Onset and  
Persistence of Mental  
Health Conditions



Alcohol and  
Substance Use





# The **Bio-Psycho-Social** Model

The **Bio-Psycho-Social** model helps to understand the interconnected nature of these transformations.

## **Biological Aspects**

Adolescence is primarily marked by **puberty**, which leads to physical and hormonal changes that significantly influence development.

- **Physical Growth and Puberty:** Adolescents experience rapid growth in height, weight, and muscle mass. Puberty leads to the development of secondary sexual characteristics
- **Brain Development:** The brain undergoes significant changes during adolescence, particularly in the **prefrontal cortex**, which is involved in decision-making, impulse control, and planning. Adolescents also experience increased connectivity in brain regions involved in emotions and social processing, which can influence behavior and risk-taking.
- **Hormonal Changes:** Hormonal urges (particularly estrogen in girls and testosterone in boys) influence not only physical traits but also emotional and psychological states.
- These hormones play a role in the development of sexual attraction and behaviors, influencing relationships and identity formation.

## Psychological Aspects

Psychologically, adolescence is a time of **self-discovery** and identity formation, as well as emotional and cognitive maturation.

- **Identity Development (Erikson's Theory):** According to Erik Erikson, adolescence is a key stage for developing **personal identity**. Teens experiment with different roles, values, and beliefs to form a coherent sense of self. This process can lead to confusion, especially if they face pressures or conflicts between their emerging identity and societal expectations.
- **Cognitive Development:** Adolescents experience advances in cognitive abilities, including improved reasoning, abstract thinking, and problem-solving. This is influenced by the maturation of the **prefrontal cortex**.



# Psychological Aspects

- **Emotional Regulation:** Adolescents can experience intense emotions due to hormonal changes and evolving brain structures. The emotional experience is often more volatile, which can lead to mood swings, anxiety, or depression, but also increased emotional depth and empathy.
- **Risk-Taking and Peer Influence:** Adolescents are more likely to engage in **risky behaviors** (such as substance use, reckless driving) due to the underdeveloped impulse-control regions of their brain.
- Peer influence becomes particularly significant during this time, and adolescents may prioritize peer approval over family or authority figures' guidance.

# Social Aspects

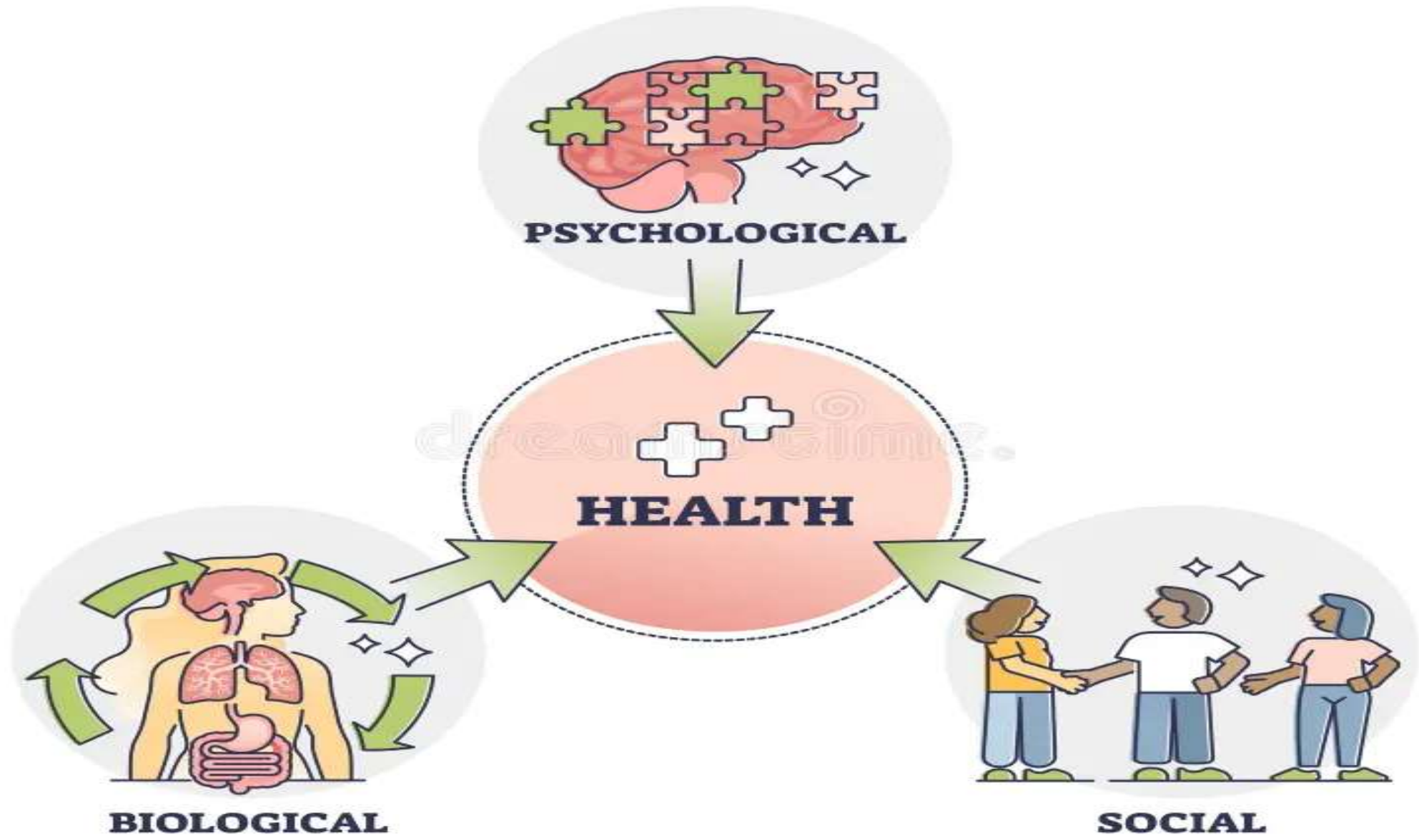
The social environment plays a major role in adolescent development, as teens navigate new relationships, societal expectations, and independence.

