

Spiritual and Psychological Development: Ages 11-12 (Pre- Teen)



Servant Meeting 2/25/2024

Overview

- Erik Erikson Stages of Development
- Development in the Pre-Teen
- Transitions in Development
- Discussions on Sexual Purity
- Social Media Effect on the Adolescent Mind
- Saints of this Age Range



“My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”-

1 John 2:1



**“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord”-
Ephesians 6:4**

“Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged”- Colossians 3:21

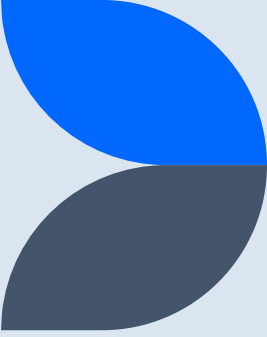
Some translations exasperate: “irritate and frustrate intensely”



Erikson's Psychosocial Stages

Stage	Crisis	Description
Infancy (0 - 1 year)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Children who are treated with consistent love and care and have their needs met by their parent they should develop the capacity for trust.
Early Childhood (2 - 3 years)	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Children should be encouraged to exercise free will and try out new skills. Discouragement (or lack of encouragement) may lead to sustained self-doubt.
Play Age (4 - 6 years)	Initiative vs. Guilt	Children should be encouraged to be independent. If a child's independent initiatives and play activities are overly controlled, they may develop sustained guilt.
School Age (7 - 12 years)	Industry vs. Inferiority	A sense of industry is a desire to be creative and productive. A school child should be encouraged in their creative and productive endeavours. If belittled for incompetence, a sense of inferiority may set in.
Adolescence (13 - 18 years)	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Young people seek a sense of self and their place in the world. If they feel they lack a sense of belonging to any identity group, they may develop uncertainty about their identity that lasts into adulthood.
Young Adulthood (Early 20s)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Young adults commit their efforts to developing intimate relationships with significant others. If they are unsuccessful, they will develop a sense of isolation.
Adulthood (Late 20s - Late 50s)	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Generative adults contribute to society and the raising of future generations through parenting. Self-absorbed adults stagnate and fail to contribute to the flourishing of their societies.
Old Age (60s onward)	Ego Identity vs. Despair	As people enter their twilight years, they reflect on their contributions to society. Those dissatisfied with their lives will develop a sense of despair as they face the looming end of their lives.

Ages 11-12 Development



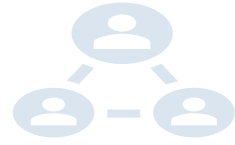
Biological:

- Beginning of **potential significant physical growth** (body proportions similar to adults), physical maturation (Girls oftentimes earlier on than boys)
- **Passions and desires** potentially begin to increase
- Mismatch between **emotions and physical growth**

Psychological:

- Developing and **testing values and beliefs** that will guide present and future behaviors.
- Defines **self-concept** in part by success in school Is starting to be somewhat **rebellious**
- Has an increasing ability to use **logic** (what does this mean spiritually?)
- Has a growing ability for fast, “on-his-feet” thinking (Impulsivity)

Ages 11-12 Development



Social:

- Increased ability to interact with peers, Increased ability to engage in competition, **Has a strong group identity**
- Increasingly defines self through peers (Role of Peer Pressure, formation of the self)
- Acquiring a sense of accomplishment based upon the achievement of greater physical strength and **self-control**
- Wants to be a stronger presence in the overall community, **Is particularly interested in getting approval from peers**



Intellectual:

Increased ability to learn and apply skills. **The beginning of abstract thinking**

Preteens are still developing this method of reasoning **and are not able to make all intellectual leaps**, such as inferring a motive or reasoning hypothetically.

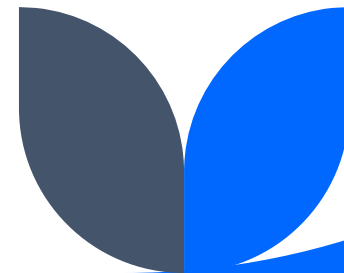
Youth in this age **range learn to extend their way of thinking** and start to view the world outside of an absolute black-white/right-wrong perspective.

