

EARLY ADULTHOOD

**The Transition to Adulthood
in the Past
&
The Transition to Adulthood
in Canada today**

TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN CANADA TODAY

- adulthood is the period that follows adolescence (after childhood) and lasts until death
- it is a transition period rather than marked by a single event
- legally the age of majority begins at age 18
- however, other criteria also exist...

- adult status = adult roles and responsibilities
 - separating from his family of orientation
 - starting her career
 - leaving home of origin



adolescence

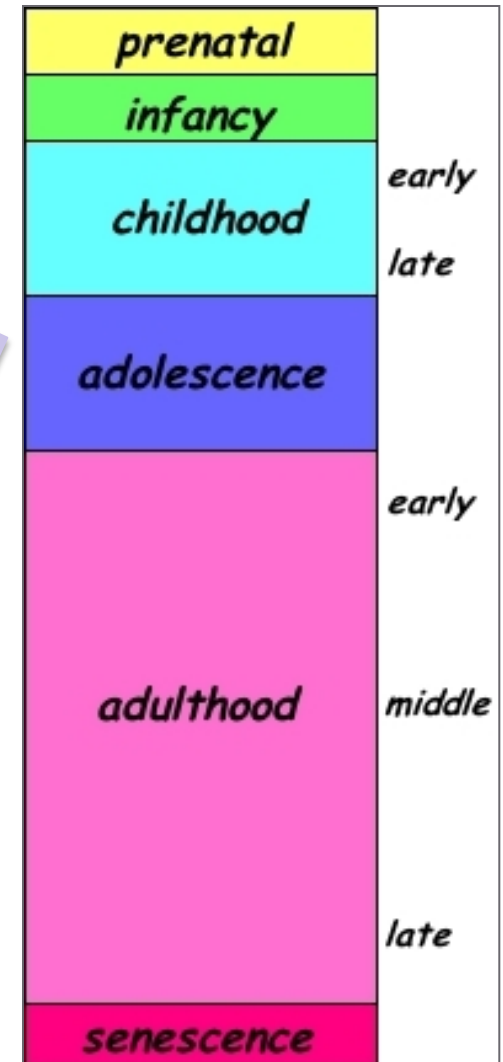
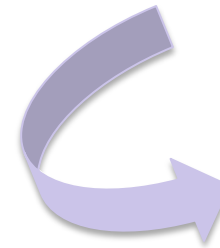
adolescents

The time period

The stage



The people

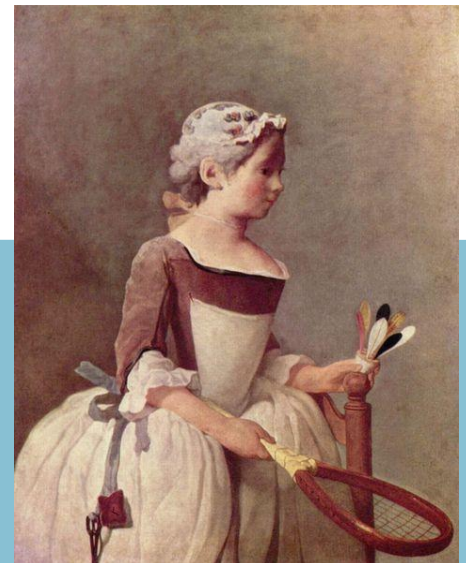


TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN THE PAST

- **Pre-industrial societies**
 - **Industrialized societies**
1800s
- **1900s**
- **21st Century**

PRE-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES

- The stage of adolescence did not exist, children were infants till around 8 and then considered work ready and known as youth till they married and lived on own – typically mid to late twenties
- Lower class girls became domestic servants and boys became labourers or apprentices, while upper class children were educated at home
- Working class youth left home early and lived semi-independently
- **High infant mortality rates saw 50% of children dying before the age of 20**



INDUSTRIALIZED SOCIETIES

1800s

- Families could live in cities and youth could find work and still live at home
- Fathers could take sons and daughters to work with them and typically maintained control over them until they turned 17 (collecting their earnings)
- New middle class (factory & business owners) adolescent daughters were educated at home, sons were sent away to school