- **Peer Relationships:** Peer groups become central to adolescent life, influencing behavior, attitudes, and identity. Adolescents often seek acceptance and approval from their peers and may engage in group dynamics like conformity, social comparison, and peer pressure. Friendships become more intimate, and adolescents may form strong emotional connections with peers.
- **Family Dynamics:** Adolescents typically experience a shift in their relationship with their family.
- As they strive for independence, there may be conflict with parents or caregivers.
- However, family support remains crucial for emotional well-being, and positive family relationships are linked to better mental health outcomes.

# Social Aspects

**Romantic Relationships:** Adolescence is often the time when individuals first experience romantic relationships.

- Navigating romantic feelings can influence self-esteem and identity, and these experiences often play a role in shaping future relationship dynamics.
- **Cultural and Societal Expectations:** Cultural factors and societal norms influence the way adolescents experience and navigate this stage. Expectations related to gender roles, social class, education, and career paths can influence an adolescent's sense of purpose and self-worth. Media and societal pressures can shape body image, identity, and the pursuit of success.





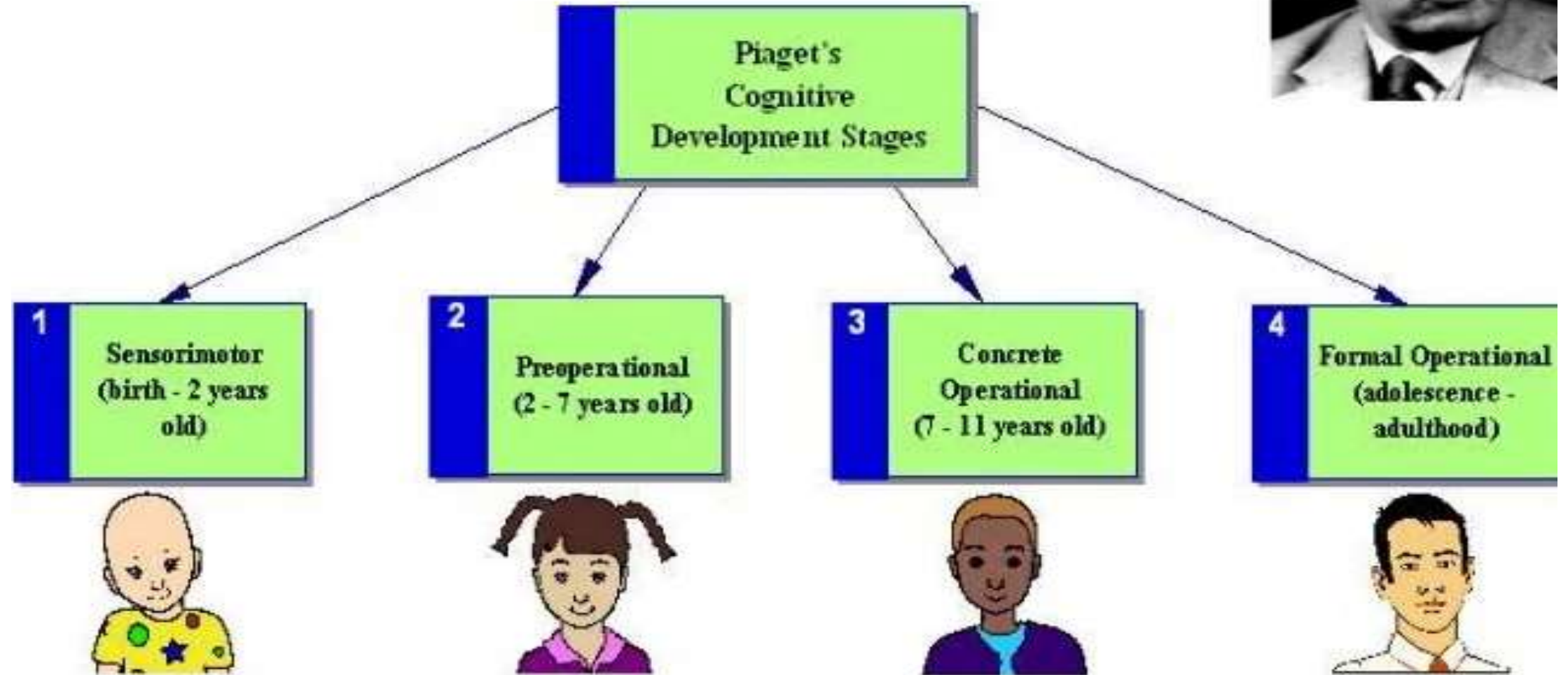
Jean Piaget

# Piaget Theory of Cognitive Development



- The **Theory of Cognitive Development** by Jean Piaget, the Swiss psychologist, suggests that children's intelligence undergoes changes as they grow.
- **Cognitive development** in children is not only related to acquiring knowledge, children need to **build** or develop a **mental model** of their surrounding world
- children progress through a series of four universal stages of cognitive development: *sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational*.
- Each stage is characterized by distinct ways of thinking and understanding the world.
- These stages build upon each other, with each stage representing a more complex and advanced way of thinking

