7 Family Relationships

"When my first boyfriend broke up with me last year, I was really depressed and he kept saying I should talk to my mom. So I did. And she made me feel a lot better.... My mom and I are really close now. I feel like she's a friend, not just my mother."

—Gretchen, age 17 (Bell, 1998, p. 70)

"[My mother] says, 'I just don't want to hear anymore; go back to your room.' And I think, as a human being, she shouldn't be able to say that to me without getting my response back; I just don't feel that's right."

—14-year-old girl (Konopka, 1985, p. 67)

"Everything was going along like usual and then all of a sudden my dad started doing crazy things—like staying out real late, not telling my mom where he was, showing up late for work or not showing up at all. My parents were arguing a lot and he would get real defensive, so it just kept building up and up.... And pretty soon my dad came to me and said, 'Well, you know me and your mom are having problems and I think I'm going to have to leave.' And we both started crying.... I didn't want to cry, I was trying not to cry, but I couldn't help it."

—Gordon, age 17 (Bell, 1998, p. 67)

Family life! It can be the source of our deepest attachments, as well as our most bitter and painful conflicts. For young people and their parents, frequent adjustments are required in their relationships as adolescents and emerging adults gain more autonomy, inexorably moving away from their families toward the larger world and new attachments outside the family. These adjustments do not always proceed smoothly, and conflicts can result when young people and their parents have different perceptions of the most desirable pace and scope of this growing autonomy. For many adolescents and emerging adults in Western societies, family life is further complicated by their parents' divorce and perhaps remarriage, which require adjustments that many young people find difficult, at least in the short run.

Despite these complications, for most young people the family remains a crucial source of love, support, protection, and comfort (Blum & Rinehart, 2000). Family members, especially parents, are the people admired most by the majority

of adolescents and emerging adults and are among the people to whom they have the closest attachments (Allen & Land, 1999; Claes, 1998; Halvor, Hanne-Trine, & Bjorkheim, 2000). For example, in one recent national (American) study, over 80% of adolescents aged 12–14 reported that they think highly of their parents, nearly 60% stated that their parents are people they want to be like, and about 75% reported that their parents are always there to help them with what is important to them (Moore, Chalk, Scarpa, & Vandivere, 2002). Adolescents and emerging adults also typically attribute their core moral values to the influence of their parents (Offer & Schonert-Reichl, 1992; Wyatt & Carlo, 2002).

In this chapter, we will explore many aspects of the family lives of adolescents and emerging adults. We will begin with a look at various aspects of the family system in which adolescents develop, including parents' development at midlife, sibling relationships, and relationships with extended family members. Then we will focus on the central relationships in adolescents' family systems, their relationships with their parents. This will include a discussion of the effects of various parenting styles on adolescents' development and an examination of adolescents' attachments to parents. Emerging adults' relationships to parents will be examined as well.

In the second half of the chapter we will turn to challenges and difficulties in young people's relationships with parents. We will examine the basis for conflict with parents in adolescence. We will also look at the historical context of adolescents' family lives, including changes in family life over the past 200 years as well as more recent family changes—rising rates of divorce, remarriage, single-parent households, and dual-earner families—and how these changes have influenced adolescents' development. The chapter will close with a look at the causes and effects of physical and sexual abuse in the family and the problems faced by adolescents who run away from home.

The Adolescent in the Family System

One useful framework for making sense of the complex ways family members interact with each other is the **family systems approach**. According to this approach, to understand family functioning one must understand how each relationship within the family influences the family as a whole (Minuchin, 1974, 2002; Steinberg & Silk, 2002). The family system is composed of a variety of subsystems (Kramer & Lin, 1997; Piotrowski, 1997). For example, in a family consisting of two parents and an adolescent, the subsystems would be mother and adolescent, father and adolescent, and mother and father. In families with more than one child, or with extended family members who are closely involved in the family, the family system becomes a more complex network of subsystems, consisting of each **dyadic relationship** (a relationship of two persons) as well as every possible combination of three or more persons.

The family systems approach is based on two key principles. One is that each subsystem influences every other subsystem in the family (Minuchin, 1974, 2002). For example, a high level of conflict between the parents affects not only the relationship between the two of them but also the relationship that each of them has with the adolescent (Emery & Tuer, 1993; Wilson & Gottman, 1995).

A second, related principle of the family systems approach is that a change in any family member or family subsystem results in a period of **disequilibrium** (or imbalance) until the family system adjusts to the change (Minuchin, 1974, 2002; Steinberg & Silk, 2002). When a child reaches adolescence, the changes that accompany adolescent development make a certain amount of disequilibrium normal and inevitable. A key change is the advent of puberty and sexual maturity, which typically results in disequilibrium in relationships with each parent, as we saw in Chapter 2. Changes also take place as a result of adolescents' cognitive development, which may lead to disequilibrium because of the way cognitive changes affect adolescents' perceptions of their parents.

THINKING CRITICALLY

Think of an example of disequilibrium that occurred in your family during your adolescence or emerging adulthood. How did the various family members adapt?

When emerging adults leave home, the disequilibrium caused by leaving often changes their relationships with their parents for the better (Arnett, 2003a; Graber & Dubas, 1996). Parents change, too—most parents are reaching midlife as their children reach adolescence, and the changes of midlife may result in disequilibrium in their relationships with their children (Steinberg & Silk, 2002; Steinberg & Steinberg, 1994). Other, less normative changes that may take place in adolescence or emerging adulthood can also be a source of disequilibrium—the parents' divorce, for example, or psychological problems in the adolescent or in one or both parents. For both normative and nonnormative changes, adjustments in the family system are required to restore a new equilibrium.

In the following sections, we will examine three aspects of the family system that have implications for adolescents' development: changes in parents at midlife, sibling relationships, and extended family relationships.

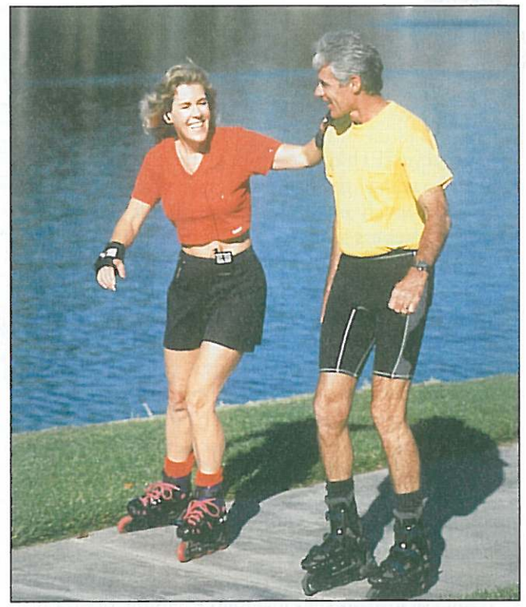
Parents' Development During Midlife

"I'm ready for a giant change, because a little change just won't do it for me. My kids are getting ready to leave home soon, and I want to sell the house and do something crazy, like go around the world for a year, or move back into the city and get a job or go back to school. I'm not willing to wait till I get cancer or until somebody dies, or until Peter and I divorce to make a change. At least now we can still enjoy ourselves."

—ELLIE, 39-YEAR-OLD MOTHER OF THREE ADOLESCENTS (BELL, 1998, P. 67)

For most parents, their children's development during adolescence and emerging adulthood overlaps with their own development during midlife. As noted in Chapter 1, the median age of marriage and first childbirth in industrialized societies today is quite high, usually in the mid- to late twenties. If adolescence begins about age 10, this means that most parents in industrialized societies are nearing age 40 when their first child enters adolescence, and age 40 is usually considered the beginning of midlife (Levinson, 1978; Shweder, 1998). Of course, a great deal of variability exists in most industrialized societies—a substantial proportion of people have their first child in their teens or in their thirties or forties. But even for people who have their children relatively early or relatively late, their children's development in adolescence and emerging adulthood is likely to overlap at least in part with their own development during midlife, if it can be said that midlife lasts roughly from age 40 to 60.

What kinds of developmental changes take place during midlife that may have an impact on the family system? In the 1990s a consortium of distinguished scholars collaborated on a major investigation of development during midlife (Shweder, 1998). This consortium confirmed and extended studies by earlier scholars in finding that, for most people in most respects, midlife is an especially satisfying and enjoyable time of life. Although most people do perceive a decline in energy, physical health, creativity, and physical attractiveness when they reach midlife, they perceive increases in wisdom, competence, psychological health, and respect from others. Despite popular beliefs that midlife is typically a time of "**midlife crisis**," for most people midlife is in many ways the prime of life.



At midlife, most parents of adolescents are reaching the prime of life in many respects.

This is true in a variety of aspects of life. Job satisfaction peaks in middle adulthood, as does the sense of having job status and power (Feldman, 2003; Gallagher, 1993). Earning power tends to increase, so that many couples who struggled financially when their children were younger find themselves financially secure for the first time during midlife (Gallagher, 1993). Marital problems decline and marital satisfaction increases (Noller, Feeney, & Ward, 1997). Gender roles become less restrictive and more flexible for both men and women, not only in the West but in non-Western cultures as well (Gutmann, 1987; Shweder, 1998).

People's personalities also tend to become more flexible and adaptive when they reach midlife. For example, in one large study of German adults at midlife, during their forties and fifties most people reported a steady rise in what the researchers called "flexible goal

RESEARCH FOCUS

The Daily Rhythms of Adolescents' Family Lives

In several chapters so far I have referred to research using the Experience Sampling Method (ESM), which involves having people carry wristwatch beepers and then beeping them randomly during the day so that they can record their thoughts, feelings, and behavior. This method is an exceptionally creative and unusual approach to studying adolescents' lives. Some of the most interesting and important findings so far using this method concern the interactions and relationships between adolescents and their families. Here, let's look at ESM research in greater detail.

Reed Larson and Maryse Richards are the two scholars who have done the most to apply the ESM to adolescents and their families. In their book *Divergent Realities: The Emotional Lives of Mothers, Fathers, and Adolescents* (Larson & Richards, 1994), they described the results of a study that included a sample of 483 fifth through ninth graders and another sample of 55 fifth through eighth graders and their parents. (More recently, they have published articles that follow up this sample through 12th grade; Larson et al., 2002; Richards, Crowe, Larson, & Swarr, 2002). All were two-parent, White families. (Larson is currently collecting data on single-parent African American families.) All three family members (adolescent, mother, and father) were beeped at the same times, about 30 times per day between 7:30 in the morning and 9:30 at night, during the week of the study.

When beeped, they paused from whatever they were doing and recorded a variety of information in the notebooks that the researchers had given them for the study. The notebooks contained items about their objective situation when beeped: where they were, whom they were with, and what they were doing. There were also items about their subjective situation: they rated the degree to which they felt happy to unhappy, cheerful to irritable, and friendly to angry, as well as how hurried, tired, and competitive they were feeling. The results provide "an emotional photo album ... a set of snapshots of what [adolescents] and [their] parents go through in an average week" (Larson & Richards, 1994, p. 9).

What do the results tell us about the daily rhythms of adolescents' family lives? One striking finding of the study was how little time adolescents and their parents actually spent together on a typical day. Mothers and fathers each averaged about an hour a day spent in shared activities with their adolescents, and their most common shared activity was watching television. The amount of time adolescents spent with their families dropped by 50% between fifth and ninth grades and declined even more sharply between 9th and 12th grades, as you can see in Figure 7.1. In turn, there was an increase from fifth to ninth grade in the amount of time adolescents spent alone in their bedrooms.

The study also revealed some interesting gender differences in parent-adolescent relationships. Mothers were more deeply involved with their adolescents, both for better and for worse. The majority of mother-adolescent interactions were rated positively by both of them, especially experiences such as talking together, going out together, and sharing a meal. Adolescents, especially girls, tended to be closer to their mothers than to their fathers and had more conversations with them about relationships and other personal issues. However, adolescents' negative feelings toward their mothers increased sharply from fifth to ninth grade, and certain positive emotions decreased—for example, the proportion of interactions with the mother in which adolescents reported feeling "very close" to her fell from 68% in fifth grade to just 28% by ninth grade. Also, adolescents reported more conflicts with their mothers than with their fathers—although fathers were often called in if Mom's authority failed to achieve the results she desired—and the number of conflicts between mothers and adolescents increased from fifth to ninth grades.

As for fathers, they tended to be only tenuously involved in their adolescents' lives, a "shadowy presence," as Larson and Richards put it. For most of the time they spent with their adolescents, the mother was there as well, and the mother tended to be more directly involved with the adolescent when the three of them were together. Moms were usually on the "front lines" of parenting, whereas for fathers parenting was more of a voluntary, leisure-time activity. Fathers averaged only 12 minutes per day alone with their adolescents, and 40% of this time was spent watching TV together. Fathers and their adolescents did not talk much, and when they did, sports was the most common topic.

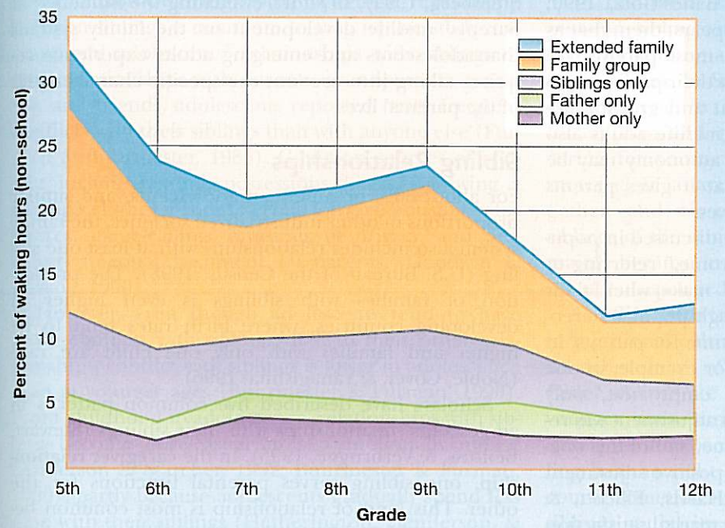


FIGURE 7.1 Changes in time spent with family members during adolescence.
Source: Larson et al. (1996).

THINKING CRITICALLY

Why do you think fathers tend to be less involved than mothers in the lives of their adolescents? Do you think this will remain true when the current generation of adolescents grows up and has adolescents of their own?

Fathers usually reported being in a good mood during the rare times they and their adolescents were doing something together. In contrast, adolescents' enjoyment of their time with their fathers decreased with age between fifth and ninth grades, especially for girls. Fathers tended to dominate when they were with their adolescents, and adolescents often resented it. Dad may have been enjoying their time together, but by ninth grade the adolescent usually was not. The "divergent realities" experienced in adolescents' families seem to be especially sharp between fathers and adolescents.

The authors used the term "the Six O'Clock Crash" to describe what happens when Mom and Dad come home from work in the early evening and face a barrage of demands—greeting each other, fixing dinner, taking care of household chores, and dealing with the emotions each has piled up during the day. The burden of household tasks fell mostly on mothers rather than fathers, even when both parents worked an equal number of hours. Adolescents were even less help than fathers—they did only half as much household work as fathers, who already did a lot less than mothers. And even when they helped out, they often did so grudgingly and resentfully; they interpreted requests for help as harassment. As the authors put it, "Many of these adolescents, especially boys, felt little responsibility for their family's needs, and were therefore annoyed when asked to do their part" (Larson & Richards, 1994, p. 100).

At the same time, however, the study showed that parents are often important sources of comfort and security for adolescents. Adolescents brought home to the family their emotions from the rest of the day. If their parents were responsive and caring, adolescents' moods improved and their negative emotions were relieved. In contrast, if adolescents felt their parents were unavailable or unresponsive, their negative feelings became even worse.

Thus, the study demonstrates the enduring importance of parents in the lives of adolescents. Also, because the study included the perspectives of fathers and mothers as well as adolescents, interacting in pairs as well as all together, the results provide a vivid sense of the interconnected emotions and perspectives within the family system.

adjustment," as defined by affirmative responses to items such as "I can adapt quite easily to changes in a situation" (Brandtstadter & Baltes-Götz, 1990; Brandtstadter & Greve, 1994). It appears, then, that as their children reach adolescence, most parents are likely to be flexible enough to adapt their parenting to adolescents' changing development and growing autonomy. The results of studies on midlife adults also suggest that adolescents' growing autonomy may be welcomed by most parents, in that it gives parents more time for enjoying their own lives.

