

Adolescents' Education

A teenager is not his parents, not his teachers, not the books that he reads nor the movies that he sees; he is neither his friends nor his entourage.

I would like to show in this reflective paper that the education is a very important factor in the development of a teenager, but it is not the only one. There will be various environmental factors that will influence an adolescent's academic performances, there will be many competency demands, but there must also be the personal thinking patterns which will allow the teenagers to make their own choices, to enhance their personal identity even at an early age. From everything that the teenagers are receiving in this period, they must select what would be the best fit him.

The society inclines to manipulate the adolescents through its messages destined for the teens. At the age of 14 - 18 or so, everybody wants to decide for a teenager's fate: his next level of education, his vocations, his skills and his future career.

Because the youngsters are much disoriented at this age, most of the times the parents decide for them without taking in considerations the teenagers thoughts and expectations. They use some manipulative tactics to make their children follow their advices. As De La Tour observes, a "very common mistake consists in taking the parental authority *for granted*, because it is objectively legitimate. But what is objectively true is not always recognized subjectively as true, even by adults." ("The Education of Adolescents", par. 23)

On the other hand, at this age teens need direction and coordination. This is the time of great changes, teenagers are inconsequent: they manifest psychological, social, behavioral, interests and educational multiple transformations. A positive environmental factor is the counseling. This may be exerted by either the family or by teachers. A good counselor must offer support and guidance by drawing a path for the teenager to find his self – efficacy (his ability to reach his goals) and to discover himself.

The teenagers are very sensitive and they can be easily negatively influenced. A very dangerous environmental factor is the entourage. For the desire of being liked and considered "cool", one may let himself get carried away and make some bad choices. Teenagers tend to copy the perverted tempers and this for sure could have a bad influence upon the academic performances.

Another environmental factor that could influence a teenager's academic performances is the easy access to internet and media. The amplitude of the negative messages transmitted through these mediums (violence, drugs, weapons, sexuality) can easily feed a teenager's anger, violence and uncontrolled aggressive behavior.

This is the age of great experiences and huge mistakes. Both will influence an adolescent's individuality.

"Adolescence is a pivotal developmental period in which youth begin to form an enduring sense of personal identity and agency about themselves. Self-efficacy is a key belief underlying adolescents' motivation to act intentionally" (Pajares, Urdan, 2006). It is a complex period, but the teenagers must confront it and must use their self-efficacy for following their dreams.

The education helps youngsters to underline their visions. Nevertheless, they must not let the education absorb them. They should be the ones to absorb the education and to use it in their own interest, for their own academic performances, human growth and for the future challenges of life. In order for them not to become “Just Another Brick in the Wall” (Pink Floyd, 1979) they must follow their personal thinking patterns, their self-efficacy and they must also be selective with the environmental factors that they come across with.

From everything life offers, teens must take what suits them best. They must be adaptable and very attentive with what they choose to wear from all the life given accessories.