# COGNITIVE THEORY - JEAN PIAGET (1952)



## PIAGET'S STAGES OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT THEORY



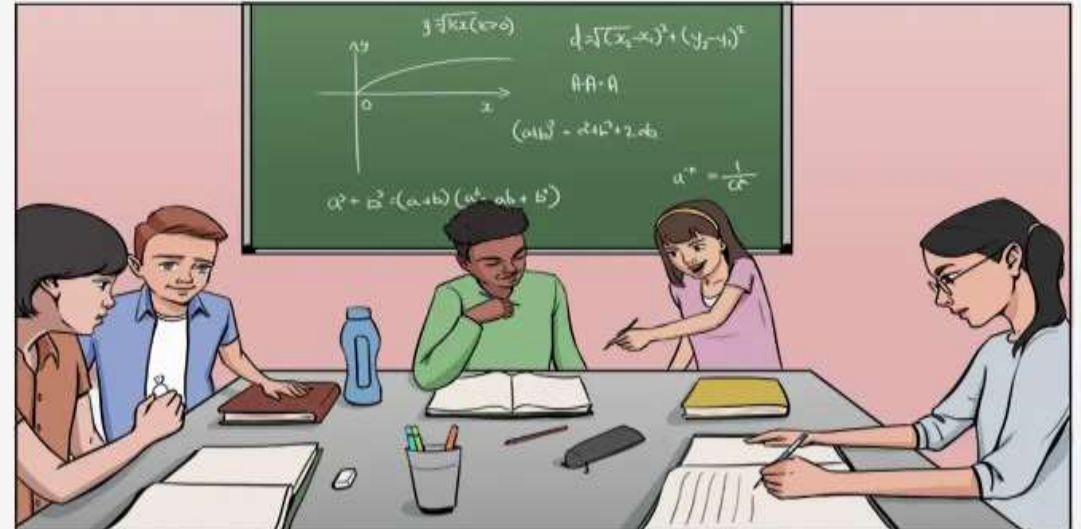
**Sensory-Motor Stage ( Birth-age 2 )**



**Pre-Operational Stage (ages 2-7)**



**Concrete Operational Stage ( ages 7-12 )**



**Formal Operations (ages 12 and above)**





**Sensorimotor**

**Birth-2 years**

**Understands  
world  
through  
senses and  
actions**



**Preoperational**

**2-7 years**

**Understands  
world  
through  
language and  
mental  
images**



**Concrete  
operational**

**7-12 years**

**Understands  
world  
through  
logical  
thinking and  
categories**



**Formal  
operational**

**12 years  
onward**

**Understands  
world  
through  
hypothetical  
thinking and  
scientific  
reasoning**

# Piaget's Periods of Cognitive Development

<b>Birth to 2 years</b>	<b>Sensori-motor</b>	<b>Uses senses and motor skills, items known by use</b>	<b>Object permanence learned</b>
<b>2-6 yrs</b>	<b>Pre-operational</b>	<b>Symbolic thinking, language used; egocentric thinking</b>	<b>Imagination/ experience grow, child de-centers</b>
<b>7-11 yrs</b>	<b>Concrete operational</b>	<b>Logic applied, has objective/rational interpretations</b>	<b>Conservation, numbers, ideas, classifications</b>
<b>12 yrs to adulthood</b>	<b>Formal operational</b>	<b>Thinks abstractly, hypothetical ideas (broader issues)</b>	<b>Ethics, politics, social/moral issues explored</b>