One change that has been much discussed in popular culture is the "empty-nest syndrome," referring to the adjustments that parents must make when their youngest child leaves home. Although popular stereotypes suggest that this is a difficult time for parents, in fact most parents handle it easily. For example, in one study of women's responses to the "empty nest," only one-third reported that a significant adjustment was required when their last child left home, and of this one-third, more of them reported it as a positive adjustment than as a negative adjustment (Harris, Ellicott, & Holmes, 1986). In general, parents' marital satisfaction and overall life satisfaction improves when their adolescent children enter emerging adulthood and leave the nest (White & Edwards, 1990). Disequilibrium is not necessarily negative, and for most parents the disequilibrium in the family system that results from children's leaving home is experienced as positive.

THINKING CRITICALLY

Why do you think parents respond favorably when their children leave home?

Although reaching midlife is positive for most adults, there is variability at midlife as there is at other ages. For men in blue-collar professions that require physical strength and stamina, such as construction or factory work, job performance becomes more difficult to sustain in middle adulthood and job satisfaction declines (Sparrow & Davies, 1988). Although marital problems decline at midlife for couples who stay married, some couples divorce at midlife. Only about one-fourth of divorces take place after age 40, but midlife divorces tend to be even more emotionally and financially difficult than divorces at younger ages, especially for women (Cherlin, 1992). Also, although a midlife crisis does not take place for most adults, for the minority of adults who experience an unusually intense period of reevaluation and reappraisal at midlife, their relationships with their adolescents tend to be negatively affected by it (Hauser et al., 1991; Steinberg & Steinberg, 1994). In short, evaluating the influence of parents' midlife development on the family systems that adolescents and emerging adults experience requires taking into account the specific characteristics of the parents' lives.

Sibling Relationships

For about 80% of American adolescents, and similar proportions in other industrialized societies, the family system also includes relationships with at least one sibling (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998). The proportion of families with siblings is even higher in developing countries, where birth rates tend to be higher and families with only one child are rare (Noble, Cover, & Yanagishita, 1996).

Scholars have described five common patterns in adolescents' relationships with their siblings (Stewart, Beilfuss, & Verbrugge, 1995). In the **caregiver relationship**, one sibling serves parental functions for the other. This kind of relationship is most common between an older sister and younger siblings, in both Western and non-Western cultures (Whiting & Edwards, 1988). In the **buddy relationship**, siblings treat each other as friends. They try to be like one another, and they enjoy being together. A **critical relationship** between siblings is characterized by a high level of conflict and teasing. In a **rival relationship**, siblings compete against each other and measure their success against one another. Finally, in a **casual relationship** between siblings, the relationship between them is not emotionally intense, and they may have little to do with one another.

Adolescents tend to have more conflict with siblings than with anyone else.

Adolescents' relationships with their siblings can take any one of these forms, or any combination of them (Zukow-Goldring, 2002). A critical relationship between siblings is common. In fact, in one study that compared adolescents' relationships with siblings to their relationships with parents, grandparents, teachers, and friends, adolescents reported more frequent conflicts with their siblings than with anyone else (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Common sources of conflict include teasing, possessions (e.g., borrowing a sibling's clothes without permission), responsibility for chores, name-calling, invasions of privacy, and perceived unequal treatment by parents (Goodwin & Roscoe, 1990).

However, even though adolescents tend to have more conflicts with siblings than in their other relationships, conflict with siblings is lower in adolescence than at younger ages (Buhrmester & Furman, 1990). From childhood to adolescence, relationships with siblings become more casual and less emotionally intense (Anderson & Starcher, 1992; Buhrmester & Furman, 1990), partly because adolescents gradually spend less time with their siblings (Hetherington, Henderson, & Reiss, 1999). Adolescents' involvement in friendships and employment takes them outside the family environment for an increasing amount of time (Larson & Richards, 1994), resulting in less time and less conflict with siblings.

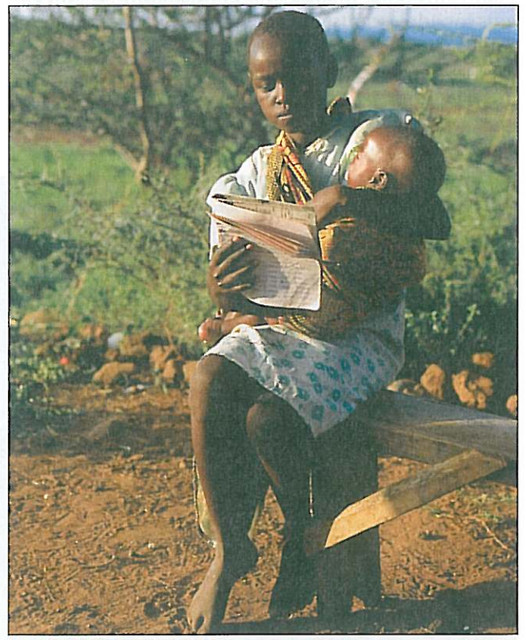
THINKING CRITICALLY

Thus far, no research has taken place on sibling relationships in emerging adulthood. Based on your own observations and experience, what would you expect research to indicate about sibling relationships during this period?

Nevertheless, many adolescents have a buddy relationship with their siblings and feel close to them (Seginer, 1998). Most adolescents list their siblings when asked to list the most important people in their lives (Blyth, Hill, & Thiel, 1982), and siblings are often an important source of emotional support (Seginer, 1998). Adolescents who have two or more siblings may be closer to one sibling than to the others. With respect to their "favorite" brother or sister, adolescents rate the level of closeness as similar to that in their relationship with their best friend (Greenberger et al., 1980). However, for sibling relationships in general, adolescents rate the level of closeness as lower than in their relationships with parents or friends (Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; Updegraff, McHale, & Crouter, 2002).

In traditional cultures, the caregiver relationship between siblings is the most common form. Adolescents in traditional cultures often have child-care responsibilities. In Schlegel and Barry's (1991) analysis of adolescence in traditional cultures, over 80% of adolescent boys and girls had frequent responsibility for caring for younger siblings. This responsibility promotes close attachments between siblings. Time together, and closeness, is especially high between siblings of the same gender (Schlegel & Barry, 1991), mainly because in traditional cultures daily activities are often separated by gender.

Conflict tends to be low between adolescent siblings in traditional cultures, because age serves as a powerful determinant of status (Whiting & Edwards, 1988). Older siblings are understood to have authority over younger ones, simply by virtue of being older. This lessens conflict because it is accepted that the older sibling has the right to exercise authority—although of course sometimes younger siblings resist their older siblings' authority (Schlegel & Barry, 1991). Also, siblings in traditional cultures often rely on one another



Adolescents in traditional cultures often take care of younger siblings.

economically throughout life, which means that they all have an interest in maintaining harmony in the relationship (Schlegel & Barry, 1991). For example, Hollos and Leis's (1989) ethnography of Nigerian adolescents described how they frequently rely on older siblings to provide them with connections that will lead to employment.

Extended Family Relationships

In traditional cultures, young men generally remain in their family home after marriage, and young women move into their new husband's home (Schlegel & Barry, 1991). This practice has been remarkably resistant to the influence of globalization so far. It remains the typical pattern, for example, in the majority cultures of India and China, the two most populous countries in the world, as well as for most other traditional cultures in Asia and Africa. Consequently, in these cultures children typically grow up in a household that includes not only their parents and siblings but also grandparents, and often uncles, aunts, and cousins as well.

These living arrangements promote closeness between adolescents and their extended family. In Schlegel and Barry's (1991) cross-cultural analysis, daily contact was as high with grandparents as with parents for adolescents in traditional cultures, and adolescents were usually even closer to their grandparents than to their parents. Perhaps this is because parents typically exercise authority over adolescents, which may add ambivalence to adolescents' relationships with their parents, whereas grandparents are less likely to exercise authority and may focus more on nurturing and supporting adolescents.

Similar patterns of closeness to grandparents have been found among adolescents in American minority cultures. Asian American adolescents typically grow up with grandparents either in the home or living nearby, and they report high levels of nurturing and support from their grandparents (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999; Sung, 1979). Many Mexican American adolescents have grandparents living in their household, and closeness in extended family relationships is highly valued in Mexican American families (Harwood et al., 2002; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1996).

African American families also have a tradition of extended family households (Wilson, 1989). Several studies have described how African American extended families provide mutual support, sharing financial resources and parenting responsibilities (McAdoo, 1996; Taylor, 1997). About 70% of African American adolescents are in single-parent families, and extended family support has been found to be especially important in reducing the emotional and economic stresses of single parenthood (Wilson, 1989). The effects of this support are evident in the lives of adolescents. For example, research by Ronald Taylor has found that extended family support in African American families is negatively related to adolescents' involvement in problem behavior and positively related to their grades in school (Taylor, 1994, 1996, 1997).

Grandparents tend to be important figures in the lives of African American adolescents.

Extended family members are also important figures in the lives of adolescents in Western majority cultures. About 80% of American adolescents list at least one member of their extended family among the people most important to them (Blyth et al., 1982). However, in the American majority culture adolescents' contact with extended family members is relatively infrequent (Feiring & Lewis, 1991), in part because extended family members often live many miles away. American adolescents have significantly less contact with their extended family members compared with adolescents in European countries, because members of European extended families are more likely to live in close proximity (Alsaker & Flammer, 1999b; Arnett & Balle-Jensen, 1993). Also, for Americans closeness to extended family members declines substantially between childhood and adolescence (Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; Levitt, Guacci-Franco, & Levitt, 1993).

An exception to this pattern occurs among adolescents in divorced families, who tend to have increased rather than decreased contact with their grandparents during adolescence, especially with their maternal grandfather (Clingempeel et al., 1992). This suggests that the maternal grandfather fills the father's role in these families, to some extent, by spending more time with his grandchildren than he would if the father were present. Mothers and adolescents in divorced families may have greater need for the grandfather's support and assistance, given the economic and emotional strains that often occur in divorced families (Hetherington et al., 1998).

Parenting Styles

"My parents are never home. They're either off on a trip or away at work or something. Like, I get home from school and there's a note on the table about what I can make myself for supper and not to expect them. They don't show up at my games or band concerts. I mean, am I an orphan or what?"

—JULIAN, AGE 14 (BELL, 1998, P. 57)

"My father's so strict, if I look at him funny he knocks me under the table. That's how he was raised; that's how he treats me."

—PATRICK, AGE 16 (BELL, 1998, P. 64)

"My mother told me I couldn't go with a guy in a car until I was in my senior year of high school. I argued with her about that, but in a nice way. We ended up compromising, and she said I could ride with someone as long as she knew who the person was."

—DORENE, AGE 15 (BELL, 1998, P. 56)

Because parents are so important in the development of children, social scientists have devoted a great deal of research to the quality of parent–child relationships and to the effects of parenting. One branch of this research has involved the study of **parenting styles**, that is, the kinds of practices that parents exhibit in relation to their children and the effects of these practices. For over 50 years scholars have engaged in research on this topic, and the results have been quite consistent (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Steinberg, 2001). Virtually all of the prominent scholars who have studied parenting have described it in terms of two dimensions: demandingness and responsiveness (also known by such other terms as *control* and *warmth*). Parental **demandingness** is the degree to which parents set down rules and expectations for behavior and require their children to comply with them. Parental **responsiveness** is the degree to which parents are sensitive to their children's needs and the extent to which they express love, warmth, and concern for their children.

Many scholars have combined these two dimensions to describe different kinds of parenting styles. Currently, the best-known and most widely used conception of parenting styles is the one articulated by Diana Baumrind (1968, 1971, 1991a, 1991b). Her research on middle-class American families, along with the research of other scholars inspired by her ideas (see Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Steinberg, 2000), has identified four distinct parenting styles (see Table 7.1).

Authoritative parents are high in demandingness and high in responsiveness (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Steinberg, 1996). They set clear rules and expectations for their children. Furthermore, they make clear what the consequences will be if their children do not comply, and they make those consequences stick if necessary. However, authoritative parents do not simply "lay down the law" and then enforce it rigidly. A distinctive feature of authoritative parents is that they *explain* the reasons for their rules and expectations to their children (Steinberg, 1996), and they willingly engage in discussion with their children over issues of discipline, sometimes leading to negotiation and compromise. Authoritative parents are also loving and warm toward their children, and they respond to what their children need and desire.

Table 7.1 Parenting Styles and the Two Dimensions of Parenting

		Demandingness	
		High	**Low**
Responsiveness	**High**	Authoritative	Indulgent
	Low	Authoritarian	Indifferent

Source: Based on Maccoby & Martin (1983).

Authoritarian parents are high in demandingness but low in responsiveness (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Steinberg, 1996). They require obedience from their children, and they punish disobedience without compromise. None of the verbal give-and-take common with authoritative parents is allowed by authoritarian parents. They expect their commands to be followed without dispute or dissent. Also, they show little in the way of love or warmth toward their children. Their demandingness takes place without responsiveness, in a way that shows little emotional attachment and may even be hostile.

Indulgent parents are low in demandingness and high in responsiveness (Lamborn et al., 1991; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Steinberg, 1996). They have few clear expectations for their children's behavior, and they rarely discipline them. Instead, their emphasis is on responsiveness. They believe that children need love that is truly "unconditional." They may see discipline and control as having the potential to damage their children's healthy tendencies for developing creativity and expressing themselves however they wish. They provide their children with love and warmth and give them a great deal of freedom to do as they please.

Indifferent parents are low in both demandingness and responsiveness (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Steinberg, 1996). They seem uninvolved and even uninterested in their children's development. Their goal may be to minimize the amount of time and emotion they have to devote to parenting. Thus, they require little of their children and rarely bother to correct their behavior or place clear limits on what they are allowed to do. They also express little in the way of love or concern for their children. They may seem to have little emotional attachment to them.

An American Parenting Style?

"My mom's just starting her career now. She's going to become a legal assistant and she's going back to school and all, but she's saying, 'All these years you kids have been able to do what you wanted, and I've always been there putting you first. Well, now I'm coming first for a while.... Now I need you to take care of the house.' And I say, 'Gee, Mom, that's great for you, but where am I supposed to come from now?'"

—WENDY, AGE 17 (BELL, 1998, P. 67)

How common is each of these parenting styles among the parents of adolescents in American society? Is a particular parenting style typical among American parents? The best evidence on these questions comes from a study of over 4,000 American adolescents aged 14 to 18 (Lamborn et al., 1991). The adolescents were diverse, coming from working-class as well as middle-class backgrounds, from urban, suburban, and rural communities, and including African Americans (9%), Asian Americans (14%), and Latinos (12%). The adolescents completed a questionnaire asking about various aspects of their parents' demandingness and responsiveness, and on the basis of their reports their parents were classified as falling into one of the four parenting styles described above.

Figure 7.2 shows the results. As you can see, the most common parenting style among the parents of the adolescents in the study was the indifferent style (37%), followed closely by the authoritative style (32%). Authoritarian (15%) and indulgent (15%) styles were less common. Authoritative parenting was somewhat more common in middle-class families than in working-class families, and in White families than in minority families. Authoritarian parenting was more common in minority families than in White families. Thus, we might conclude that the parents of American adolescents have diverse parenting styles, tending toward styles that either combine demandingness and responsiveness (authoritative) or lack both of these qualities (indifferent).

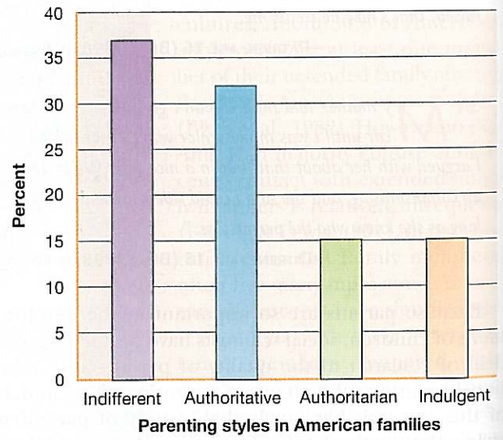


FIGURE 7.2 Percentage of parents using each parenting style.

The high proportion of indifferent parents in the study (Lamborn et al., 1991)—37%—is striking. Perhaps this is related to the aspects of parents' midlife development discussed earlier in this chapter. At midlife, many parents feel they are reaching an enjoyable time of life, and they may wish to pursue their own interests now after many years of raising young children.

