



Chapter 8

Ecology of the Peer Group

Learning objectives

- Define peer group and explain its functions as a socializing agent.
- Discuss developmental tasks relating to the peer group.
- Delineate the stages of play and exemplify peer activities during early childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence.
- Describe the stages of friendship.
- Describe peer group dynamics and the effects of peer group social hierarchies, including bullies and victims.

Student Characteristics

- Gender
- Culture
- Socioeconomic status
- Learning style
- Disability
- Risk and resilience

Peers as Socializing Agents

Activity: Poem or Song

Using ,

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write a song or a poem
about how your peers
influenced you.

Share with class.

Pivotal in my life growing up

Embraced my ideas

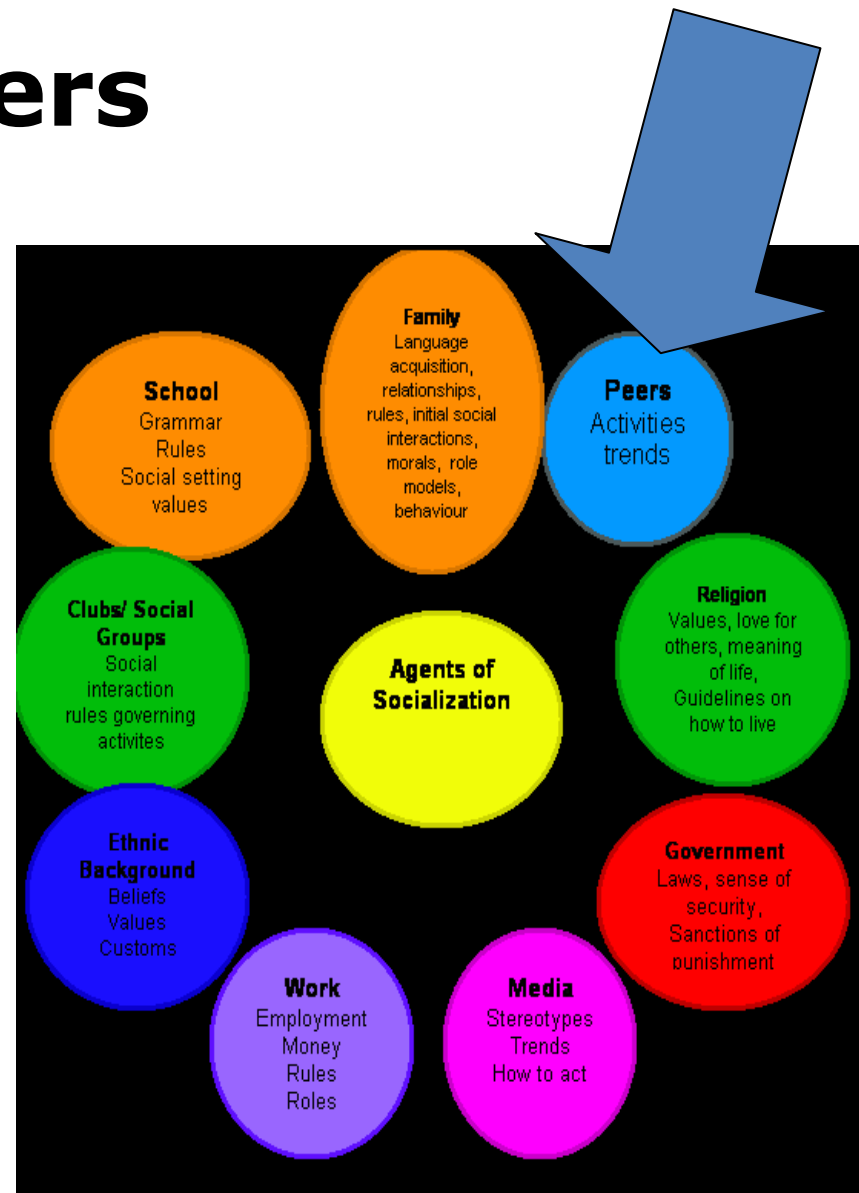
Educated me about life as a
teen

Responded to my wonders

Satisfy my desire to live and
grow

Peers

- Individuals who are of approximately the same gender, age, and social status and who share interests



Peers



- Satisfy certain belonging needs
- Are often preferred to other socializing agents
- Influence social, cognitive, psychological development

Peers

- Influential from late childhood through adolescence and early adulthood
- Learn how to form relationships without adult supervision
- May encourage good and bad interests
- May guide short term choices
- Change behavior and personality to be accepted by peers

Peer Interactions- Dyad

Activity: Pages 250-255

1. Read *The Significance of Peers to Human Development*.
2. Select a developmental stage.
3. What are the characteristics of peer interaction of the stage selected?