# Piaget's Theory

- Jean Piaget viewed intellectual growth as a process of **adaptation** (adjustment) to the world. He theorised that this happens through:
- **Schemas** – developing “units” of knowledge, each relating to one aspect of the world,
- **Assimilation** - Which is using an existing schema to deal with a new object or situation
- **Adaption** - This happens when the existing schema (knowledge) does not work, and needs to be changed to deal with a new object or situation.
- **Equilibrium** - occurs when a child's schemas can deal with most new information through assimilation
- **Disequilibrium** - when new information cannot be fitted into existing schemas (assimilation).

# Assimilation and Accommodation

- The new information can either be **assimilated** into present schemas or **accommodated** through studying present schema or generating a totally new kind of information.
- Assimilation** denotes a part of the adaptation process originally proposed by Jean Piaget. With the help of assimilation, we take in new experiences and information, and integrate them into our existing thoughts.

• COGNITION

• SCHEMA

• ASSIMILATION

• ACCOMMODATION

SCHEMA



ASSIMILATION



ACCOMMODATION



Boy has learned  
schema of cat



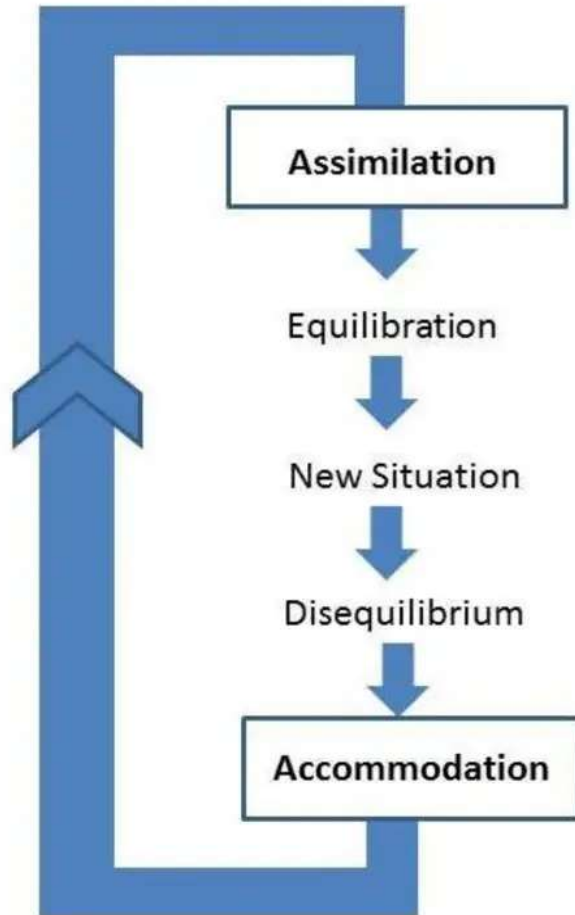
Boy saw a cub and called it  
"cat". Sister said "no, it's a cub".