Table 7.2 Adolescent Outcomes Associated With Parenting Styles

Authoritative	Authoritarian	Indulgent	Indifferent
Independent	Dependent	Irresponsible	Impulsive
Creative	Passive	Conforming	Delinquent
Self-assured	Conforming	Immature	Early sex, drugs
Socially skilled			

These parenting styles can also be looked at as custom complexes. As described in Chapter 4, a custom complex consists of a typical cultural practice and the beliefs underlying it. What beliefs are reflected in the parenting styles described above? Research on parents' child-rearing goals shows that American parents tend to value independence highly as a quality they wish to promote in their children (Alwin, 1988; Hoffman, 1988). Authoritarian parenting clearly discourages independence, but the other three parenting styles—authoritative, indulgent, and indifferent, which accounted for 85% of the parenting styles in the study described above (Lamborn et al., 1991)—reflect parents' beliefs that it is good for adolescents to learn **autonomy**, that is, to learn to be independent and self-sufficient, to learn to think for themselves and be responsible for their own behavior.

Authoritative parents promote autonomy in positive ways, through encouraging discussion and give-and-take that teaches adolescents to think independently and make mature decisions. Indifferent and indulgent parents promote this outcome in a negative way, that is, through the absence of restraint that allows adolescents a great deal of autonomy without parental guidance. As we will see shortly, the differences in how these parenting styles promote autonomy result in different effects on adolescents' development. Nevertheless, in combination the prominence of these parenting styles in the families of American adolescents reflects the prominence of individualism in American cultural beliefs (Alwin, 1988). Thus the family socialization of American adolescents tends toward broad rather than narrow socialization.

The Effects of Parenting Styles on Adolescents

A great deal of research has been conducted on how parenting styles influence adolescents' development. A summary of the results is shown in Table 7.2. In general, authoritative parenting is associated with the most favorable outcomes, at least by American standards. Adolescents who have authoritative parents tend to be independent, self-assured, creative, and socially skilled (Baumrind, 1991a, 1991b; Fuligni & Eccles, 1993; Lamborn et al., 1991; Steinberg et al., 1994; Steinberg, 2000). They also tend to do well in school and to get along well with their peers and with adults (Steinberg, 1996, 2000).

All the other parenting styles are associated with some negative outcomes, although the type of negative outcome varies depending on the specific parenting style (Baumrind, 1991a, 1991b; Dornbusch et al., 1990; Durbin et al., 1993; Lamborn et al., 1991; Steinberg et al., 1994; Steinberg, 1996, 2000). Adolescents with authoritarian parents tend to be dependent, passive, and conforming. They are often less self-assured, less creative, and less socially adept than other adolescents. Adolescents with indulgent parents tend to be immature and irresponsible. They are more likely than other adolescents to conform to their peers. Adolescents with indifferent parents tend to be impulsive. Partly as a consequence of their impulsiveness, and partly because indifferent parents do little to monitor their activities, adolescents with indifferent parents tend to have higher rates of problem behaviors such as delinquency, early sexual involvement, and use of drugs and alcohol.

Authoritative parenting tends to be better for adolescents for a number of reasons (Steinberg, 2000). Adolescents are at a point in their lives when they have become capable of exercising more autonomy and self-regulation than when they were younger (Steinberg, 1990, 1996). In order to be able to move into adult roles after adolescence, they need to be given a greater amount of autonomy and required to exercise a greater amount of responsibility (Steinberg & Levine, 1997). At the same time, they lack the experience with the world and with their own impulses and abilities that adults have, and consequently an excess of autonomy may leave them aimless or even lead them into

harm (Dornbusch et al., 1990). Authoritative parenting achieves a balance between allowing enough autonomy for adolescents to develop their capacities and at the same time requiring them to exercise their increased autonomy in a responsible way. All the other parenting styles either fail to allow as much autonomy or allow it without requiring the kind of responsibility that is associated with healthy development.

Authoritative parenting combines demandingness with responsiveness, which includes affection, emotional attachment, love, and concern for the adolescent's needs and well-being. Parents' responsiveness helps adolescents to learn to believe in their own worthiness as people (Baumrind, 1991a, 1991b). It also leads adolescents to identify with their parents and seek to please them by embracing the values their parents hold and by behaving in ways the parents will approve (Baumrind, 1991a, 1991b). The other parenting styles either lack responsiveness or provide it without requiring an adequate level of demandingness.

Inconsistency between parents also tends to be related to negative outcomes for adolescents. Most studies of parenting in adolescence simply combine ratings for the two parents into one rating, but studies that examine differences have produced interesting results. For example, Johnson, Shulman, and Collins (1991) had 5th, 8th, and 11th graders rate their parents on various items. Parents were categorized into one of two general types, authoritative or permissive. Fifth graders generally viewed their parents as similar—only 9% rated them in different categories—but the proportion perceiving a discrepancy rose with age, to 23% of 8th graders and 31% of 11th graders.

Adolescents who perceived inconsistency between their parents were lower on self-esteem and school performance compared not only with those who perceived both parents as authoritative but also with those who perceived both parents as permissive. A study by Wentzel and Feldman (1993) produced similar results: Adolescents who perceived inconsistency in the parenting styles of their parents were lower than other adolescents on self-control and academic motivation.

THINKING CRITICALLY

How would you categorize the parenting style of your parents when you were in adolescence? Was it the same for you as for your siblings (if you have any)? To what extent did their parenting influence you, and to what extent did you evoke certain parenting behaviors from them?

A More Complex Picture of Parenting Effects

Although parents undoubtedly affect their adolescents profoundly by their parenting, the process is not nearly as simple as the cause-and-effect model just described. Sometimes discussions of parenting make it sound as though parenting style A automatically and inevitably produces adolescent type X. However, enough research has taken place by now to indicate that the relationship between parenting styles and adolescent development is considerably more complex than that (Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington, & Bornstein, 2000). Adolescents not only are affected by their parents but also affect their parents in return. This principle is referred to by scholars as **reciprocal or bidirectional effects** between parents and children (Patterson & Fisher, 2002).

Recall our discussion of evocative genotype–environment interactions in Chapter 2. Adolescents are not like billiard balls that head reliably in the direction they are propelled. They have personalities

Adolescent siblings within the same family often report different experiences with their parents.

and desires of their own that they bring to the parent–adolescent relationship (Scarr, 1992). Thus, adolescents may evoke certain behaviors from their parents. An especially aggressive adolescent may evoke authoritarian parenting—perhaps the parents find that authoritative explanations of the rules are simply ignored, and their responsiveness diminishes as a result of the adolescent's repeated violations of their trust. An especially mild-tempered adolescent may evoke indulgent parenting—parents may see no point in laying down specific rules for an adolescent who has no inclination to do anything outrageous anyway.

Research involving siblings suggests that reciprocal effects occur in parent–adolescent relationships. Most research on the effects of parenting styles involves only one adolescent per family, and this research indeed finds a consistent correlation between what adolescents say their parents do and what adolescents report about their own characteristics and behavior. However, a few studies have included more than one adolescent per family, and those studies make the picture much more complex. The interesting finding of these studies is that adolescent siblings *within the same family* often give very different accounts of what their parents are like toward them (Daniels et al., 1985; Hoffman, 1991; Plomin & Daniels, 1987). For example, one study investigated families with two adolescents aged 11 to 17 and found that siblings perceived significant differences in their parents' love for them, their parents' closeness to them, their parents' use of discipline, and the degree to which their parents involved them in family decisions (Daniels et al., 1985).

Thus, one adolescent may see her parents as admirably demanding and responsive, the epitome of the authoritative parent, whereas her brother describes the same parents as dictatorial, unresponsive, authoritarian parents. These differences in how adolescents perceive their parents' behavior are in turn related to differences in the adolescents: The ones who perceive their parents as authoritative tend to be happier and to be functioning better in a variety of ways (Daniels et al., 1985). Overall, little similarity in personality exists between adolescent siblings (Plomin & Daniels, 1987), which suggests that whatever effect parents have, it may be different for different adolescents within the same family.

Does this research discredit the claim that parenting styles influence adolescents? No, but it modifies this claim (Collins et al., 2000). Parents do have beliefs about what is best for their adolescents, and they try to express those beliefs through their behavior toward their adolescents (Alwin, 1988). However, parents' actual behavior is affected not only by what they believe is best but also by how their adolescents behave toward them and how their adolescents seem to respond to their parenting. Being an authoritative parent is easier if your adolescent responds to the demandingness and responsiveness you provide, and not so easy if your love is rejected and your rules and the reasons you provide for them are ignored. Parents whose efforts to persuade their adolescents through reasoning and discussion fall on deaf ears may be tempted either to demand compliance (and become more authoritarian) or to give up trying (and become indulgent or indifferent).

Recently, an ambitious research project has gone deeper than previous research into the complexities of adolescents' family lives (Reiss, Neiderhiser, Hetherington, & Plomin, 2000). In this project there were 720 families from various areas of the United States, and two same-sex siblings within each family were studied, including identical twins, fraternal twins, full siblings, half siblings, and biologically unrelated stepsiblings.

This research design enabled the researchers to examine questions of genetic and environmental family influences on adolescents, and also to study the different experiences of siblings within the same family. The research methods used in the study included not only questionnaires but interviews, videotaped family interactions, and information on the adolescents' social world outside the family. The average ages of the siblings when the study began were 12 and 15, and the families were followed over a 3-year period.

Data analysis for the project is continuing, but it has yielded many interesting results so far. In terms of dimensions of *warmth* and *negativity*, there was evidence for **differential parenting**, meaning that parents' behavior often differed toward siblings within the same family (Feinberg & Hetherington, 2001). Differential parenting resulted in **nonshared environmental influences**, meaning that the adolescents experienced quite different family environments, and the consequences of these differences were evident in adolescents' behavior and psychological functioning. Also, the influence of genetics seemed to be especially strong for parental negativity, in the sense that the more alike two siblings were genetically, the more alike parents' behavior was toward them with respect to negativity (Feinberg, Neiderhiser, Howe, & Hetherington, 2001). This seems to indicate evocative genotype–environment interactions (see Chapter 2 if you need to review this concept), because it suggests that the parents' negativity was evoked by the adolescents' (genetically based) behavior.

Furthermore, parents and adolescents often differed in their reports of the parenting behavior (Feinberg et al., 2001), with parents reporting more warmth and less negativity for themselves than their adolescents reported for them. For younger adolescents, the more different their reports were from their parents' reports, the more likely they were to be functioning poorly (Feinberg, Howe, Reiss, & Hetherington, 2000). This suggests that it is important to include multiple reports of parenting behavior rather than only the adolescents' reports, as most studies do.

Parenting in Other Cultures

Almost all the research on parenting styles has taken place in American society, and most of it has taken place on families in the American majority culture. What do parent–adolescent relationships look like if we step outside of the American experience and look around the world, especially toward non-Western cultures?

Probably the most striking difference is how rare the authoritative parenting style is in non-Western cultures. Remember, a distinctive feature of authoritative parents is that they do not rely on the authority of the parental role to ensure that adolescents comply with their commands and instructions. They do not simply lay down the law and expect to be obeyed. On the contrary, authoritative parents *explain the reasons* for what they want adolescents to do and *engage in discussion* over the guidelines for their adolescents' behavior (Baumrind, 1971, 1991a; Steinberg & Levine, 1997).

Outside of the West, however, this is an extremely rare approach to adolescent socialization. In traditional cultures, parents expect that their authority will be obeyed, without question and without requiring an explanation (Whiting & Edwards, 1988). This is true not only of nonindustrial traditional cultures but also of industrialized traditional cultures outside the West, most notably Asian cultures such as China, Japan, Vietnam, and South Korea (Fuligni et al., 1999; Zhou, 1997). Asian cultures have a tradition of **filial piety**, meaning that children are expected to respect, obey, and revere their parents throughout life. In other traditional cultures as well, the *role of parent* carries greater inherent authority than it does in the West. Parents are not supposed to provide reasons why they should be respected and obeyed. The simple fact that they are parents and their children are children is viewed as sufficient justification for their authority (see the Cultural Focus box for an example).

Does this mean that the typical parenting style in traditional cultures is authoritarian? No, although sometimes scholars have come to this erroneous conclusion. Keep in mind that authoritarian parenting combines high demandingness with *low responsiveness.* Parents in traditional cultures are indeed high in demandingness, and their demandingness is often of a more uncompromising quality than is typical in the West. However, it is not true that parents in traditional cultures are typically low in responsiveness. On the contrary, parents and adolescents in nonindustrialized traditional cultures often develop a closeness that is nearly impossible in Western families, because they spend virtually all of their days together, working side by side (boys with their fathers, girls with their mothers), in a way that the economic structure of industrialized societies prevents (Schlegel & Barry, 1991).

Parents and adolescents in industrialized traditional cultures such as Asian cultures also maintain a strong degree of closeness, reflected in shared activities and mutual obligations (Fuligni et al., 1999).

However, parental responsiveness may be expressed quite differently in non-Western cultures. For example, parents in non-Western cultures rarely use praise with their children (Whiting & Edwards, 1988). But are typical parents of adolescents in non-Western cultures responsive—do they have deep emotional attachments to their adolescents, do they love them, are they deeply concerned with their well-being? Unquestionably the answer is yes.

If parents in non-Western cultures cannot be called authoritarian, what *are* they? The fact is, they do not fit very well into the parenting scheme presented above. They are generally closest to authoritative parents, because like them they tend to be high in demandingness and high in responsiveness. However, as noted, their demandingness is very different from the demandingness of the authoritative American or Western parent.

Diana Baumrind (1987), the scholar who originally invented the terminology for the parenting styles we have been discussing, has recognized the problem of fitting traditional cultures into her scheme. In fact, she has proposed the term **traditional parenting style** to describe the kind of parenting typical in traditional cultures—high in responsiveness and high in a kind of demandingness that does not encourage discussion and debate but rather expects compliance by virtue of cultural beliefs supporting the inherent authority of the parental role (Baumrind, 1987).

The difficulty of fitting other cultures into Baumrind's scheme applies not only to non-Western traditional cultures, but also to ethnic minority cultures that are part of American society. Studies indicate that African American, Latino, and Asian American parents are less likely than White parents to be classified as authoritative and more likely to be classified as authoritarian (e.g., Chao, 1994; Dornbusch et al., 1987; Feldman et al., 1991; Steinberg et al., 1991; Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992). However, because none of these studies used Baumrind's more recent "traditional" category as one of the classifications, it is somewhat difficult to say what this means. If parents in these studies were high in responsiveness and also high in an uncompromising demandingness that rejects discussion and explanation, they would not have fit well into either the authoritative or the authoritarian categories used by the researchers.

Asian American psychologist Ruth Chao (2001; Chao & Tseng, 2002) has argued that designations of authoritative and authoritarian cannot be easily applied to Asian American parents. She suggests that White researchers may misunderstand Asian American parenting and mislabel it as authoritarian, because it involves a degree and type of demandingness that is typical of Asian families but that may be perceived as wrong by a White researcher unfamiliar with Asian cultural beliefs. Asian American adolescents show none of the negative effects typically associated with authoritarian parenting. On the contrary, they have higher educational achievement, lower rates of behavioral problems, and lower rates of psychological problems, compared with White adolescents (Chao & Tseng, 2002; Steinberg, 1996). This suggests that cultural context is crucial to predicting the effects parenting will have on adolescents.

Latino parents in American society have also typically been classified as authoritarian (Busch-Rossnagel & Zayas, 1991). The Latino cultural belief system places a premium on the idea of *respeto,* which emphasizes respect for and obedience to parents and elders, especially the father (Harwood, et al., 2002). The role of the parent is considered to be enough to command authority, without requiring that the parents explain their rules to their children. Again, however, this does not mean that their parenting is authoritarian. Another pillar of Latino cultural beliefs is **familismo**, which emphasizes the love, closeness, and mutual obligations of Latino family life (Harwood et al., 2002). This hardly sounds like the aloofness and hostility characteristic of the authoritarian parent, and in fact studies confirm the positive effects of familismo on Latino adolescents (Fuligni et al., 1999; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1996).

Attachments to Parents

"[My parents are] always there and I feel I can always go to them and they always say something that will make me feel better."

—17-YEAR-OLD GIRL (KONOPKA, 1985, P. 71)

We have noted that adolescents consistently state that their parents are among the most important figures in their lives, and that most young people maintain a sense of emotional closeness to their parents throughout adolescence and emerging adulthood. An influential theory describing the emotional relationships

CULTURAL FOCUS
Young People and Their Families in India

India is currently the second most populous country in the world, with a population of over 1 billion. By the middle of the 21st century, it is projected to pass China and reach a population of 1.5 billion, more than five times the projected population of the United States. India is an astonishingly diverse country, with a wide variety of religions, languages, and regional cultures. Nevertheless, scholars generally believe that a common Indian culture can be identified (Segal, 1998), including with regard to young people and their families. The features of the Indian family provide a good illustration of young people's family lives in a traditional culture.

