

# Emotional Development in Adolescents

\*Sethi Bharti

Assistant Professor, Department of Home Science, Dr. K.C.B Govt. P.G. College, Chhattisgarh, Bhilai & India

## ABSTRACT

Emotions are psychological reactions or something a person feels in response to a certain situation. There can be negative-positive or primary- secondary emotions. Emotional development is understanding what are emotions and feelings, why they occur and what they cause, understand emotions of others and accordingly manage one's behavior in the most rational manner. Emotional development starts right after 6 weeks of birth, when a child learns and understands a social smile. Gradually he/she learns to laugh, toddlers understand shame and pride, preschoolers understand fear, anger, happiness and school goes understand empathy and other social and complex emotions. Adolescence is a highly emotional stage and can be very stressful. Emotional quotient is the measure of emotional intelligence. Healthy emotional development is very vital which makes us self-aware, manage ourselves, become socially aware, build relationships and help to take responsible decisions. Finally, teachers and guardians are coming together for overall development of children. So that they become responsible and well behaved adults.

**Keywords:** Emotions, Emotional development, Emotional Quotient, Emotional Intelligence, self-aware

## Article Publication

Published Online: 15-Mar-2021

## Author's Correspondence

**Sethi Bharti**

Assistant Professor, Department of Home Science, Dr. K.C.B Govt. P.G. College, Chhattisgarh, Bhilai & India

✉ [bharti.sethi1907\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:bharti.sethi1907[at]gmail.com)

© 2021 The Authors. Published by *Research Review Journals*

This is an open access article under the CC

BY-NC-ND license 

(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>)

## 1. Introduction

1.1 **Definition:** The word emotion has been taken from Latin word “emovere” which means to stir up or agitate or to excite. Emotion is a state of mind, which is result of our way of thinking, feeling about someone or something and chemical secretion in our brain<sup>[1]</sup>. Basically, emotion is anything which one feels psychologically and cannot be measured or counted tangibly. They can also be described as good or bad experiences towards a particular situation or condition<sup>[2]</sup>.

1.2 Emotions can be broadly classified as:

1. **Positive emotions:** When we feel happy, elated, amused, appreciated, worthy etc., in response to a particular situation, they bring out the positive emotions in us. Examples: Happiness, love, Joyful, enthusiasm, confidence, gratitude.
2. **Negative emotions:** On the other hand, conditions which make us feel low, depressed, unworthy, guilty, cheated or angry, they are expressed as negative emotions. Examples: Anger, fear, guilt, jealousy, grief, frustration, anxiety.

Emotions can also be classified as Primary and secondary emotions. For example:

1. **Primary emotion-** the emotions which are triggered as first response in a particular condition. Example: Anger, laughter
2. **Secondary emotions:** the emotions which follow primary emotions like primary emotion can be anger which can lead to sadness or frustration over a period of time. One may laugh at certain situations and later feel happy or elated due to that.

1.3 **Emotional development:** Emotional development involves learning about feelings and emotions, and understanding how and why they occur, recognizing own feelings and those of others, and evolving effective ways of managing them. The process through which children starts developing the ability to experience, express, and interpret emotions.

The study of emotional development in infants and children is recent and have been studied by researchers through various approaches.

**1.4 Emotional Quotient:** This is comparatively a recent term frequently used to assess managerial efficacy. Emotional management is measured through Emotional Quotient (EQ). As a manager or leader, one has to deal with a lot of emotions, of his/her team as well as self, and take decisions accordingly. A good manager is one who understands and empathizes with his team members and handles situations in the most rational way.

According to Dr Goleman, 'emotional intelligence is defined as a set of skills or competencies, that provide human resource professionals, managers, and anyone in the world of work, with a comprehensive tool to define, measure and develop emotional skills'. Emotional intelligence can also be defined as the ability to recognize our own feelings and others, for motivating ourselves and managing emotions well in our social interactions.

Emotional quotient consists of five important dimensions:

1. Knowing one's emotions.
2. Controlling one's emotions.
3. Recognizing emotions in others (empathy).
4. Controlling emotions in others.
5. Improvement in emotional control.

