



**UMTRI**

Adolescent Development,  
Social Influence, and  
Interpersonal Interactions

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# Developmental Tasks

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A primary developmental task of adolescence is to gain autonomy and the ability to successfully reach personal and functional objectives through independent action.

- Parents
- Peers
- Maturation
- Experience

# Parental Influences

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- During adolescence autonomy increases
- Parental influences continue, but take on a new form
  - Decreased primary/direct influence
  - Partnership
  - Gradual, with coaching

# Peer Influences

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## Active

- Peers active attempts to promote a behavior
  - Bullying
  - Teasing
  - Coaxing
  - Leadership
- Source may be a friend or foe

# Peer Influences

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## Passive

- Falsely or truly, felt or perceived
- Pleasant – to impress someone of the other sex
- Punishing/coersive – negative perceptions of others' impressions
- Sex drive
  - Competition
  - Attract positive attention

# Judgment

## Development of the prefrontal cortex

- Decreasing role of emotion-driven control
  - Early development of emotion control centers
  - Active and well developed by adolescence
- Increasing role of cognitive control
  - Big changes in adolescence
  - Cognitive control skills need to be developed
- Imbalance can result in highly painful and overly harsh self-judgments

(Steinberg, 2008)

# Judgment

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## Cognitive Capabilities

- Expertise
  - Time for acquisition of knowledge and skills
  - Effortful concentrated practice
  - Automaticity
- Regulatory competence: Proficient function in difficult conditions
- Mismatched with adolescents' goal becoming an independent driver quickly

(Keating, 2007; Keating, Halpern-Felsher, 2008)

# Judgment

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## Maturity

- Assumed contributor to driver safety
- Shown by one study not examining brain development
- Does not explain short-term changes in driver safety
- Likely related to the long-term changes in management of similar-aged passenger.



# Experience

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- Needed for development of expertise
- Provides opportunities for learning in context
- Plays role in personal identity development
- Experimentation
- Trying out alternative ways of being
- Increases risks: tobacco, alcohol, drugs, sex
- Crash risk