Indian families have many features in common with other traditional cultures discussed in this book. Collectivistic values are strong, and the well-being and success of the family are considered more important than the well-being and success of the individual (Saraswathi, 1999). There is a strong emphasis on sacrifice, and children are taught from an early age to relinquish their own desires for the sake of the interests of the family as a whole. Interdependence among family members is stressed throughout life, emotionally, socially, and financially (Gupta, 1987; Kakar, 1998; Shukla, 1994).

As in most traditional cultures, the Indian family has a clear hierarchy based on age (Kakar, 1998; Reddy & Gibbons, 1999; Segal, 1998). Respect for elders is strongly emphasized. Even in childhood, older children are understood to have definite authority over anyone younger than they are; even in adulthood, older adults merit respect and deference from younger adults simply on the basis of being older. Because it is common for young married couples to live with the husband's parents rather than establishing a separate residence, many households with children contain grandparents and often uncles, aunts, and cousins as well. This pattern is changing, because Indian society is becoming increasingly urbanized, and extended family households are less common in urban areas than in rural areas. Nevertheless, even now 80% of India's population is rural and tends to live according to traditional family arrangements (Carson et al., 1999).

One feature that is distinctive to the traditional Indian family is the idea that the parents, and especially the father, are to be regarded by their children as a god would be regarded by a devotee. The Hindu religion, which most Indians believe, has many gods of varying degrees of power, so this is not like stating that the father is like "God" in a Western sense. Nevertheless, the analogy of a father being like a god to his children effectively symbolizes and conveys the absolute nature of his authority within the family.

These features of the Indian family have important implications for the development of adolescents and emerging adults. The inherent authority of parents and the emphasis on respect for elders means that parents expect obedience even from adolescents and emerging adults. Traditional Indian families include little of the explanation of rules and discussion of decisions that characterize the relationships between adolescents and parents in authoritative Western families. For parents to explain the reasons for their rules, or for young people to demand to take part in family decisions, would be considered an offense to the parents' inherent authority. This does not mean the parents are "authoritarian," in the scheme of parenting styles described by Western social scientists. On the contrary, warmth, love, and affection are known to be especially strong in Indian families (Kakar, 1998; Larson et al., 2000). Indian parenting is better described by the "traditional" parenting style discussed in this chapter.

The authority of parents in Indian families also means that there are not the same expectations of autonomy for adolescents and emerging adults as there are in Western families (Gupta, 1987; Larson et al., 2000; Reddy & Gibbons, 1999; Segal, 1998; Shukla, 1994). Indian adolescents spend most of their leisure time with their families, not with their friends. Dating and sexual relationships before marriage are almost nonexistent (Kakar, 1998). Most marriages are arranged by the parents, not chosen independently by the young people themselves. Emerging adults usually remain in their parents' homes until marriage.

What are the consequences of these family practices for the development of Indian adolescents and emerging adults? A Western reader may be tempted to regard the practices of Indian families as "unhealthy" because of their hierarchical, patriarchal quality and because of the way that the autonomy of young people is suppressed. However, it is probably more accurate to view Indian family socialization as having both costs and benefits, like other cultural forms of socialization (Arnett, 1995a). For young people in India, there are clearly costs in terms of individual autonomy. To be expected to be obedient to your parents even in your teens and twenties (and beyond), to be discouraged from ever questioning your parents' authority and judgment, and to have your parents control crucial life decisions in love and work clearly means that young people's autonomy is restricted in Indian families.

However, Indian family practices have clear benefits as well. Young people who grow up in a close, interdependent Indian family have the benefit of family support and guidance as they enter adult roles. For example, even now in India, even among well-educated, urban Indians, most young people continue to prefer to have their parents arrange their marriage rather than choosing a marriage partner themselves (Kakar, 1998). Having a strong sense of family interdependence also provides Indian young people with a strong family identity, which may make them less lonely and vulnerable as they form an individual identity. Indian adolescents have low rates of delinquency, depression, and suicide compared with Western adolescents (Kakar, 1998).

The influence of globalization can be seen in Indian culture as in other traditional cultures. Western styles of dress, language, and music are popular among young Indians. In urban middle-class families, the traditional Indian pattern of parental authority is changing, and parents' relationships with their adolescents increasingly involve discussion and negotiation (Larson et al., 2000; Patel-Amin & Power, 2002; Reddy & Gibbons, 1999). Nevertheless, young Indians remain proud of the Indian tradition of close families, and they express the desire to see that tradition endure (Mullatti, 1995).

between parents and children is **attachment theory**. This theory was originally developed by British psychiatrist John Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1980), who argued that among humans as among other primates, attachments between parents and children have an evolutionary basis in the need for vulnerable young members of the species to stay in close proximity to adults who will care for and protect them. Bowlby's colleague, American psychologist Mary Ainsworth (1967, 1982), observed interactions between mothers and infants and described two general types of attachment: **secure attachment**, in which infants use the mother as a "secure base from which to explore" when all is well, but seek physical comfort and consolation from her if frightened or threatened; and **insecure attachment**, in which infants are wary of exploring the environment and resist or avoid the mother when she attempts to offer comfort or consolation.

Although most of the early research and theory on attachment focused on infancy, both Bowlby and Ainsworth believed that the attachment formed with the **primary caregiver** (usually but not necessarily the mother) in infancy forms the foundation for attachments to others throughout a person's life. Bowlby quoted a phrase from Sigmund Freud to describe this, in which Freud stated that the relationship with the mother is "the prototype of all [future] love relations" (Freud, 1940/1964, p. 188). According to Bowlby (1969), in the course of interactions with the primary caregiver, the infant develops an **internal working model** that shapes expectations and interactions in relationships with others throughout life. This implies that in adolescence and emerging adulthood, the quality of relationships with others—from friends to teachers to romantic partners to the parents themselves—will all be shaped, for better or

Secure attachments to parents are related to adolescents' well-being in a variety of respects.

worse, by the quality of the attachments to parents the person experienced in infancy.

This is a provocative and intriguing claim. How well does it hold up in research? First, abundant research indicates that a secure attachment to parents *in adolescence* is related to a variety of favorable outcomes. Secure attachments to parents are related to a variety of aspects of adolescents' well-being, including self-esteem and psychological and physical health (Allen & Kuperminc, 1995; Allen & Land, 1999; Juang & Nguyen, 1997). Adolescents who have secure attachments to parents tend to have closer relationships with friends and romantic partners (Allen & Bell, 1995; Laible, Carlo, & Rafaelli, 2000; Roisman, Madsen, Hennighausen, Sroufe, & Collins, 2001). Security of attachment to parents in adolescence has also been found to predict a variety of outcomes in emerging adulthood, including educational and occupational attainment, psychological problems, and drug use (Allen et al., 1998; O'Connor et al., 1996).

"When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much he had learnt in seven years."
—Mark Twain

Another prediction of attachment theory involves the compatibility between autonomy and **relatedness** in adolescence. According to attachment theory, autonomy (being capable of self-direction) and relatedness (feeling close to parents emotionally) should be compatible rather than opposing dynamics in relations with parents. That is, in infancy as well as in adolescence, if children feel close to their parents and confident of their parents' love and concern, they are likely to be able to develop a healthy sense of autonomy from parents as they grow up (Allen & Bell, 1995). Rather than promoting prolonged dependence on parents, a secure attachment gives children the confidence to go out into the world, using the comfort of that attachment as a "secure base from which to explore."

This prediction from attachment theory is supported by research. Adolescents who are the most autonomous and self-reliant also tend to report close, affectionate relationships with their parents (Allen et al., 1994; Ryan & Lynch, 1989). Adolescents who have trouble establishing autonomy in adolescence also tend to have more difficulty maintaining a healthy level of relatedness to parents. An imbalance between autonomy and relatedness (i.e., too little of one or both) tends to be related to a variety of negative outcomes, such as psychological problems and drug use (Allen et al., 1994).

However, these studies do not really test the heart of attachment theory, which is the claim that attachments *in infancy* form the basis for all later relationships, including those in adolescence and emerging adulthood. What do studies indicate on this crucial issue? Because the infants in the earliest attachment studies have only recently grown into adolescence, there is limited data available so far. Studies of college students have attempted to reconstruct the students' early attachments by having them recall various aspects of their childhood relationships with their parents (Duemmler & Kobak, 2001; Kobak & Cole, 1994; Kobak et al., 1993). These studies have found that college students who remember having secure attachments in childhood also report (in the present) lower rates of depression (Kobak & Cole, 1994), more stable romantic relationships (Davis & Kirkpatrick, 1998), and closer friendships (Kerns, 1994) compared with students who report having insecure attachments in childhood. This seems consistent with the prediction of attachment theory that a secure attachment in infancy provides a solid foundation for later development. However, this research approach relies on having people recall memories from childhood, which other research has found to be an unreliable enterprise, often distorted by failures of memory and by the quality of present relationships.

A handful of longitudinal studies on attachment have by now followed samples from infancy to adolescence, and they provide mixed support for the predictions of attachment theory. One study found that a prolonged separation from parents during infancy or early childhood predicted a less secure attachment to parents in adolescence, in accord with attachment theory, which asserts that early separation from parents can result in long-term difficulties in emotional development (Woodward, Fergusson, & Belsky, 2000). Another study found that attachment classification in infancy predicted the quality of interactions with others at ages 10 and 15 (Sroufe, Carlson, & Schulman, 1993). When the children in the original infancy study reached age 10, the researchers invited them to attend a summer camp where their relations with peers could be examined. At age 10, the children who had been securely attached in infancy were judged to be more skilled socially, more self-confident, and less dependent on other campers. Five years later, the researchers arranged a camp reunion where the children could again be evaluated. At age 15, adolescents who had been securely attached in infancy were more open in expressing their feelings and were more likely to form close relationships with peers.

However, in a more recent follow-up, these researchers found no continuity between security of attachment to parents in infancy and at age 19 (Weinfield, Sroufe, & Egeland, 2000). At this point, then, the answer to the question of whether infant attachment is a foundation for relationships in adolescence and emerging adulthood awaits further studies following up samples from infancy.

Parent–Adolescent Conflict

"This is a dangerous world, what with all the drugs and drunk drivers and violent crime and kids disappearing and you name it. I know my kids are pretty responsible, but can I trust all their friends? Are they going to end up in some situation they can't get out of? Are they going to get in over their heads? You can never be sure, so I worry and set curfews and make rules about where they can go and who they can go with. Not because I want to be a tough dad, but because I want them to be safe."

—John, father of a 16-year-old son and a 13-year-old daughter (Bell, 1998, p. 54)

"My father is very strict and had a great deal of rules when I was in high school, which usually could not be bent for anything. My father was very worried about the fact that I was getting older and interested in boys so much. This worrying led him to lay down strict rules which led to many arguments between us. He wouldn't let me date until I was 16—by this he meant 'don't even speak to a boy until you're 16!' He would hardly let me go anywhere."

—Danielle, age 19 (Arnett, unpublished data)

Although children and adolescents typically develop attachments to their parents, the course of family life does not always run smoothly, and this seems to be especially true for families with adolescents. For a variety of reasons, adolescence can be a difficult time for relationships with parents.

However, the degree of parent–adolescent conflict should not be exaggerated. Early theories of adolescence, such as those of G. Stanley Hall (1904) and Anna Freud (1946), made it sound as though it was universal and inevitable that *all* adolescents rebel against their parents and that *all* parents and adolescents experience intense conflict for many years. Anna Freud (1946) even believed that adolescents would not develop normally without this kind of turmoil in their relationships with their parents.

Few scholars on adolescence believe this anymore. Over the past few decades, numerous studies have

Conflict in adolescence is especially frequent and intense between mothers and daughters.

indicated that it is simply not true. In fact, adolescents and their parents agree on many of the most important aspects of their views of life and typically have a great deal of love and respect for one another (Moore et al., 2002; Offer & Schonert-Reichl, 1992). Two studies in the 1960s were among the first and most important in dispelling the stereotype of pervasive and fierce conflict in parent–adolescent relationships (Douvan & Adelson, 1966; Offer, 1969). Both studies found that the great majority of adolescents like their parents, trust them, and admire them. Both studies also found that adolescents and their parents frequently disagreed, but the arguments were usually over seemingly minor issues such as curfews, clothes, grooming, and use of the family car. These arguments usually did not seriously threaten the attachments between parents and their adolescents.

More recent studies confirm this pattern (e.g., Moore et al., 2002; Offer, Ostrov, & Howard, 1981; Steinberg, 1990, 2000). These studies report that adolescents typically love and care about their parents and are confident that their parents feel the same about them. Like the earlier studies, recent studies find that arguments between parents and adolescents generally concern seemingly minor issues such as curfews, clothing, musical preferences, and the like (Smetana, 1988; Steinberg & Levine, 1997). Parents and adolescents may disagree and argue about these issues, but they usually agree on key values such as the importance of education, the value of hard work, and the desirability of being honest and trustworthy (Gecas & Seff, 1990).

However, let's not get carried away with the rosy portrait of family harmony, either. Studies also indicate that conflict with parents increases sharply in early adolescence, compared with preadolescence, and remains high for several years before declining in late adolescence (Arnett, 1999a; Dworkin & Larson, 2001; Larson & Richards, 1994; Laursen, Coy, & Collins, 1998). One study found that high school sophomores had an argument with a parent about once every 3 days, lasting an average of 11 minutes (Montemayor, 1982). Frequency of conflict between *typical* adolescents and their parents is higher than between *distressed* marital couples (Buchanan, Maccoby, & Dornbusch, 1991). Conflict in adolescence is especially frequent and intense between mothers and daughters (Steinberg, 1990). Both parents and adolescents report more frequent conflict in early adolescence than prior to adolescence; by midadolescence, conflict with parents tends to become somewhat less frequent but more intense (Laursen et al., 1998). It is only in late adolescence and emerging adulthood that conflict with parents diminishes substantially (Arnett, 2003a).

THINKING CRITICALLY

Apply the idea of the custom complex to parent–child conflict in the American majority culture. How do the typical topics of conflict reflect certain cultural beliefs?

Perhaps as a consequence of these conflicts, parents tend to perceive adolescence as the most difficult stage of their children's development (Buchanan et al., 1990; Silverberg & Steinberg, 1990). Although midlife tends to be an especially fruitful and satisfying time for adults, for many of them their satisfaction with their relationships with their children diminishes when their children reach adolescence (Gecas & Seff, 1990; Gladding, 2002).

Chores are a common source of conflict between parents and adolescents.

Although most parent–adolescent conflict is over apparently minor issues, some issues that seem trivial on the surface may in fact be substitutes for more serious underlying issues (Arnett, 1999a). For example, most American parents and adolescents have limited communication about sexual issues. Especially in the era of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, it would be surprising indeed if most parents did not have some concerns about their adolescents' sexual behavior (Eccles et al., 1993), yet they find it difficult to speak to their adolescents directly about sexual issues. As a result, they may say "You can't wear that to school" when they mean "That's too sexually provocative." They may say "I don't know if it's a good idea for you to date him" when they really mean "He has that lean and hungry look—I worry that he will want you to have sex, and I worry that you'll like the idea." And "You have to be home by 11:00" may mean "The movie ends at ten, and I don't want you to have time to have sex between the time the movie ends and the time you come home."

Sexual issues are not the only issues that may be argued about in this indirect way. "I don't like that crowd you're hanging around with lately" could mean "They look like the type who might use drugs, and I worry that they might persuade you to use them, too." Arguments about curfews may be parents' attempts to communicate that "The sooner you come in, the less likely it is that you and your friends will have drunk enough beer to put yourselves at risk for a terrible automobile accident."

Seen in this light, these arguments are not necessarily over trivial issues, but may be proxies for arguments over serious issues of life and death (Arnett, 1999a). Parents have legitimate concerns about the safety and well-being of their adolescents, given the high rates of adolescents' risky behavior (Arnett, 1995a), but they also know that in the American majority culture they are expected to loosen the reins substantially when their children reach adolescence. The result may be that they express their concerns indirectly, through what seem to be less serious issues.

Sources of Conflict With Parents

"One minute my mother treats me like I'm old enough to do this or this—like help her out at home by doing the marketing or making dinner or babysitting my little brother. And she's always telling me, 'You're thirteen years old now, you should know better than that!' But then the next minute, when there's something I really want to do, like there's a party that everyone's going to, she'll say, 'You're too young to do that.'"

—ELIZABETH, AGE 13 (BELL, 1998, P. 55)

But why do parents and adolescents argue more than they did earlier? Why would early adolescence be a time when conflict with parents is especially high? Part of the explanation may lie in the biological and cognitive changes of adolescence. Biologically, adolescents become bigger and stronger physically with puberty, making it more difficult for parents to impose their authority by virtue of their greater physical presence. Also, puberty means sexual maturity, which means that sexual issues may be a source of conflict—at least indirectly—in a way they would not have been earlier (Arnett, 1999a; Steinberg, 1990).