Peer Interactions

Developmental Stage	Belonging Needs and Socialization	Sense of Self
Infancy/Toddlerhood	Awareness of peers	Relationships become more reciprocal
Early Childhood	Parents facilitate	Children play alone and together in groups
Middle Childhood	Opportunities for social interaction increase	Peers become important source of self-confirmation
Adolescence	Growth of relationships and closeness	Peer activities escalate

Peer Group Socializing Mechanisms

- Reinforcement
- **Modeling**
The extent to which modeling influences behavior depends upon the
 - *Situation*
 - *Model*
 - *Observer*
- Punishment
- Apprenticeship



Chronosystem Influences

Play: Parten

Play Category	Characteristics
Solitary	Child plays alone and independently
Onlooker	Child watches other children play
Parallel	Child plays alone, but with toys like those other children are using
Associative	Social interaction and communication with little or no organization
Cooperative	Social interaction in a group

Prepare and present an activity that will demonstrate the type of play selected.

Play: Sutton-Smith

Play Category	Characteristics
Imitative	Baby imitates parent; Children imitate roles
Exploratory	Exploring- taste, touch, manipulation
Testing	Testing abilities and emotions
Model-Building	Building- putting elements together in new ways

Peer Group Interaction

Selman & Selman

Developmental Stage	Friendship
Early Childhood	Momentary playmateship
Early to Middle Childhood	One-way assistance
Middle Childhood	Two-way, fair-weather cooperation
Middle Childhood-Adolescence	Intimate, mutually shared relationships
Adolescence	Autonomous interdependent friendships

Peer Group Dynamics

- Bullies and victims

The Bullying Project

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8dVX0tWiG2E>

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Gang

- A group of people who form an alliance for a common purpose and engage in unlawful or criminal activity

Americas Deadliest Gangs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFGvPnvhXUU>

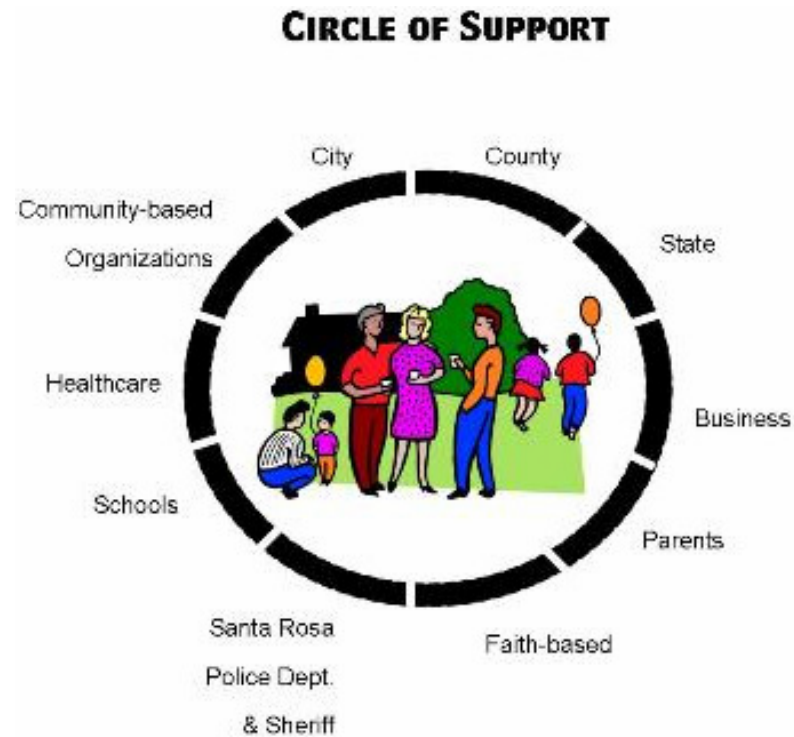


Gangs

- Gangs give members companionship, guidance, excitement, and identity.
- Gang members have significantly lower levels of self-esteem than their non-gang peers.
- Gang members can name fewer adult role models in their families and communities.



What would be strategies to prevent gangs?



Coordinated intervention Strategy: Gangs

- Community and law enforcement personnel work to reduce the likelihood that high-risk youth will become involved in gangs.
- ***Essential to success***
Involvement of police agencies, educators, job-training resources, parents, and community groups



http://www.sanjoseca.gov/mayor/goals/pubsafety/MGPTF/mgp_tf.asp

Strategy: Sports

- Organized interactions of children in competitive and/or cooperative team or individual enjoyable physical activities