Interpretative ability/Cause and Effect sequences



Phase of Life Transition

- Difficult for all of us. Ex/ Starting College, Newlyweds, Elderly
- With Transition comes **vulnerability, weakness**, but also **opportunity**. Ex/ Israel in Captivity->Wilderness->Promised Land
- Satan loves to **prey on our Vulnerability and Weakness**
- God loves to **embrace us during our Vulnerability and Weakness**
- Pre-Teen: Dependence to Independence, Child to Adult thinking, Restrictive to Free thinking



Important Purity Discussions

- When to discuss these things? Why should we discuss these things? Who discusses with them?
- Homosexuality/Transgenderism, Temptations, Lust towards others, Self Lust, Pornography, Passions/Desires, Purpose of Marriage and Intimacy to be between Husband and Wife (Sanctified and blessed by God)
- The Sexualization of Society
- Old and New Testament consistently discuss importance of purity of mind, body and heart
- Sexual sins affect the individual (especially the developing mind) in all domains (biological, social, psychological, and spiritual)
- “For this is the **will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;**”- 1 Thessalonians 4:3
- “But I say to you that **whoever looks at a woman to lust** for her has already **committed adultery with her in his heart.**”- Matthew 5:28



How to Discuss These Topics

- Love, Care, Respect, Warmth, Firmness (Do not provoke, do not fill with fear)
- The Greater the Fear, The Greater the Guilt and Shame after and hindrance to Repentance
- Biblically, Theologically, Spiritually, Patristically, and Comprehensively
- Lust is a struggle and temptation for ALL. Empathize with them.
- As much as we discuss the risks of sin, we must discuss the greatness and virtue of repentance.
- ‘O Repentance, You have created virgins out of adulterers!’
–John Saba (Spiritual Elder)



Social Media and Youth Mental Health

2023

The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory



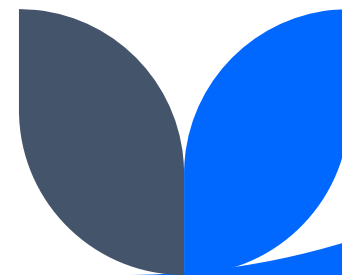
Statistics

- “Social media use by youth is **nearly universal**. Up to **95% of youth ages 13–17** report using a social media platform, with more than a third saying they use social media **“almost constantly.”** Although age 13 is commonly the required minimum age used by social media platforms in the U.S., nearly **40% of children ages 8–12 use social media.”**
- “As of 2021, **8th and 10th graders** now spend an average of **3.5 hours per day on social media.**”
- “the study’s co-author also noted that when applied across the entirety of the U.S. college population, the introduction of the social media platform may have contributed to more than **300,000 new cases of depression.**”



Statistics

- “adolescents who spent more than 3 hours per day on social media faced double the risk of experiencing poor mental health outcomes including symptoms of depression and anxiety” Role of Brain Development Age 10-19, Brain is not developed yet!
- “This is a period when risk-taking behaviors reach their peak, when well-being experiences the greatest fluctuations, and when mental health challenges emerge”
- “Adolescent social media use is predictive of a subsequent decrease in life satisfaction for certain developmental stages including for girls 11–13 years old and boys 14–15. Because adolescence is a vulnerable period of brain development”