Cognitively, increased abilities for thinking abstractly and with more complexity make adolescents better arguers than preadolescents and make it more difficult for parents to prevail quickly in arguments with their children. Conflict may also be a reflection of cognitive changes experienced by adolescents and their parents in their expectations for one another. Psychologists Andrew Collins and Judith Smetana have each studied these mutual cognitions in relation to parent–adolescent conflict. According to Collins (1997), conflict may occur when parents' expectations are violated as their child reaches adolescence and wants to behave differently—for example, to stay out later, spend more time with friends, or wear different clothes. Adolescents' expectations of their parents change at the same time, in terms of what they expect their parents to allow them to do. Thus, adolescents' development may result in a mismatch between parents' and adolescents' expectations, and conflict between parents and adolescents may occur in the course of revising their expectations for one another. Although parents and adolescents are likely to experience conflict as distressing, Collins's (1997) insights suggest that conflict can be constructive and useful, as it promotes the development of a new equilibrium in the family system that allows adolescents greater autonomy.

Smetana (1988) argues that parent–adolescent conflict results from the different ways that parents and adolescents understand and define the range of adolescents' autonomy. Issues of conflict are frequently viewed by parents as matters of desirable social convention but viewed

by adolescents as matters of personal choice. Research indicates that, especially in early adolescence, parents and adolescents often disagree about who should have the authority over issues such as dress and hair styles, the adolescent's choice of friends, and what state of order or disorder should be maintained in the adolescent's bedroom (Smetana, 1989; Smetana & Asquith, 1994). Parents tend to see these as issues they should decide, or at least influence and set boundaries for; adolescents, however, tend to see the issues as matters of personal choice that should be theirs to decide by now. Perhaps the peak of conflict occurs in early adolescence because that is the time when adolescents are first pressing for a new degree of autonomy, and parents are adjusting to their adolescents' new maturity and struggling over how much autonomy they should allow.

Culture and Conflict With Parents

Although the biological and cognitive changes of adolescence may provide a basis for parent–adolescent conflict, this does not mean that such conflict is therefore universal and "natural." Biological and cognitive changes take place among adolescents in all cultures, yet parent–adolescent conflict is not typical in all cultures (Arnett, 1999a). Culture can take the raw material of nature and shape it in highly diverse ways. This is no less true for parent–adolescent conflict than for the other topics we will address in this book.

In traditional cultures, it is rare for parents and adolescents to engage in the kind of frequent, petty conflicts typical of parent–adolescent relationships in the American majority culture (Schlegel & Barry, 1991; Whiting & Edwards, 1988). Part of the reason for this is economic. In nonindustrialized traditional cultures, family members tend to rely a great deal on each other economically. In many of these cultures family members spend a great deal of time together each day, working on family economic enterprises (Schlegel & Barry, 1991). Children and adolescents depend on their parents for the necessities of life, parents depend on children and adolescents for the contribution of their labor, and the larger network of relatives are all expected to assist one another routinely and help one another in times of need. Under such conditions, the pressure to maintain family harmony is intense, because the economic interdependence of the family is so strong (Schlegel & Barry, 1991).

However, more than economics and the structure of daily life are involved in the lower levels of parent–adolescent conflict in traditional cultures. Levels of conflict are low in parent–adolescent relationships not only in nonindustrialized traditional cultures but also in highly industrialized traditional cultures, such as Japan and Taiwan (Zhou, 1997), and in the Asian American and Latino cultures that are part of American society (Chao, 1994; Harwood et al., 2002; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1996). This indicates that even more important than economics are cultural beliefs about parental authority and the appropriate degree of adolescent independence. As discussed earlier, the role of parent carries greater authority in traditional cultures than in the West, and this makes it less likely that adolescents in such cultures will express disagreements and resentments toward their parents (Arnett, 1999a).

THINKING CRITICALLY

How would you predict parent–adolescent conflict in traditional cultures will be affected by globalization?

This does not mean that adolescents in traditional cultures do not sometimes feel an inclination to resist or defy the authority of their parents, to question their demands and argue with them (Phinney & Ong, 2002). Like Western adolescents, they undergo biological and cognitive changes at puberty that may incline them toward such resistance. But socialization shapes not only the way people behave but their cultural beliefs, their whole way of looking at the world (Arnett, 1995a). Someone who has been raised in a culture where the status and authority of parents and other elders are taught to them and emphasized constantly in direct and indirect ways is unlikely at adolescence to question their parents' authority, regardless of their new biological and cognitive maturity. Such questioning is simply not part of their cultural beliefs about the way the world is and the way it should be. Even when they disagree with their parents, they are unlikely to mention it because of their feelings of duty and respect (Phinney and Ong, 2002).

A key point in understanding parent–adolescent relationships in traditional cultures is that the independence that is so important to Western adolescents is not nearly as much of an issue in non-Western cultures. In the West, as we have seen, regulating the pace of adolescents' autonomy is often a source of parent–adolescent conflict. However, parents and adolescents in the West agree that independence is the ultimate goal for adolescents as they move into adulthood (Alwin, 1988). Individuals in the West are supposed to reach the point, during emerging adulthood, where they no longer live in their parents' household, no longer rely on their parents financially, and have learned to stand alone as self-sufficient individuals (Arnett, 1998a). The pace of the adolescent's growing autonomy is a source of contention between parents and adolescents not because parents do not want their adolescents eventually to become independent of them, but because the ultimate goal of self-sufficiency that both of them value requires continual adaptations and adjustments in their relationship as they move toward that goal (Steinberg, 1990). Increasing autonomy prepares adolescents for life in a culture where they will be expected to be capable of independence and self-sufficiency. The discussion, negotiation, and argument typical of parent–adolescent relationships in the West may also help prepare adolescents for participation in a politically diverse, democratic society.

Outside of the West, independence is not highly valued as an outcome of adolescent development (Schlegel & Barry, 1991). Financially, socially, even psychologically, interdependence is a higher value than independence, not only during adolescence but throughout adulthood (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Phinney, Kim-Jo, Osorio, & Vilhalmsdottir, 2003). According to Schlegel and Barry (1991), in traditional cultures "independence as we know it would be regarded as not only egocentric but also foolhardy beyond reason" (p. 45), because of the ways that family members rely on each other economically. Just as a dramatic increase in autonomy during adolescence prepares Western adolescents for adult life in an individualistic culture, learning to suppress disagreements and submit to the authority of one's parents prepares adolescents in traditional cultures for adult life in cultures where interdependence is among the highest values and throughout life each person has a clearly designated role and position in a family hierarchy.

Relationships with parents tend to improve when emerging adults leave home.

Emerging Adults' Relationships With Parents

"In high school, I went out of my way to avoid conversations with my parents because I felt that a lot of things they wanted to know about didn't concern them. I find now that my parents know less about my life because I'm not at home. They don't ask me as many questions, so I enjoy having conversations with them."

—TARA, AGE 23 (ARNETT, 2003A)

"In high school I was rude, inconsiderate, and got into many fights with my mom. Since coming to college I realize how much she means to me and how much she goes out of her way for me. I've grown to have a true appreciation for her."

—JAMES, AGE 21 (ARNETT, 2003A)

"They're still my parents, but there's more—I don't know if friendship is the right word, but like I go out with them and just really enjoy spending time with them, and they're not in a parental role as much. It's not a disciplining role, it's just more of a real comfortable friendship thing."

—JOANNA, AGE 28 (ARNETT, 2003A)

"Over the past year I have become very close with my dad. Before college there was a definite parent–child relationship with my father. Now he is more like a mentor or friend. Overall, the relationship between my parents and I has been a growing mutual respect."

—MARK, AGE 20 (ARNETT, 2003A)

In Western majority cultures, most young people move out of their parents' home sometime during emerging adulthood. In the United States, leaving

home typically takes place around ages 18 to 19 (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999). This is earlier than in most other Western countries. For example, in Germany the median age of leaving home is about 23 for males and 21 for females (Juang, Silbereisen, & Wiesner, 1999; Silbereisen, Meschke, & Schwarz, 1996), and median ages in other Western countries are similar. In the United States as well as in many other Western countries, few emerging adults remain in their parents' home until marriage. The most common reasons for leaving home stated by emerging adults are going to college, cohabiting with a partner, or simply the desire for independence (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999; Juang et al., 1999; Silbereisen et al., 1996).

When a young person leaves home, a disruption in the family system takes place that requires family members to adjust. As we have seen, parents generally adjust very well, and in fact report improved marital satisfaction and life satisfaction once their children leave (White & Edwards, 1990). What about the relationship between parents and emerging adults? How is it influenced by the young person's departure?

Typically, relationships between parents and emerging adults *improve* once the young person leaves home. In this case, at least, absence makes the heart grow fonder. Numerous studies have confirmed that emerging adults report greater closeness and fewer negative feelings toward their parents after moving out (e.g., Arnett, 2003a; O'Connor et al., 1996; Shaver, Furman, & Buhrmester, 1985). Furthermore, among emerging adults of the same age, those who have moved out tend to get along better with their parents than those who remain at home. For example, Dubas and Petersen (1996) followed a sample of 246 young people from age 13 through age 21. At age 21, the emerging adults who had moved at least an hour away (by car) from their parents reported the highest levels of closeness to their parents and valued their parents' opinions most highly. Emerging adults who remained home had the poorest relations with their parents in these respects, and those who had moved out but remained within an hour's drive were in between the other two groups.

What explains these patterns? Some scholars have suggested that leaving home leads young people to appreciate their parents more (Arnett, 2003a; Katchadourian & Boli, 1985). Another factor may be that it may be easier to be fond of someone you no longer live with (Arnett, 2003a). Once emerging adults move out, they no longer experience the day-to-day friction with their parents that inevitably results from living with others. They can now control the frequency and timing of their interactions with their parents in a way they could not when they were living with them. They can visit their parents for the weekend, for a holiday, or for dinner, enjoy the time together, and still maintain full control over their daily lives. As a 24-year-old woman in my research put it, "I don't have to talk to them when I don't want to, and when I want to, I can" (Arnett, 2003a).

In the United States, although most emerging adults move out of their parents' home in their late teens, a substantial proportion (about 30%) stay home through their early twenties (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999). Staying at home is more common among Latinos, Blacks, and Asian Americans than among White Americans. The reason for this appears to be their greater emphasis on family closeness and interdependence, and less emphasis on being independent as a value in itself. For example, one emerging adult in my research (Arnett, 2003a) lived with her Chinese American mother and Mexican American father throughout her college years at the University of California–Berkeley. She enjoyed the way staying home allowed her to remain in close contact with them. "I loved living at home. I respect my parents a lot, so being home with one of them was actually one of the things I liked to do most," she said. "Plus, it was free!" For Latinos and Asian Americans, an additional reason for staying home is specific to young women, and concerns the high value placed on virginity before marriage (Arnett, 2003a).

About 40% of American emerging adults "return to the nest" to live at least once after they leave (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999). There are many reasons why emerging adults sometimes move home again (Arnett, 2003a; Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999). For those who left home for college, moving back home may be a way of bridging their transition to postcollege life after they graduate or drop out. It gives them a chance to decide what to do next, be it graduate school, a job near home, or a job in another state. For those who left home for independence, some may feel that the glow of independence dims after a while as the freedom of doing what they want when they want becomes outweighed by the burden of taking care of a household and paying all their own bills. An early divorce or a period of military service are other reasons emerging adults give for returning home (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999). Under these circumstances, too, coming home may be attractive to young people as a transition period, a chance to get back on their feet before they venture again into the world.

Emerging adults and their parents react in a range of ways when emerging adults "return to the nest" (Arnett, 2003a). For some, the return home is welcome and the transition is managed easily. A successful transition home is more likely if parents recognize the change in their children's maturity and treat them as adults rather than adolescents. For others, however, the return home is a bumpy transition. Parents may have come to enjoy having the nest all to themselves, without children to provide for and feel responsible for. Emerging adults may find it difficult to have parents monitoring them daily again, after a period when they had grown used to managing their own lives. In my research (Arnett, 2003a), after Amy moved home she was dismayed to find that her mother would wait up for her when she went out with her boyfriend, just like it was high school all over again. They did not argue openly about it, but it made Amy feel "like she was sort of 'in my territory' or something." For many emerging adults, moving back home results in ambivalence. They are grateful for the support their parents provide, even as they resent returning to the subordinate role of a dependent child.

In European countries, emerging adults tend to live with their parents longer than in the United States, especially in southern and eastern Europe (Chisholm & Hurrelmann, 1995). There are a number of practical reasons for this. European university students are more likely than American students to continue to live at home while they attend university. European emerging adults who do not attend university may have difficulty finding or affording an apartment of their own. However, also important are European cultural values that emphasize mutual support within the family while also allowing young people substantial autonomy. Young Europeans find that they can enjoy a higher standard of living by staying at home rather than living independently, and at the same time enjoy substantial autonomy. Italy provides a good case in point (Chisholm & Hurrelman, 1995). Ninety-four percent of Italians aged 15 to 24 live with their parents, the highest percentage in the European Union (EU). However, only 8% of them view their living arrangements as a problem—the lowest percentage among EU countries. Many European emerging adults remain at home contentedly through their early twenties, by choice rather than necessity.

There is more to the changes in relationships with parents from adolescence to emerging adulthood than simply the effects of moving out, staying home, or moving back in. Emerging adults also grow in their ability to understand their parents (Arnett, 2003a). Adolescence is in some ways an egocentric period, as we have seen, and adolescents often have difficulty taking their parents' perspectives. They sometimes cast a pitiless gaze on their parents, magnifying their deficiencies and becoming easily irritated by their imperfections. As emerging adults mature and begin to feel more adult themselves, they become more capable of understanding how their parents look at things. They come to see their parents as persons and begin to realize that their parents, like themselves, have a mix of qualities, merits as well as faults.

Parents change, too, in how they view their children and how they relate to them. Their role as monitor of their children's behavior and enforcer of household rules diminishes, and this results in a more relaxed and amiable relationship with their children. The changes in parents and their emerging adult children allow them to establish a new intimacy, more open than before, with a new sense of mutual respect. They begin to relate to each other as adults, as friends, as equals, or at least as near-equals. There are exceptions, of course, in parents who find it difficult to let their "baby" grow up or emerging adults who are reluctant to accept the responsibilities of becoming self-sufficient adults. However, for the most part both parents and emerging adults are able and willing to adjust to a new relationship as near-equals (Arnett, 2003a).

In summary, studies in both the United States and Europe show that emerging adults can maintain or enhance the closeness they feel to their parents even as they become more autonomous. This is similar to the pattern we have already seen for adolescents. For both adolescents and emerging adults, autonomy and relatedness are complementary rather than opposing dimensions of their relationships with their parents (O'Connor et al., 1996).

Historical Change and the Family

To gain a complete understanding of adolescents' and emerging adults' family relationships today, it is necessary to understand the historical changes that are the basis for current patterns of family life. Many of

the changes that have taken place in Western societies over the past two centuries have had important effects on families. Let's take a look briefly at these changes, considering how each has affected adolescents' and emerging adults' family lives. We will focus on the American example, but similar changes have taken place in other industrialized countries in the past two centuries and are taking place today in economically developing countries. First we will examine changes over the past two centuries, then focus on changes during the past 50 years.

Patterns Over Two Centuries

Three of the changes that have influenced family life over the past two centuries are a lower birth rate, longer life expectancy, and a movement from predominantly rural residence to predominantly urban residence. In contrast to young people today, young people of 200 years ago tended to grow up in large families; in 1800, women in the United States gave birth to an average of *eight* children (Harevan, 1984)! It was much more common then for children to die in infancy or early childhood, but nevertheless, adolescents who were among the eldest children were much more likely to have responsibility for younger children than they are today, when the average number of births per mother is just two (Noble et al., 1996). In this respect, adolescents' family lives 200 years ago in the West were like the lives of adolescents in many traditional cultures today (Schlegel & Barry, 1991).

Longer life expectancy is another change that has affected the way young people experience family life. Up until about 1900, the average human life expectancy was about 45 (Kett, 1977); now it is over 70 and still rising (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1999). As a consequence of the lower life expectancy in earlier times, marriages frequently ended in the death of a spouse in young or middle adulthood (Hetherington, Arnett, & Hollier, 1986). Thus, adolescents frequently experienced the death of a parent and the remarriage of their widowed parent.