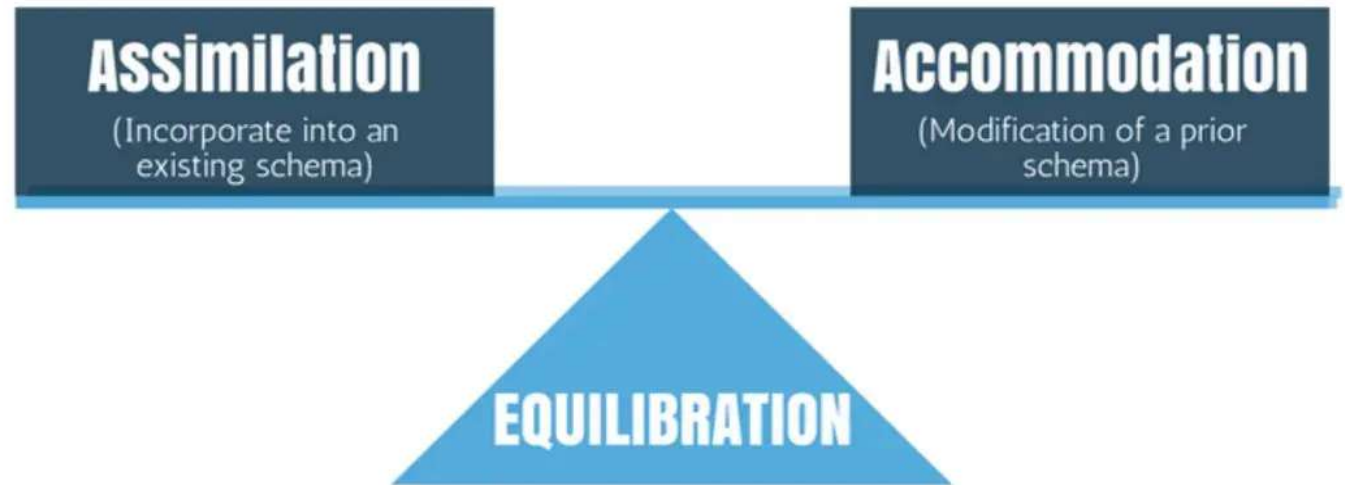
He Accommodate new  
schema of cub.