Youth tended to leave after 17 to board on their own and remained on their own until they married around the age of 24 typically

the 1900s

- were a century of change for the family, child labour laws introduced to prevent child labour
- public schooling was established
- as the century progressed youth stayed in school for longer and longer 14 - 16 – 18 (working class youth have a harder time staying in school throughout)
- post secondary attendance increased
- the term adolescence is used to identify children who had reached puberty but were not yet in the workforce
- Increase in schooling period = more leisure and preparation time = longer transition period to adulthood



1940s



1950s



1960s



1970s



1980s

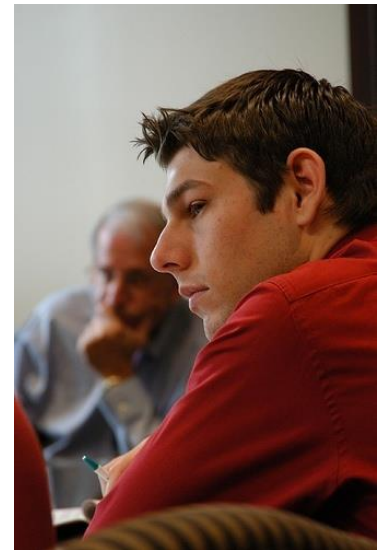


1990s



21ST CENTURY

- the period of adolescence is expanding, financial and emotional dependence on parents is increasing
- leaving school, starting work, leaving home and getting married happening later and in a more compressed timeframe
- increase in school time coincides with a decrease in work opportunities



- young people end up being delayed from taking on adult roles & becoming independent because of a lack of good jobs



LEAVING HOME EDUCATION

The Workforce *Relationships*




**ISSUES AFFECTING THE
TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD
IN CANADA TODAY**

LEAVING HOME

- Today living independently * alone or with flat mates typically precedes cohabitation or marriage.



- in the 1800s puberty preceded full physical maturity by a shorter period
 - today sexual maturity occurs 5-8 years before full physical maturity
 - marriage & family occurring later [the majority of 24 year olds still live at home 7/10]
- 

Should I stay or should I go?

- the Social Exchange Theory can be used to understand how young adults weigh costs and benefits of staying or leaving



- DYK Children of lower income parents or divorced parents are more likely to leave home earlier, women leave earlier, men and children of higher income parents tend to stay longer

- Not leaving home early enough has been termed “failure to launch”



SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY

	Costs	Benefits
Staying home longer		
Leaving home earlier		

EDUCATION

- there has been an increased emphasis on public education over the last 50 years,
 - 60s and 70s introduced **streams** educating the most number of people possible including those whose abilities may have reduced their chances of being successful in the past.
- Post secondary education opportunities also increased in the 70s and 80s, with emphasis in the past few decades on work place **training** > **credentialism** (less emphasis on education for interest or knowledge sake)
- Past – more men have post secondary education
Present – more women have post secondary education

Education inflation > we need more education today to get a job than was needed in past, but more education still = more employment & more money



The Workforce

- income is connected to being independent
- career choice is important to identity development
- the workplace has changed
 1. it is becoming more equitable
 2. the economy dropped in the 90s, forcing unemployment rates to increase
 3. it is recovering now – lowest rates in decades in 2007, but there are a lot of baby boomers still in the workforce that had been expected to retire
 4. fewer opportunities = higher competition
- networking, co-op, volunteering and starting part time in the job you want full time, helps land a job



Relationships

- relationships with parents, teachers & friends support young adults making the transition
- teens value personal relationships as most important to happiness
- teens who are encouraged to be independent = more positive parental relationship
- Systems theory can be used to understand that the whole family system has to adjust to allow the young adult to change (both family and young adult adjust)
- Workplace relationships for young adults often present new challenges
- Mentor relationships can be helpful (an older person in the work place who helps teach the system, values, expectations, knowledge & skills)
- Focus also turns to fostering an intimate relationship and looking for a partner



SYSTEMS THEORY

What sort of changes would a young adult need to make as they transition into adulthood?

What sort of changes would a family of the young adult need to make as their youth transitions into adulthood?



*This transition
takes years
flexibility, positive
goals and resiliency are
key assets*



POSITIVITY

It's positively
life changing.

**SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS
ARE THE GOAL...**