Increased urbanization has also resulted in changes in family life. Up until about 200 years ago, most people lived and worked on a family farm. As recently as 1830, nearly 70% of children lived in farm families (Hernandez, 1997). By 1930, this figure had dropped to 30%, and today it is less than 2%. This means that the majority of adolescents growing up 200 years ago would have grown up in a rural area in a farm family, with their daily lives structured around farmwork and spent almost entirely with their families. As people moved off the farms, they moved increasingly to the cities. Emerging adults often led the way, leaving their farm families to head for the bright lights of the big city (Kett, 1977). This meant new opportunities for education and employment, as well as greater exposure to opportunities for premarital sex, alcohol use, and other temptations of urban life (Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985).

Between 1830 and the present, the proportion of farm families fell from about 70% to less than 2%.

Each of these changes has had effects on young people's family lives. Overall, we can say that the range of functions the family serves has been greatly reduced, many of them taken over by other social institutions (Coleman, 1961). The family in our time has mainly emotional or **affective functions**—the family is supposed to provide its members with love, nurturance, and affection above all else.

Table 7.3 The Changing Functions of the Family

Function	Performing Institution, 1800	Performing Institution, 2000
Educational	Family	School
Religious	Family	Church/Synagogue
Medical	Family	Medical profession
Economic Support	Family	Employer
Recreational	Family	Entertainment industry
Affective	Family	Family

Table 7.3 shows some of the functions the family once served and the institutions that now serve those functions. As you can see, the only one of those functions that still remains within the family is the affective function. Although the family also contributes in the other areas, the main context of those functions has moved out of the family. Most young people living in industrialized countries do not rely on their parents to educate them, treat their medical problems, make a place for them in the family business, or provide recreation. Rather, young people look to their parents mainly for love, emotional support, and some degree of moral guidance (Allen & Land, 1999; Hoffman, 1988; Offer & Schonert-Reichl, 1992).

The Past 50 Years

Family life today not only is much different than it was 200 years ago, but also has changed dramatically in the past 50 years. During this time the most dramatic changes have been the rise in the divorce rate, the rise in the proportion of children in single-parent households, and the rise in the prevalence of dual-earner families. Once again, let's look at each of these changes with an eye to their implications for development in adolescence and emerging adulthood.

Rise in the Divorce Rate Fifty years ago divorce was relatively rare in American society, compared with the present, and the rate of divorce actually declined between 1950 and 1960 (Figure 7.3). However, between 1960 and 1975 the divorce rate more than doubled, before leveling out and remaining about the same between 1975 and the present. Americans have one of the highest divorce rates in the world (McKenry & Price, 1995). The current rate is so high that nearly half of the current generation of young people are projected to experience their parents' divorce by the time they reach their late teens (Hernandez, 1997). Furthermore, over three-fourths of those who divorce eventually remarry, with the result that over one-fourth of young people spend some time in a stepfamily by the time they reach age 18 (Hernandez, 1997). Within American society, the divorce rate is especially high among African Americans.

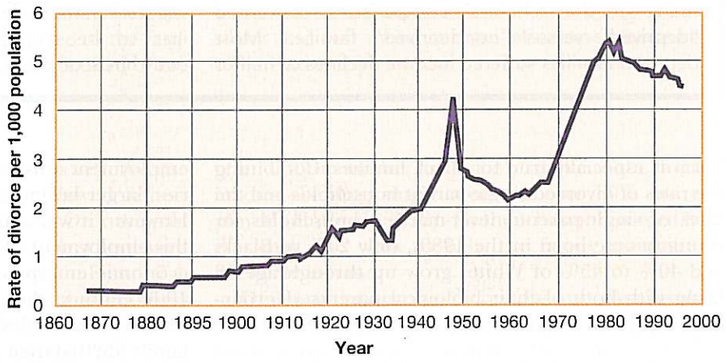


FIGURE 7.3 Changes in divorce rate, United States.

Rise in the Rate of Single-Parent Households The rise in the divorce rate has contributed to a simultaneous rise in the rate of single-parent households. Although most divorced parents remarry, they have a period between marriages as single parents. Usually, it is the mother who is the **custodial parent**, that is, the parent who lives in the same household as the children following the divorce; this is true in about 90% of divorces (Emery, 1999).

In addition to the rise in single-parent households through divorce, there has been a rise in the proportion of children born outside of marriage. This is true for both White and Black families in American society,

HISTORICAL FOCUS

Adolescents' Family Lives in the Great Depression

The Great Depression was the most severe economic cataclysm of the 20th century. It began with a plunge in the American stock market in 1929 and soon spread around the world. In the United States by 1932, at the depth of the Depression, stocks had dropped to just 11% of their 1929 value, thousands of companies had collapsed, thousands of banks had failed, and hundreds of thousands of families had been evicted from their homes (Manchester, 1973). One-third of adult men were unemployed, and homelessness and malnutrition were rampant. The average family suffered a decline in family income of 40% (Elder, 1974/1999).

What sort of effects did these historical events have on adolescents' development? Sociologist Glen Elder and his colleagues have analyzed longitudinal data from a study that followed families beginning in the early 1930s (Elder, 1974/1999; Elder, Caspi, & Van Nguyen, 1986; Elder, Van Nguyen, & Caspi, 1985). Known as the Oakland Growth Study, the project followed the families of 167 adolescents born in 1920–1921, from 1932 when the adolescents were 11 to 12 years old until 1939 when they were 18 to 19 years old. Later follow-ups took place in the 1950s and again in the 1960s. All the families were White, and slightly more than half were middle-class prior to the Depression.

The families varied greatly in how much they suffered economically during the Depression, and many of the scholars' comparisons concerned "deprived" versus "nondeprived" families. Most deprived families suffered income declines of half or more of their 1929 income. The nondeprived families suffered a loss averaging about 20% of their 1929 income—certainly substantial, but not as devastating as in the deprived families.

Economic difficulties affected adolescents' family lives in a variety of ways. The economic upheaval of the Depression put a considerable strain on family relationships, especially in deprived families. Many of the fathers in the deprived families were frustrated and ashamed because of their inability to find work and support their families, and their relationships with their wives and children often deteriorated as a result. Fathers often became more punitive toward their children and more prone to anger and irritability toward their wives as well as their children. The more angry and punitive the fathers became, the more their children were likely to suffer declines in social and psychological well-being.

For other family members, the effects of economic deprivation were more complex and varied and were surprisingly positive in many ways. As the father's status in deprived families declined, the mother's often rose. On average the mother in deprived families was viewed by her adolescent children as more powerful, supportive, and attractive than the father.

Economic deprivation tended to bring adult responsibilities into the lives of adolescents at an early age. By age 14 or 15, adolescents in deprived families were more likely than those in nondeprived families to be employed in part-time jobs—about two-thirds of boys in deprived families and nearly

During the Great Depression, many adolescents took on adult responsibilities within their families.

half of girls were employed by that age. For example, one boy in Elder's study washed dishes in the school cafeteria after school, then supervised the work of six newspaper delivery boys. Adolescent girls often worked as baby-sitters or in local stores. Adolescents' earnings were usually contributed to the family's needs. Deprived families also required more household work from adolescents, especially girls, in part because mothers in these families were more likely to be employed. Adolescents from deprived families tended to marry earlier than adolescents from nondeprived families.

The effects of early family responsibilities were generally positive. Adolescents who were employed displayed more responsible use of money and more energetic and industrious behavior compared with those who were not. In general, adolescents in deprived families felt that they played an important role in the lives of their families. Although they were required to take on responsibilities at an early age, those responsibilities were clearly important and meaningful to their families.

However, some negative effects were seen as well, especially for adolescent girls in deprived families. Girls in deprived families showed greater moodiness, lower social competence, and greater feelings of inadequacy compared with girls in nondeprived families. These effects were especially strong for girls who felt rejected by their fathers. Girls in deprived families were also less likely than other girls to take part in social activities such as dating, in part because of their greater household responsibilities.

Taken together, the results of Elder's study show the complex interactions that take place between historical events and adolescents' family lives. The study also shows that even under conditions of extreme adversity, many adolescents are highly resilient and will thrive in spite of—or even because of—the adversity.

but it is especially true for Black families. Combining the rates of divorced single-parent households and the rates of single-parent, never-married households for young people born in the 1980s, only 20% of Blacks and 40% to 45% of Whites grow up through age 18 living with both of their biological parents (Hernandez, 1997).

Rise in the Rate of Dual-Earner Families In the 19th and 20th centuries, the rise of industrialization took most employment outside of the home and farm into fac ries, larger businesses, and government organizatio However, it was almost exclusively men who obtain this employment. Women were rarely employed in economic enterprises of industrialization. During 19th century their designated sphere became home, and their designated role was the cultivation o family life that their husband and children would ex rience as a refuge from the complex and sometin bruising world of industrialized societies (Lasch, 197

This trend changed about 50 years ago with the rise of **dual-earner families**, as mothers followed fathers out of the home and into the workplace. Over the past 0 years, employment among women with school-aged hildren has increased steadily, as shown in Figure 7.4. Mothers of adolescents are more likely than mothers of younger children to be employed outside of the ome (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2002). Part of the crease is related to the increase in rates of divorce nd single parenthood discussed above, which have often left the mother as the only source of the family's income—among single mothers, over 80% are employed (Hofferth, 1992). Mothers in nondivorced families may also work to help the family maintain an adequate income.

Of course, noneconomic reasons are often involved as well. Many educational and occupational opportunities have opened up to women in the past 50 years that had been denied to them before. Research indicates that most employed mothers would continue to work

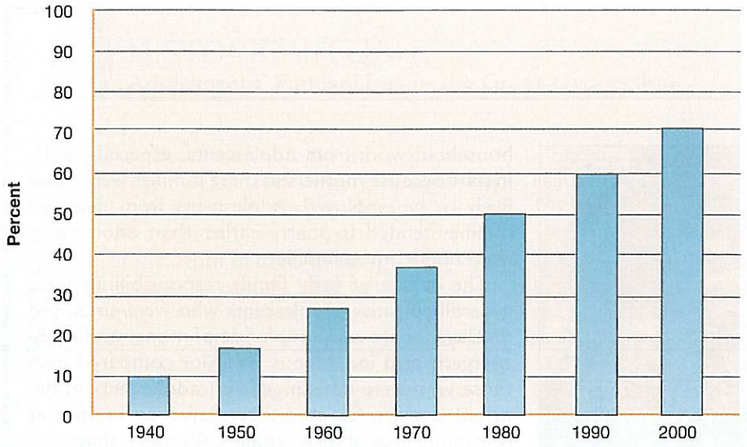


FIGURE 7.4 Proportion of children with mothers in the labor force, 1940–2000.
Source: Hernandez, 1997; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2002.

even if they had enough money (Hochschild, 2001). Women in professional careers as well as restaurant servers and factory workers generally report that they are committed to their jobs, enjoy having a work role as well as family roles, and desire to continue to work.

Effects of Divorce, Remarriage, Single Parenthood, and Dual-Earner Families

Now that we have reviewed the historical background of the current American family, let's take a look at how divorce, remarriage, single parenthood, and dual-earner families are related to young people's behavior and to their perceptions of their family lives.

Divorce

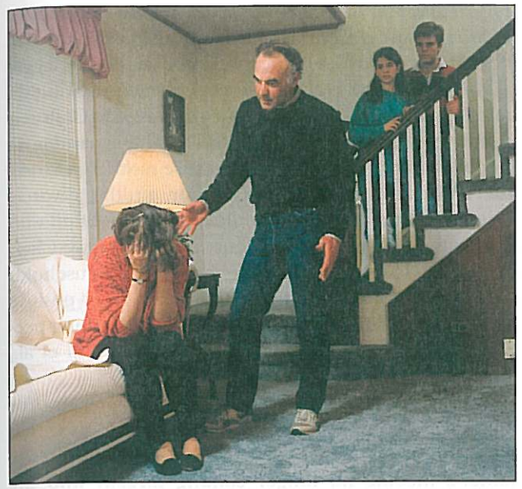
"When I was 15 my parents separated. I continued to live with my mother but would visit my father on Sunday. During that time we would do something 'entertaining,' like go to a movie, which relieved the pressure from us to actually interact.... My parents are now divorced and my father calls me every Sunday night. We talk about school, my job, and things in the news. But when I need advice or just want to talk, I always call my mother. She is more aware of my everyday life and I feel very comfortable with her. With my father, on the other hand, our relationship is more forced because he is not up-to-date on my life and hasn't been for some time."

—MARILYN, AGE 21
(ARNETT, UNPUBLISHED DATA)

"My parents were divorced, so the money was pretty thin. My father was a psycho and didn't pay child support. When I was in junior high I wanted everything that the other kids had—Liz Claiborne purses, designer clothes, etc. I would pester my mother for money constantly, sometimes to the point where she would be in tears because she wanted to give me things but couldn't afford to do so."

—DAWN, AGE 20 (ARNETT, UNPUBLISHED DATA)

Because the rate of divorce is so high in American society and has risen so dramatically in recent decades, scholars have devoted a great deal of attention to investigating the effects of divorce. These studies consistently find that young people whose parents have divorced are at higher risk for a wide variety of negative outcomes compared with young people in nondivorced families, in areas including behavior problems, psychological distress, and academic achievement (Amato & Keith, 1991; Buchanan, 2000). With regard to behavior problems, adolescents whose parents have divorced have higher rates of using drugs and alcohol (Needle, Su, & Doherty, 1990) and tend to initiate sexual intercourse at an earlier age, compared with adolescents in nondivorced families (Dornbusch et al., 1985). With regard to psychological distress, adolescents with divorced parents are more likely to be depressed and withdrawn. Those who feel caught in a loyalty conflict between their parents are especially likely to be anxious and depressed following the divorce (Buchanan et al., 1991; Buchanan, Maccoby, & Dornbusch, 1996). Adolescents in divorced families also are more likely to report having psychological problems, and more likely to receive mental health treatment (Buchanan, 2000; Chase-Lansdale, Cherlin,



Exposure to conflict between parents leads to a variety of problems in children and adolescents.

& Kiernan, 1995; Cherlin, 1999). With regard to academic achievement, young people from divorced families tend not to do as well in school as their peers (Amato, 1993; Jeynes, 2002), and they are less likely to attend college than young people from nondivorced families (Furstenberg, 1990; Astone & McLanahan, 1995).

Even many years after the divorce, the painful memories and feelings linger for many adolescents and emerging adults (Laumann-Billings & Emery, 2000). In emerging adulthood, the effects of parental divorce are evident in greater problems in forming close romantic relationships (Herzog & Cooney, 2002; Wallerstein, Lewis, & Blakeslee, 2000). As they anticipate a possible marriage of their own, emerging adults from divorced families tend to be somewhat wary of entering marriage, but especially determined to avoid having a divorce of their own (Arnett, 2003a; Darlington, 2001). Nevertheless, the risk of divorce is higher for young people from divorced families (Amato, 2001).

Although the findings on the effects of divorce are consistent, a great deal of variability exists in how adolescents and emerging adults respond to and recover from their parents' divorce (Cherlin, 1999). As one prominent research team observed, "the fact that a young person comes from a divorced family does not, in itself, tell us a great deal about how he or she is faring on embarking into adulthood" (Zill, Morrison, & Coiro, 1993, p. 100). To say that a young person's parents are divorced tells us only about **family structure**. *Family structure* is the term scholars use to refer to the outward characteristics of the family—whether or not the parents are married, how many adults and children live in the household, whether or not there is a biological relationship between the family members (e.g., in stepfamilies), and so on. However, in recent years most of the attention of scholars studying divorce has been focused on **family process** (Emery, 1999)—that is, the quality of family members' relationships, how much warmth or hostility there is between them, and so on. So instead of asking the simple question, why does divorce have negative effects on children and adolescents, let's ask the more complex and more enlightening question: How does divorce influence family process in ways that, in turn, influence child and adolescent development?

Perhaps the most important aspect of family process with regard to the effects of divorce on children and adolescents is *exposure to conflict between parents* (Emery, 1999). Divorce involves the dissolution of a relationship that is, for most adults, at the heart of their emotional lives and their personal identities (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989). Because the marriage relationship carries such a large freight of hopes and desires, it rarely sinks without numerous explosions occurring along the way. Living in the household where the divorce is taking place, children and adolescents will likely be exposed to their parents' hostility and recriminations before and during the divorce, and this exposure is often painful, stressful, and damaging to them (Amato & Keith, 1991; Kelly, 2000).