# 1. PIAGET'S SCHEMAS



## PIAGET'S THEORY OF DEVELOPMENTAL CHANGE VIA SCHEMAS

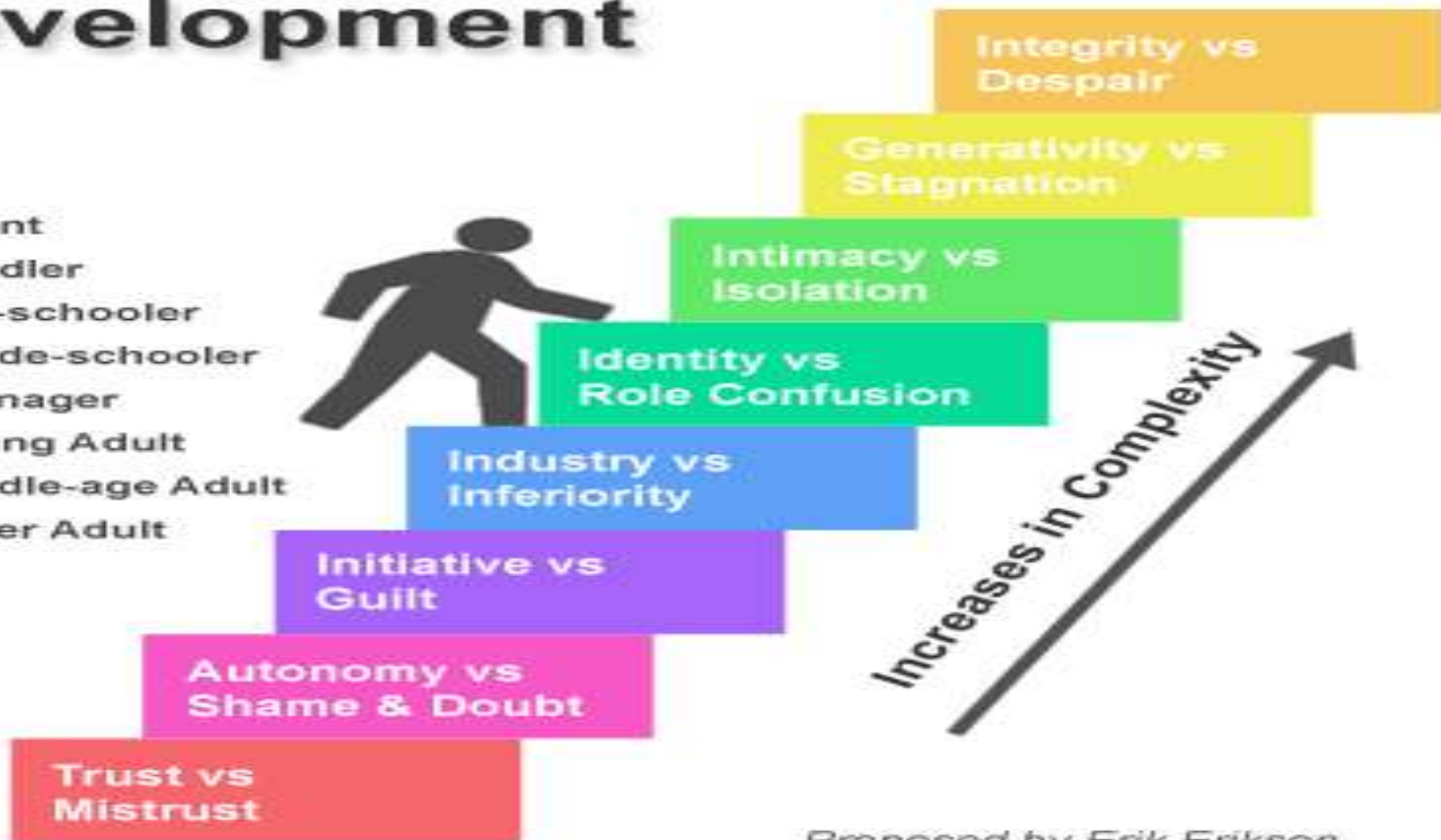


# Erik Erikson's theory of Psychosocial Development



# Stages of Psychosocial Development

- Infant
- Toddler
- Pre-schooler
- Grade-schooler
- Teenager
- Young Adult
- Middle-age Adult
- Older Adult



*Proposed by Erik Erikson*



# Erikson's Psychosocial Stages

Stage	Basic Conflict	Virtue	Description
<b>Infancy</b> 0–1 year	Trust vs. mistrust	Hope	Trust (or mistrust) that basic needs, such as nourishment and affection, will be met
<b>Early childhood</b> 1–3 years	Autonomy vs. shame/doubt	Will	Develop a sense of independence in many tasks
<b>Play age</b> 3–6 years	Initiative vs. guilt	Purpose	Take initiative on some activities—may develop guilt when unsuccessful or boundaries overstepped
<b>School age</b> 7–11 years	Industry vs. inferiority	Competence	Develop self-confidence in abilities when competent or sense of inferiority when not
<b>Adolescence</b> 12–18 years	Identity vs. confusion	Fidelity	Experiment with and develop identity and roles
<b>Early adulthood</b> 19–29 years	Intimacy vs. isolation	Love	Establish intimacy and relationships with others
<b>Middle age</b> 30–64 years	Generativity vs. stagnation	Care	Contribute to society and be part of a family
<b>Old age</b> 65 onward	Integrity vs. despair	Wisdom	Assess and make sense of life and meaning of contributions



# Infancy Psychosocial Development

## Psychosocial Conflict: Trust vs. Mistrust

Major Question:  
"Can I trust the people  
around me?"



## Basic Virtue: Hope

Important Event: Feeding



## Important Tasks in Psychosocial Stage 2



Picking out her own clothes and dressing herself



Developing food preferences of her own



Choosing which toys she likes by herself



Mastering toilet training



# Preschool Psychosocial Development

## Psychosocial Conflict: Initiative vs. Guilt



## Basic Virtue: Purpose



# School-Age Psychosocial Development

Psychosocial Conflict: Industry vs. Inferiority

Major Question:  
"How can I be good or bad?"