Over the past, it is believed that success in life depends upon the level of intelligence. Recent development in the field of emotional intelligence has revealed that EQ is an important determinant of the extent of professional and personal success in life<sup>[3]</sup>.

## 2. Stages of Emotional Development

- a. In infants, the first sign of emotional development generally is **a smile**. This can happen within **six weeks of age**. Infants cry in order to express their emotions.
- b. When babies reach the age of **3-6 months** they start to **laugh** to express emotion.
- c. During the **toddler stage**, children develop the emotions that are related to their self-awareness and independence. Children in this age begin to understand **shame and pride**.
- d. **Preschool children** are taught by social cues how to express their emotions verbally. Until this point, most expression of emotion remains nonverbal. Preschool children are able to start to understand the difference between **anger, fear, and sadness**.
- e. As children reach **school age**, they develop understanding of **empathy**. They also start understanding conflicts of emotions. **Older aged school children** start developing the skills required to cope with emotionally challenging situations and suppress negative emotions as required.
- f. **Adolescence** is considered **emotional time of development**. Emotions can be negative in nature and children in this stage may be resist to discuss these emotions with guardians.

## 3. Importance of Emotional Development

Developed countries pay significant importance to emotional and social learning. They believe initial development of social and emotional strengths has important value for a meaningful future and productive society. Some institutions have mechanisms designed to help peoples to better identify and manage their emotions, **establish respectful caring relationships and resolve conflicts using non-violent means**. Research shows that good-quality social and emotional programs significantly **reduce aggression and enhance social and emotional understanding** among children who receive it. Children who have participated in such school programs **are kinder, more cooperative, inclusive of others, less aggressive and less likely to bully** others compared to children who do not participate in such programs. These positive effects last for years.

"At the Greater Good Science Center, we believe that these core competencies are crucial to our well-being in that they can serve as the foundation for creating a meaningful and successful life," says Vicki Zakrzewski, University of California at Berkeley Greater Good's education director. "Simultaneously, these skills have to be cultivated, because the environment can tamper their development." Practicing emotional regulation and other relative skills is important because **these are the prosocial habits** which

help young children become more involved, get along with others and succeed in the world. Children learn these skills as early as kindergarten.

Social and emotional research suggests that one specific trait – **gratitude** – not only helps people **form, maintain and strengthen supportive relationships**, but it also helps people feel connected to a supportive community. The development of appreciation and a great vision in preschool has futuristic benefits into adulthood. The children of age group 11 to 13 exposed to a effective social and emotional program **are cheerful, more positive, have better social background and are more satisfied**. And hence these children of age group 14 to 19 are more satisfied with their lives and **use their power to make their surrounding better**. They are **often involved** in their schoolwork/homework, hobbies and have **good grades**; as well as being **less envious, depressed and materialistic**.

The diagram below depicts importance of Emotional development/learning <sup>[4]</sup>:



**Fig 1: Importance of Emotional and social development**

The diagram above describes that as a result of emotional development activities in schools, colleges, home and other learning places, children and youngsters are better equipped for:

- A. **Self-management**- they manage their emotions and behavior effectively.
- B. **Self-awareness**- they are able to identify their own feelings and desires along with their strengths and challenges. Accordingly, they direct their efforts in a constructive direction to achieve their goals.
- C. **Social awareness**- they are able to empathize and appreciate people around them and hence are able to adjust in a community fruitfully.
- D. **Relationship skills**- as they develop better understanding, they are able to accept and adjust with different kinds of people, form positive and long-lasting relationships, work in a team, manage conflicts, become open to opinions and are able to live and make a happier society.
- E. **Responsible decision making**- once they are able to identify and manage their emotions, they make more informed and rational decisions, rather erratic ones.

#### 4. Gender differences in emotional development <sup>[5]</sup>:

Data indicate that **gender differences** exist in several areas of emotional functioning, including **nonverbal sensitivity; expressiveness; self-reports of anger, fear, and sadness; the quality of defenses; and cognitive correlates of recognition abilities**.

Research suggests that with development, **males increasingly show the expression and attribution of most emotions**, on the other hand **females increasingly shows the expression and recognition of socially avoided emotions (e.g., anger)**.