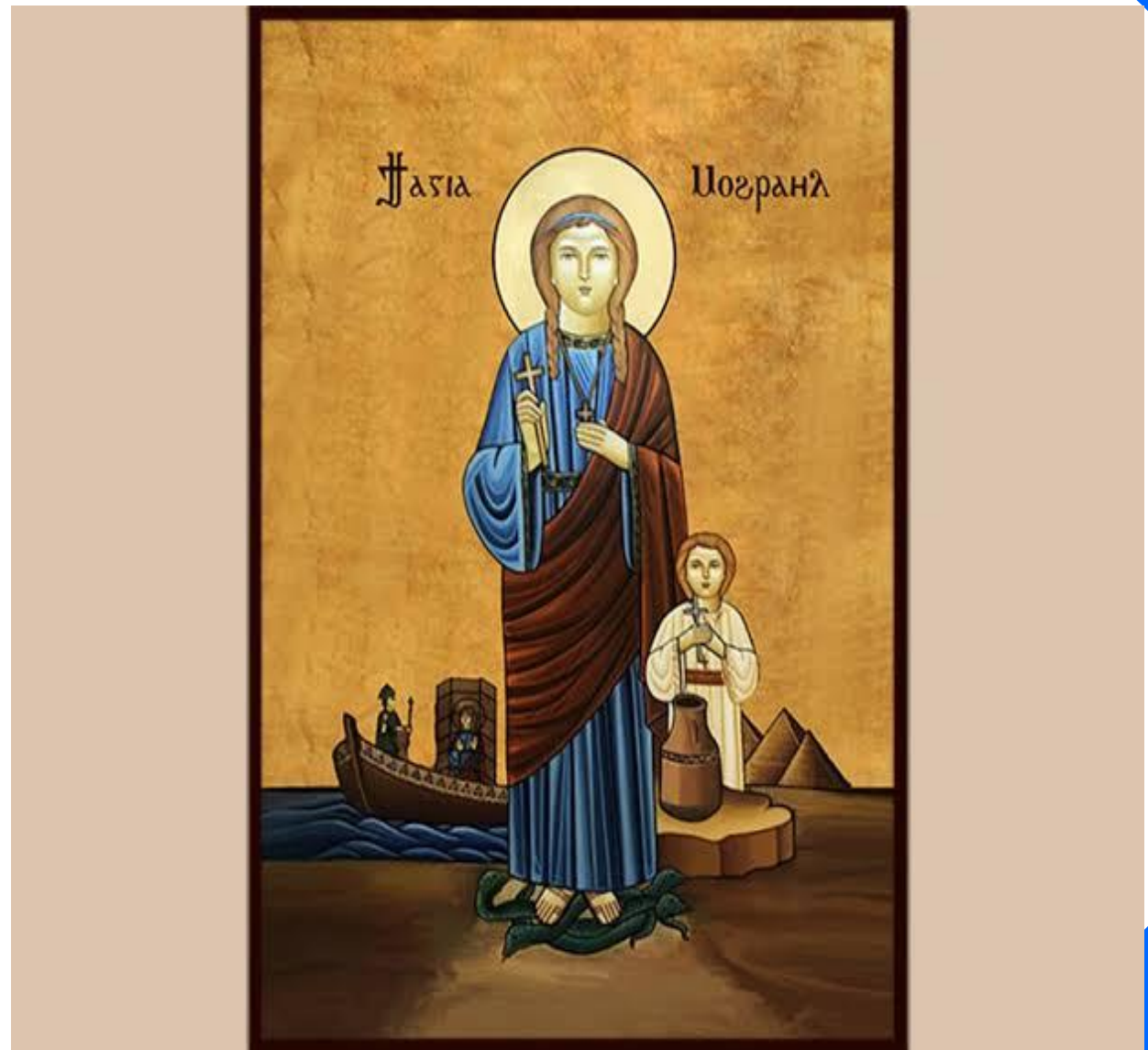


Final Thoughts/Spiritual Effects

- “A strange illness has appeared in our days – the passion for distractions. Never before was there such a desire for distractions; people have forgotten how to lead a serious life for the good of others; they have no spiritual life and are bored. They exchange the profound content of a spiritual life for distractions! What madness! It is here that pastors must deploy their strength: they must re-introduce into life its lost meaning and give back to the people the knowledge of the true purpose of life.”- John of Kronstadt
- Distraction
- Time Away from Family, Church, God
- False Perceptions of Reality, Peer Pressure, Confusion on the Self
- Judging Others, Envy, Jealousy, Purity
- Our role is to strengthen their identity in Christ
- Provide support, healthy discussion, boundary setting
- Empathize and Dive Deeper into Spiritual Meaning



Sts. Abanoub and Mohraeel



Resources

<https://www.childrens.com/health-wellness/wellness-by-age-eleven-to-twelve> (Children's Health)

<https://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/pass/learning-circles/four/Early%20adolescence.pdf> (Hunter College School of Social Work, National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice)

Mission Bible Class

The Science of Adolescent Learning and Growing

Southern Diocese Sunday School Curriculum

VeryWell Mind, Kendra Cherry, MEd (Psychosocial Development Guide)

CDC Developmental Milestone Checklist, Surgeon General Report on Social Media Usage

“Simply Psychology Attachment Theory in Psychology”- McLeod

“Ages and Stages”- Schaefer

“Raising Them Right, A Saint's Advice on Raising Children”-Theophan the Recluse