verywell

Basic Virtue: Competence

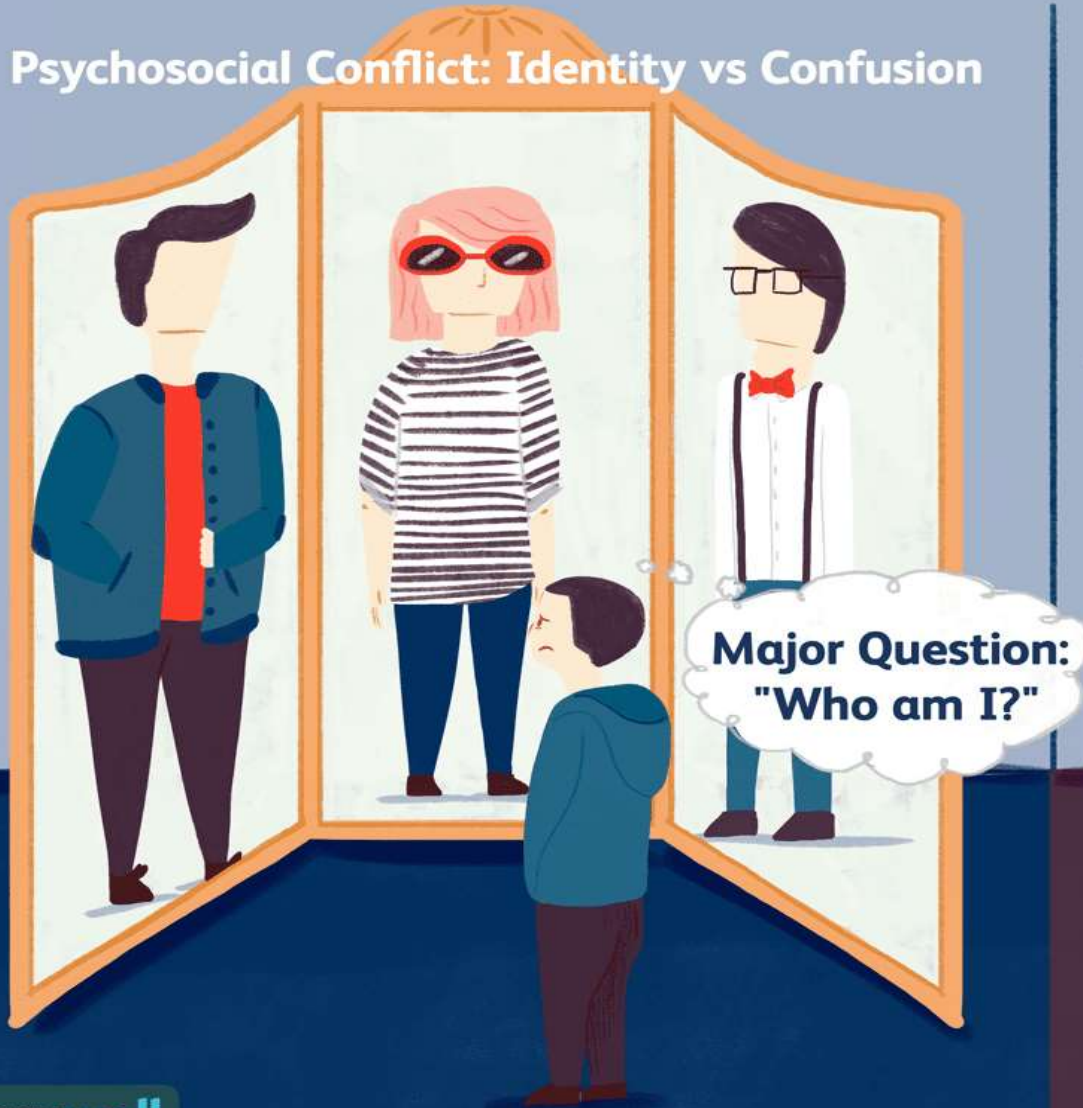


Important Event: School



# Adolescent Psychosocial Development

**Psychosocial Conflict: Identity vs Confusion**



**Basic Virtue: Fidelity**



**Important Event: Social Relationships**



# Psychosocial Development in Young Adulthood

Psychosocial Conflict: Intimacy vs. Isolation

Basic Virtue: Love



Major Question:  
"Will I be loved or  
will I be alone?"



Important Event: Romantic relationships

# Middle Adulthood Psychosocial Development

**Psychosocial Conflict: Generativity vs. Stagnation**



**Basic Virtue: Care**



**Important Event: Parenthood and work**



## Psychosocial Development in Maturity

### Psychosocial Conflict: Integrity vs. Despair



### Basic Virtue: Wisdom