These differences may be a function of **different socialization processes for boys and girls, which may be adaptations to innate gender differences in temperament or to existing sociocultural pressures**. It is argued that emotions trigger and control adaptive behaviors and that researchers must explore gender differences in emotional development.

## 5. Role of teachers/trainers in emotional development of youth

Adolescence are very active emotionality. Emotions like love, anger, hate, jealousy, fear, worry and joy etc, all reach in their peak. In adolescent stage child is more restless as compare to any other stage. He is too emotional and moody. Due to this reason this period is often stated as a period of stress and strain.

If the tutor is aware about all these upheavals in adolescents, he can give directions accordingly. **Developing proper emotional management is very essential aim of education during adolescence.** fulfilling social requirements as well as to eradicate the negative effects of emotions on behaviors and physical well-being, managing emotions is essential. Controlling emotions does not mean suppression but it means learning new approach to deal with social situation with positive attitude and avoid emotions which are socially avoidable. The teacher plays a vital role to reduce tension that interferes with adolescents' emotional development.

### 5.1 Correct guidance:

A teacher can use various methods and instruments to manage fears of inadequacy in various stages by developing competencies and skills, which develops self-confidence.

### 5.2 Resistance Development:

A teacher should help the children to determine the causes of failure and frustrations and try to solve them.

### 5.3 Proper understanding:

As the adolescent is started by problems of divided loyalties, accentuated by the lack of adult privileges and responsibilities and try to provide them proper environment for the expression of pent up feelings and can give suggestions for guardians at home. Equal treatment, sympathy, co-operation, and freedom of action within some reasonable limitations and necessary restrictions should be imposed. Diverse interests should be developed to replace frustrations. Guide the adolescents to be peaceful and grab the opportunities by using their talents.

Give suggestion to the guardians to free their children to grow. So, they handle their problems effectively.

### 5.4 Speaking about feelings:

Teacher guides children how to express their feelings and emotions through proper wordings. Thus, they become manageable.

### 5.5 Health:

Bad health of the children may cause some bad behavior like worry, anxiety, fear etc. Hence, proper care should be taken regarding children's health. Moreover, teachers can guide them that they should study when they are not tired otherwise it should result in negative learning and feeling of inadequacy.

### 5.6 Tours:

The tutors can organize picnics, excursions<sup>3</sup> and tours to provide them chances to understand each other and to come closer<sup>[6]</sup>.

## 6. Conclusion

WHO modified its definition of "health" by adding terms mental, social and spiritual well being of a person and not just physical well-being. In today's world of high competition, peer pressure and social media pressure, emotional development is very vital for children and youngsters. They critically need to identify their feelings, communicate and share them, manage them and direct in a correct direction, otherwise they can easily fall victims of these pressures, slide into clinical depression and ruin their entire lives. Teachers play a very vital role in developing students socially and emotionally with good emotional intelligence, our youth will have more productive lives, leading to ultimate development of the country.

## Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Mrs. Mahima Dwivedi & Dr. S.K. Sethi for their consistent support and guidance.

**References**

1. Definition of emotions- [https://www.careerpower.in/2019/Cd\\_study\\_notes\\_week5.pdf](https://www.careerpower.in/2019/Cd_study_notes_week5.pdf)
2. Emotions Articles/Type of Emotions/<https://www.the-emotions.com/type-of-emotions.html>
3. Chand.Smriti/ <http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/human-resources/emotional-quotient-meaning-definition-components-and-benefits/32401>.
4. Rey.dustin;2018;importance of emotional and social development; [www.drdustinrey.com](http://www.drdustinrey.com); <http://www.drdustinrey.com/the-importance-of-social-and-emotional-development-in-young-children-2/>
5. Brody, L. R. (1985). Gender differences in emotional development: A review of theories and research. *Journal of Personality*, 53(2), 102-149.
6. How can a teacher guide adolescent for proper emotional development?;[www.preservearticles.com](http://www.preservearticles.com); <http://www.preservearticles.com/articles/how-can-a-teacher-guide-adolescents-for-proper-emotional-development/15277>