In nondivorced families, too, parents' conflict has damaging effects on children's development (Emery, 1999; Kelly, 2000). In fact, numerous studies have found that adolescents and emerging adults in high-conflict nondivorced households have poorer adjustment than adolescents and adults in low-conflict divorced households (Amato, 2000; Emery, 1999). Longitudinal studies that include data before and after divorce indicate that adolescents' problems after divorce often began long before the divorce, as a consequence of high conflict between their parents (Buchanan, 2000; Cherlin, Chase-Lansdale, & McCrae, 1998; Kelly, 2000). Thus, it is exposure to parents' conflicts, more than the specific event of divorce, that is especially damaging to children and adolescents (Amato, 1993).

A second important aspect of family process to consider with regard to the effects of divorce is that divorce *affects parenting practices*. Divorce is highly

stressful and painful to most of the adults who experience it (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1996), and not surprisingly it affects many aspects of their lives, including how they carry out their role as parents. The burdens fall especially on mothers. As the sole parent in the household, the mother has to take on all the parenting that was previously shared with the father, and often has increased employment responsibilities now that the father's income no longer comes directly into the family—not to mention handling by themselves the leaky roof, the sick pet, the disabled car, and all the other typical stresses of daily life.

So it is understandable that mothers' parenting tends to change following divorce, usually for the worse. Especially in the first year following divorce, mothers tend to be less affectionate, more permissive, and less consistent in their parenting than they were before the divorce took place or than they will be after a few years have passed (Buchanan, 2000; Hetherington & Kelly, 2002). Mothers may have difficulty being authoritative parents following divorce, with all of the stresses piling up on them, and as a result they may become indulgent or indifferent. Adolescents in divorced families consequently have greater freedom than adolescents in nondivorced families, in matters such as how to spend their money and how late to stay out, but younger adolescents especially may find it to be more freedom than they can handle wisely (Turner, Irwin, & Millstein, 1991).

Another way parenting may change after divorce is that the mother may rely on the adolescent as a confidant. This is a mixed blessing for adolescents—they may enjoy becoming closer to their mothers while at the same time finding it difficult to hear about their parents' marital troubles and their mothers' difficulties in the aftermath of the divorce (Buchanan, Eccles, & Becker, 1992). Emerging adults may be able to handle this role better; some studies find that emerging adults who experience their parents' divorce become closer to their mothers after the divorce (White, Brinkerhoff, & Booth, 1985) and are closer to their mothers than young people in nondivorced families (Cooney, 1994).

As for young people's relations with their fathers after divorce, in most families children's contact with their father declines steadily in the years following the divorce (Hetherington & Kelly, 2002). Consequently, adolescents and emerging adults whose parents divorced years earlier often see their fathers only rarely. Divorced fathers complain that it often becomes difficult to arrange meetings as young people become increasingly involved in activities of their own (Dudley, 1991). Also, divorced fathers are frequently the target of young people's resentment and blame following divorce (Cooney, 1994; Cooney et al., 1986). Children often feel pressured to take sides when their parents divorce (Bonkowski, 1989), and because mothers are usually closer to their children prior to the divorce, children's sympathies and loyalties are more often with the mother than with the father (Furstenberg & Cherlin, 1991). Thus, young people in divorced households tend to have more negative feelings and fewer positive feelings toward their fathers compared with young people in nondivorced families (Cooney, 1994; Zill et al., 1993; Wells & Johnson, 2001).

A third factor in considering the effects of divorce on young people is the *increase in economic stress* that typically results from divorce (Jeynes, 2002). With the father's income no longer coming directly into the household, money is often tight in mother-headed households following divorce. In the aftermath of divorce, the income in mother-headed families decreases by an average of 40% to 50% (Smock, 1993). The economic strains in divorced families may have negative effects on parent–child relationships. Some studies claim that the problems children and adolescents exhibit following divorce are due largely to these economic problems (Blum, Boyle, & Offord, 1988).

THINKING CRITICALLY

In addition to the factors mentioned here, can you think of other things that might influence adolescents' responses to divorce for better or worse?

Several factors help to ameliorate the negative effects of divorce on adolescents (Buchanan et al., 1992, 1996; Donnelly & Finkelhor, 1992). Adolescents who maintain a good relationship with their mothers tend to function well in the aftermath of divorce (Buchanan, 2000; Tschann et al., 1990). Also, when divorced parents are able to maintain a civil relationship and communicate without hostility about issues involving their children, their children and adolescents are less likely to exhibit the negative effects of divorce (Buchanan et al., 1996; Maccoby, Depner, & Mnookin, 1988). A related factor of importance is the degree of consistency of parenting between the separate households of the mother and the father. If parents maintain consistency with each other in parenting—which they are more likely to do if they are communicating well—their adolescents benefit (Buchanan et al., 1992, 1996). In general, adolescents show fewer negative effects of parental divorce than younger children do (Buchanan, 2000; Hetherington, 1991, 1993), perhaps because adolescents are less dependent on their parents, spend more time with their peers outside of the family household, and have greater cognitive capacities to understand and adapt to what is happening.

Remarriage

"For a while [my stepfather] tried, I always call it 'tried to be my dad,' you know, but it wasn't in a good way, it was in a bad way. I felt like he was trying to boss me around or something, and I didn't feel he had any right to. It had just been me and mom all that time and I didn't like somebody else coming in. So I guess right from the beginning we just never really got along. We kind of avoided each other as much as possible."

—CHRISTINE, AGE 23 (ARNETT, 2003A)

"[My stepfather] is a very wonderful man. He always has been, but we just didn't appreciate him. But I think that would be the same for any kid. Really, I don't know that you appreciate your parents until you're older and can look back and think 'Wow. They were pretty incredible.'"

—MICHELE, AGE 24 (ARNETT, 2003A)

In the light of the factors that seem to be most strongly related to adolescents' problems following divorce—parental conflict, disruptions in parenting, and economic stress—you might think that the mother's remarriage would greatly improve the well-being of adolescents in divorced families. (I focus here on mothers' remarriage because it is usually the mother who has custody of the children.) The mother and her new husband have just chosen to get married, so presumably they are getting along well. The mother's parenting could be expected to become more consistent, now that she is happier in her personal life (Ganong & Coleman, 1999). And she is not on her own as a parent anymore, now that she has her new husband to help her with parenting and daily household tasks. As for economic stress, presumably it eases now that the stepfather's income comes into the family.

Despite these favorable prospects, studies find that adolescents typically take a turn for the worse when their mothers remarry. In general, adolescents in stepfamilies have a greater likelihood of a variety of problems compared with their peers in nondivorced families, including depression, anxiety, and conduct disorders (Freeman, 1993; Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 2002; Kasen et al., 1996; Lee et al., 1994). The academic achievement of adolescents in stepfamilies tends to be lower than in nondivorced families, and in some studies lower than in divorced families (Jeynes, 1999). Adolescents in stepfamilies are also more likely to be involved in delinquent activities, not only compared with adolescents in nondivorced families but also compared with adolescents in divorced families (Dornbusch et al., 1985).

Furthermore, although following divorce adolescents tend to have fewer problems than younger children, following remarriage the reverse is true—adolescents have more problems adjusting to remarriage compared with younger children (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 2000, 2002; Zill & Nord, 1994). Adolescent girls tend to have an especially negative reaction to their mothers' remarriage (Hetherington, 1993). The reasons for this are not clear, but one possibility is that the girls develop a closer relationship with their mothers following divorce, and this closeness is disrupted by the mother's remarriage (Hetherington & Kelly, 2002).

Why do adolescents often respond unfavorably to their mother's remarriage? Scholars who have studied remarriage emphasize that, although remarriage may seem as though it should be positive for children and adolescents in some of the ways discussed above, it also represents another disruption of the family system, another stressful change that requires adjustment (Capaldi & Patterson, 1991; Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 2002). The toughest time for families after divorce tends to be 1 year following the divorce (Hetherington & Kelly, 2002). After that, family members usually begin to adjust, and their functioning typically improves substantially after 2 years have passed. Remarriage disrupts this new equilibrium. With remarriage, family members have to adapt to a new family structure and integrate a new person into a family system that has already been stressed and strained by divorce. The precarious quality of this integration is illustrated by the fact that many stepfathers and adolescents do not mention each other when describing their family members, even 2 years following the remarriage (Ganong & Coleman, 1999; Hetherington, 1991)!

With remarriage as with divorce, adolescents' responses are diverse, and the influence of family process as well as family structure must be recognized. A key issue is the extent to which the stepfather attempts to exercise authority over the adolescent (Hetherington, 1993; Bray & Kelly, 1998). A stepfather who attempts to remind an adolescent that the curfew hour is 11:00 P.M. or that it is the adolescent's turn to do the laundry may well receive the withering retort, "You're *not* my father!" Younger children are more likely to accept a stepfather's authority, but adolescents tend to resist or reject it (Hetherington, 1991; Vuchinich et al., 1991; Zill et al., 1993).

Relationships between stepparents and adolescents have a number of other hazards to overcome in addition to the issue of the stepfather's authority (Ganong & Coleman, 1999; Visher & Visher, 1988). Establishing an attachment to a stepparent can be difficult at an age when adolescents are spending less time at home and becoming more peer oriented. Adolescents (and younger children as well) may also have divided loyalties and may fear that establishing an attachment to the stepfather amounts to a betrayal of their father. Also, because adolescents are reaching sexual maturity, they may find it difficult to welcome their mother's new marriage partner into the household. They are more likely than younger children to be aware of the sexual relationship between mother and stepfather and may be uncomfortable with this awareness.

All of these considerations mean that it is a formidable challenge for stepfathers and adolescents to establish a good relationship. However, many stepfathers and adolescents do meet these challenges successfully and establish a relationship of warmth and mutual respect (Ganong & Coleman, 1999; Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 2000). Also, in emerging adulthood relationships with stepparents often improve substantially (Arnett, 2003a). Just as with parents, emerging adults come to see their stepparents more as persons rather than simply as stepparents. Emerging adults and stepparents get along much better once they do not live in the same household and can control (and limit) the amount of contact they have.

Single Parenthood

Just as in divorced families, adolescents in never-married, single-parent households are at greater risk for a variety of problems, including low school achievement, psychological problems such as depression and anxiety, and behavioral problems such as substance use and early initiation of sexual activity (McLanahan & Sar fur, 1994). However, just as in divorced families, fa process is at least as important as family struct Many never-married single parents have relations with their adolescent children that are characteri by love, mutual respect, and mutual support, and lescents in these families tend to be doing as well a better than adolescents in two-parent families.

Also, looking at family structure only in term the parents can be misleading. As noted earlier in chapter, African American families have a long t tion of extended family households, in which on more grandparents, uncles, aunts, or cousins also in the household (McAdoo, 1998). An extended fa structure has been found to provide important a tance to single-parent African American fami through the sharing of emotional support, econo responsibilities, and parenting responsibilities (St barin & Soler, 1993; McAdoo, 1993). Extended fa members not only provide direct support to ad cents, but also help adolescents indirectly by supp ing the single parent, which enhances her paren effectiveness (Taylor, Casten, & Flickinger, 1993).

Dual-Earner Families

With both parents gone from the household fo least part of a typical day in most Western families, with parents so important in the socialization of t children and adolescents, scholars have turned t attention to the question: What happens when parents are employed? What are the consequences adolescents' development?

For the most part, few substantial effects have b found on adolescents from living in a dual-earner fa ily as compared with a family where only one pare employed (Galambos & Ehrenberg, 1997). The studies indicate that no differences exist between d earner families and families in which the mother is employed, in terms of both the quantity and the qu ty of time that mothers spend with their adolesc (Richards & Duckett, 1994). Other studies have also ported few differences in the functioning of ado cents based on whether or not both parents employed (Galambos & Maggs, 1991).

However, studies have found that the effects dual-earner families depend on the gender of the lescent and on whether both parents are working time. The effects of being in a dual-earner family often quite positive for adolescent girls. These tend to be more confident and have higher career

st American adolescents today live in a dual-earner family.

ations than girls whose mothers are not employed offman, 1984), perhaps because of the model mother provides through her participation in the rkplace.

In contrast, several studies have found that adoles- t boys in dual-earner families do not function as as boys in families with only one employed parent. olescent boys (but not girls) in dual-earner families e more arguments with their mothers and siblings pared with boys whose mothers are not employed ontemayor, 1984). Apparently, these conflicts result m the greater household responsibilities required m adolescents when the mother is employed, and fact that boys resist these responsibilities more than s do. Having two full-time working parents is also as- iated with poorer school performance for boys in ddle-class and upper-middle-class families (although for boys in lower social classes; Bogenschneider & inberg, 1994). However, boys' school performance not affected if one parent works part-time.

The number of hours worked by the parents is an portant variable in other studies as well. Adoles- nts, both boys and girls, are at higher risk for various oblems if both parents work full-time than if one par- t works just part-time. The risks are especially high adolescents who are unsupervised by parents or er adults on a daily basis for several hours between e time school ends and the time a parent arrives me from work. These adolescents tend to have high- rates of social isolation, depression, and use of drugs d alcohol (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992; Galambos & Maggs, 1991; Jacobson & Crockett, 2000; Richardson et al., 1993). In one study of nearly 5,000 eighth graders, the ones who were on their own for at least 11 hours a week were twice as likely to be using alcohol and other drugs (Richardson et al., 1989).

Another key variable in considering the effects of dual-earner families is the quality of the relationships between the parents and the adolescent (Galambos & Ehrenberg, 1997). Adolescents in dual-earner families are more likely to function well if parents maintain monitoring from a distance, for example by having their children check in with them by phone (Galambos & Maggs, 1991; Pettit et al., 1999). If parents can manage to maintain adequate levels of demandingness and responsiveness even when both of them are working, their adolescents generally function well (Galambos & Maggs, 1991; Jacobson & Crockett, 2000).

Physical and Sexual Abuse in the Family

Although most adolescents and emerging adults generally have good relationships with their parents, some young people suffer physical or sexual abuse from their parents. Rates of abuse in American society are difficult to establish, because this is an area for which social desirability is especially strong—physical and sexual abuse involve behaviors that most families would not readily disclose to others. However, numerous studies indicate that physical abuse is more likely to be inflicted on adolescents than on younger children (Kaplan, 1991; Kilpatrick et al., 2000; Williamson, Borduin, & Howe, 1991). Sexual abuse typically begins just prior to adolescence, and then continues into adolescence. About ten percent of American college students state that they have been sexually abused by a family member (Haugaard, 1992; Nevid, Rathus, & Greene, 2003). Similar figures were reported in a national survey of Canadian adolescents aged 13 to 16 (Holmes & Silverman, 1992). In the following sections we look first at physical abuse, then at sexual abuse.

Physical Abuse

What leads parents to inflict physical abuse on their adolescent children? One well-established finding is that abusive parents are more likely than other parents to have been abused themselves as children (Kashani et al., 1992; Nevid et al., 2003; Simons, Whitback, et al.,

1991). They are also more likely to have experienced parental conflict, harsh discipline, or the loss of a parent as they were growing up (Nevid et al., 2003).

This does not mean that children who are abused are destined to grow up to abuse their own children—in fact, the majority of them will not (Zigler & Hall, 1989). It does mean that being abused is a strong risk factor for becoming an abusive parent, perhaps because some children who are abused learn the wrong lessons about how to parent their own children (Cappell & Heiner, 1990; Kashani et al., 1992; Nevid et al., 2003). However, children who are physically abused only in adolescence are less likely than those who are abused throughout childhood to grow up to abuse their own children (Garbarino, 1989).

Other factors that are related to parents' physical abuse of their children and adolescents tend to involve family stresses or problems in the parents' lives. Abuse is more likely to occur in poor than in middle-class families, in large than in small families, and in families where parents have problems such as depression, poor health, or alcohol abuse (Hansen, Conaway, & Christopher, 1990; Nevid et al., 2003; Whipple & Webster-Stratton, 1991). Abusive parents also tend to be poorly skilled at parenting and at coping with life stresses (Hansen & Warner, 1992).

Physical abuse is related to a variety of difficulties in the lives of adolescents. Abused adolescents tend to be more aggressive in their interactions with peers and with adults (Wolfe et al., 2001). This may occur as a result of modeling the aggressive behavior displayed by their parents, although it is also possible that passive genotype–environment interactions are involved (i.e., that abusing parents may pass down genes to their children that contribute to aggressiveness). Abused adolescents are more likely than other adolescents to engage in antisocial behavior and substance use (Bensley, Van Eeenwyk, Spieker, & Schoder, 1999; Kilpatrick et al., 2000). They are also more likely than other adolescents to be depressed and anxious, to perform poorly in school, and to have difficulty in their peer relationships (Naar-King, Silvern, Ryan, & Sebring, 2002; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001; Weiss et al., 1992). However, these consequences are not inevitable; many abused adolescents are surprisingly resilient and grow up to be normal adults and nonabusive parents (Corby, 1993).

Sexual Abuse

The causes of sexual abuse by parents are quite different from the causes of physical abuse. Physical abuse is more commonly inflicted on boys than on girls, whereas sexual abuse takes place mainly between girls and their brothers, fathers, or stepfathers (Cyr, Wright, McDuff, & Perron, 2002; Haugaard, 1992; Holmes & Silverman, 1992; Watkins & Bentovim, 1992). Unlike physically abusive parents, sexually abusive fathers are usually not aggressive, but rather tend to be insecure and socially awkward around adults (Briere, 1992; Finkelhor, 1990; Nevid et al., 2003). Because they feel inadequate in their relationships with adults—including, usually, their wives—they prefer to seek sexual satisfaction from children, who are easier for them to control (Haugaard, 1992). Sexual abuse usually results from motives such as these, rather than being an expression of affection that got out of control. On the contrary, fathers who abuse their adolescent daughters tend to have been detached and distant from them when they were younger (Parker & Parker, 1986). Sexual abuse is more likely to be committed by stepfathers than by fathers, perhaps because there is no biological incest taboo between stepfathers and their stepdaughters (Briere, 1992; Cyr et al., 2002; Watkins & Bentovim, 1992).

The effects of sexual abuse tend to be even more profound and pervasive than the effects of physical abuse. Parental sexual abuse constitutes an ultimate breach of trust—rather than providing care and protection, the parent has exploited the child's need for nurturance and protection for the sake of his own needs. Consequently, many of the effects of parental sexual abuse are evident in the victim's social relationships. Adolescents who have been sexually abused tend to have difficulty trusting others and forming intimate relationships (Lundberg-Love, 1990). During the period of sexual abuse and for many years afterward, many victims of sexual abuse experience depression, high anxiety, and social withdrawal (Graystone, de Luca, & Boyes, 1992; Kendall-Tackett, Williams, & Finkelhor, 2001). Adolescent victims may react with one extreme or the other in their sexual behavior, becoming either highly avoidant of sexual contacts or highly promiscuous (Kendall-Tackett et al., 2001). Other consequences of sexual abuse include substance abuse, higher risk for a variety of psychological disorders, and suicidal thoughts and behavior (Bensley et al., 1999; Yoder, Hoyt, & Whitbeck, 1998).

THINKING CRITICALLY

Explain the effects of sexual abuse in terms of attachment theory.

Although sexual abuse is among the most harmful things a parent can do to a child, one-third of sexually abused children demonstrate few or no symptoms as a result (Kendall-Tackett et al., 2001). Support from the mother after a father's or stepfather's sexual abuse has been disclosed is especially important to girls' recovery from sexual abuse; daughters cope far better if their mothers believe their account of the abuse and comfort and reassure them, rather than rejecting or blaming them (Briere, 1992; Haugaard & Reppucci, 1988). Psychotherapy can also contribute to the girl's recovery (Rust & Troupe, 1991).

Leaving Early: Runaways and "Street Children"

Running Away From Home

"I skipped out of school two days and my dad found out and he just gave it to me with his belt. I had bruises all over my hands and all over my legs. And my mother couldn't do anything about it and she was upset with me at the time, so that Friday I ran away."

—15-YEAR-OLD GIRL (KONOPKA, 1985, P. 78)

For some adolescents, family life becomes unbearable to them for one reason or another, and they run away from home. It is estimated that about 1 million adolescents run away from home each year in the United States (Whitbeck & Hoyt, 1999). About one-fourth of these adolescents are not so much runaways as "throwaways"—their parents have forced them to leave home (Kufeldt & Nimmo, 1987; Tomb, 1991). In any case, about 80% to 90% of adolescents who leave home remain within 50 miles of home, often staying with a friend or relative, and return within a week (Tomb, 1991). Adolescents who stay away from home for weeks or months, or who never return at all, are at high risk for a wide variety of problems (Rotheram-Borus, Koopman, & Ehrhardt, 1991; Whitbeck & Hoyt, 1999).

Not surprisingly, adolescents who run away from home have often experienced high conflict with their parents, and many have experienced physical or sexual abuse from their parents (Rotheram-Borus et al., 1991). For example, in one study of runaway adolescents in Toronto, 73% had experienced physical abuse and 51% had experienced sexual abuse (McCarthy, 1994). Boys are more likely to have experienced physical abuse, and girls are more likely to have experienced sexual abuse (Cauce et al., 2000). Other family factors related to running away from home include low family income, parental alcoholism, high conflict between parents, and parental neglect of the adolescent (Rotheram-Borus et al., 1991; McCarthy, 1994; Whitbeck & Hoyt, 1999). Characteristics of the adolescent also matter. Adolescents who run away are more likely than other adolescents to have been involved in criminal activity, to use illegal drugs, and to have had problems at school (Fors & Rojek, 1991). They are also more likely to have had psychological difficulties such as depression and emotional isfation (Rohde, Noell, Ochs, & Seeley, 2001; Whitbeck & Hoyt, 1999), and they are more likely to be gay or lesbian (Noell & Ochs, 2001).

Although leaving home often represents an escape from a difficult family life, running away is likely to lead to other problems. Adolescents who run away from home tend be highly vulnerable to exploitation. Many of them report being robbed, physically assaulted, sexually assaulted, and malnourished (Whitbeck & Hoyt, 1999; Tyler, Hoyt, & Whitbeck, 2000). In their desperation they may seek money through prostitution and pornography (Rotheram-Borus et al., 1991). A study of 390 runaway adolescent boys and girls demonstrated the many problems they may have (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992). Nearly half had stolen food and over 40% had stolen items worth over $50. Forty-six percent had been jailed at least once, and 30% had provided sex in exchange for money. Fifty-five percent had used hallucinogenic drugs, and 43% had used cocaine or crack.

Other studies have found that depression and suicidal behavior are common among runaway adolescents (Rotheram-Borus, 1993; Yoder et al., 1998). In one study that compared homeless adolescents to other adolescents, the homeless adolescents were 13 times as likely to report feeling depressed, and 38% of them had attempted suicide at least once (Rohde et al., 2001).

Many urban areas have shelters for adolescent runaways. Typically, these shelters provide adolescents with food, protection, and counseling (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992). They may also assist adolescents in contacting their families, if the adolescents wish to do so and if it would be possible and safe for them to go home. However, many of these shelters lack adequate funding and have difficulty providing services for all the runaway adolescents who come to them.

"Street Children" Around the World

The United States is far from being the only country where adolescents can be found living on the streets of urban areas. In fact, "street children," many of them

adolescents, can be found in virtually every country in the world (Raffaelli & Larson, 1999). It is estimated that the total number of street children worldwide may be as high as 100 million (UNICEF, 2003). Many street children are homeless, but others roam the streets during the day and return to their families to sleep most or all nights. The main forces leading adolescents to the street vary in world regions, from family dysfunction in the West, to poverty in Asia and Latin America, to poverty, war and family breakdown due to AIDS in Africa. In this section we examine the lives of street children in three countries: India, Brazil, and Kenya.

In India (Verma, 1999), it is estimated that there are 11 million street children. In addition to poverty, reasons for living on the street include overcrowded homes, physical abuse, and parental substance abuse. About half of Indian street children are homeless; of those who are homeless, 4 out of 5 have families who are homeless as well. Most street children work, as beggars, vendors, shoe shiners, or car cleaners. Street children have high rates of a variety of diseases such as cholera and typhoid, and they are vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse. They are sought as prostitutes by men who believe they are less likely than older prostitutes to have AIDS. They report frequent conflicts with their parents over low earnings, disobedience, and watching movies (a very popular form of recreation in India). However, the majority of Indian street children also report feeling loved and supported by their families. Furthermore, they typically form gangs with other street children, and gang affiliation provides a sense of identity, belonging, and mutual support. Far from being discouraged and despondent, most street children in India show remarkable resilience and report enjoying "the thrill of street life and freedom of action and movement" (Verma, 1999, p. 11).

In Brazil (Diversi, Moraes filho, & Morelli, 1999), estimates of the number of street children range from 7 to 30 million. Many are driven to the streets by poverty, and they go there seeking food, money, or clothes. Some return home in the evening, bringing to their families what they have collected on the streets. Others return home rarely, if at all. Many experience a gradual transition from home to street, going to the streets for a few hours at a time at first, then for longer periods as they make friends with other street children, returning home for shorter and shorter periods. Their daily lives are a struggle for survival, as they are constantly trying to find food, a place to bathe, and a place to sleep, while being harassed by drug dealers and police. They are viewed by their society as "little criminals" and "future thieves," and many of them do engage in crime, drug use, and prostitution in response to their desperate condition. As Diversi et al. (1999) observe, "the need for money or clothes may seem more real in the decision to have sex with strangers than the hypothetical possibility that they might get pregnant or contract a venereal disease; stealing a watch that will give them $5 in exchange, especially when their stomachs are growling or they are craving a drug that will temporarily free them from the depressive consciousness of their condition, will likely outweigh the hypothetical notion of a cold cell in the event that they get caught" (p. 31).

In their study of street children in Kenya, Aptekar and Ciano-Federoff (1999) draw a distinction between street boys and street girls. In Kenya as in most non-Western countries, street boys far outnumber street girls. Aptekar and Ciano-Federoff (1999) found that street boys typically maintain contact with their families, often continuing to live with them and bringing most of their money home, especially in single-mother families. The boys demonstrate impressive resourcefulness, forming friendships, taking advantage of aid programs, and developing cognitive skills (for example, buying cheap items in one place and selling them in another for a slight profit). In contrast, street girls have often left home to avoid sexual abuse, and once on the street they typically have no contact with their families, nor do they form friendships with other girls. On the street, they are evaluated mainly in sexual terms: If they are considered unattractive they are shunned, and if they are viewed as attractive they are forced into prostitution. Often, the leaders of street boy gangs take several street girls as "wives," providing them with food and protection from other boys in return for sex.

Overall, street children across the world often exhibit remarkable resilience and manage to develop cognitive skills, make friends, and maintain supportive family relationships in the face of extremely difficult conditions. However, they are at high risk for serious problems from diseases to substance abuse to prostitution, especially girls, and their prospects for adult life are grim indeed.

Summing Up

In this chapter we have explored a wide range of topics related to the family lives of adolescents and emerging adults. Following are the main points of the chapter:

- The family systems approach is based on two key principles: that each subsystem influences the other subsystems in the family and that a change in any family member or subsystem—such as when parents reach midlife, adolescents reach puberty, or emerging adults leave home—results in a period of disequilibrium that requires adjustments.
- Adolescents in industrialized countries generally have higher conflict with siblings than in their other relationships, but most adolescents have a casual relationship with siblings in which their contact is limited. In traditional cultures, a caregiver relationship between siblings is the most common form. Because grandparents in traditional cultures often live in the same household as their children and grandchildren, adolescents tend to be as close to their grandparents as to their parents.
- The two key dimensions of parenting styles focused on by scholars are demandingness and responsiveness. Authoritative parenting, which combines high demandingness with high responsiveness, has generally been found to be related to positive outcomes for adolescents in the American majority culture. Studies of non-Western cultures indicate that the "traditional" parenting style is most common in those cultures.
- According to attachment theory, attachments formed in infancy are the basis for relationships throughout life. Although sufficient evidence is not yet available to test this claim, studies of attachment involving adolescents and emerging adults indicate that attachments to parents are related to young people's functioning in numerous ways and that autonomy and relatedness in relationships with parents are compatible rather than competing qualities.
- Research shows that conflict between parents and children tends to be highest during early adolescence, and many American parents experience their children's adolescence as a difficult time. Parent–adolescent conflict tends to be lower in traditional cultures because of greater economic interdependence of family members and because the role of parent holds greater authority.
- Emerging adults who move away from home tend to be closer emotionally to their parents and experience less conflict with them than those who remain at home. Most emerging adults get along better with their parents than they did as adolescents.
- Profound social changes in the past two centuries have influenced the nature of adolescents' family lives, including decreasing family size, lengthening life expectancy, and increasing urbanization. Changes over the past 50 years include increases in the prevalence of divorce, single-parent households, and dual-earner families.
- Parents' divorce tends to be related to negative outcomes for adolescents, including behavioral problems, psychological distress, problems in intimate relationships, and lower academic performance. However, there is considerable variation in the effects of divorce, and the outcomes for adolescents depend not just on family structure but on family process.
- Adolescents tend to respond negatively to their parents' remarriage, but again a great deal depends on family process, not just family structure.
- Dual-earner families have become much more common since World War II. For today's adolescents, having two parents who work tends to be unrelated to most aspects of their functioning. However, some studies have found some negative effects for boys and for adolescents in families where both parents work full-time.
- Adolescents who are physically abused tend to be more aggressive than other adolescents, more likely to engage in criminal behavior, and more likely to do poorly in school, among other problems.
- Sexual abuse in families takes place most commonly between daughters and their fathers or stepfathers, who are often incompetent in their relationships with adults. Sexual abuse has a variety of negative consequences, especially in girls' abilities for forming intimate emotional and sexual relationships.
- Running away from home is most common among adolescents who have experienced family problems such as physical or sexual abuse, high conflict, or parents' alcoholism. Adolescents who stay away from home for more than a week or two are at high risk for problems such as physical assault, substance use, and suicide attempts. Street children around the world exhibit high rates of these and other problems, but many of them are strikingly resilient.

Even though adolescents spend considerably less time with their families than they did when younger and even though emerging adults typically move out of the family household, family relationships play a key role in development during adolescence and emerging adulthood, both for better and for worse. Home is where the heart is, and where a part of it remains; adolescents and emerging adults continue to be attached to their parents and to rely on them for emotional support, even as they gain more autonomy and move away from their families literally and figuratively.

The power of the family on development is considerable, but family life is not always a source of happiness. Conflict with parents is higher in adolescence than at other ages. Adolescents and emerging adults often experience pain and difficulties when their parents divorce or remarry, although most young people adjust to these family transitions after a few years. The family is sometimes the setting for physical or sexual abuse, and some adolescents find their family lives so unbearable that they run away from home.

The many cultural changes of the past two centuries have resulted in profound changes in the kinds of family lives young people experience. Rates of divorce, single-parent households, and dual-earner families all rose dramatically in the second half of the 20th century. In many ways, the family's functions in the lives of adolescents and emerging adults have been reduced in the past century, as new institutions have taken over functions that used to be part of family life. Still, the family endures as the emotional touchstone of young people's lives, not only in American society but all over the world.

Key Terms

family systems approach
dyadic relationship
disequilibrium
midlife crisis
caregiver relationship
buddy relationship
critical relationship
rival relationship
casual relationship
parenting styles
demandingness
responsiveness
authoritative parents
authoritarian parents
indulgent parents
indifferent parents
autonomy
reciprocal or bidirectional effects
differential parenting
nonshared environmental influences
filial piety
traditional parenting style
familismo
attachment theory
secure attachment
insecure attachment
primary caregiver
internal working model
relatedness
affective functions
custodial parent
dual-earner families
family structure
family process

For Further Reading

Allen, J., & Land, P. (1999). Attachment in adolescence. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment.* New York: Guilford. A good summary of research on adolescent attachments.

Hetherington, E. M. (2001). *Divorce matters: Reconsidering the effects of divorce.* New York: Norton. A recent book by the preeminent scholar on divorce, summarizing the research on this topic.

Larson, R., & Richards, M. H. (1994). *Divergent realities: The emotional lives of mothers, fathers, and adolescents.* New York: Basic Books. This book describes the results of Larson and Richards's research using the ESM. It provides an excellent, insightful, and vivid portrayal of adolescents' family lives in the American majority culture. It is also very well written—a pleasure to read.

Applying Research

Calhoun, F. (2000). *No easy answers: A teen guide to why divorce happens.* New York: Rosen Publishing Group. For adolescents who have experienced their parent's divorce, this book by Florence Calhoun is a good guide to understanding why divorce occurs. Sections include topics such as "the conflicting feelings of divorce" and "taking sides and moving on." Each section begins with a personal account that adolescents will be able to identity with. Calhoun's clear and concise explanations should help adolescents to ease the pain and confusion of divorce. The book includes information on where to go for further information and help.

Comer, J. P., & Poussaint, A. E. (1992). *Raising black children.* New York: Plume. Two prominent professors of psychiatry provide advice to parents of Black children on how to help their children confront racism, handle anger and conflict, and maintain an African American identity in American society.

Steinberg, L., & Levine, A. (1997). *You and your adolescent: A parent's guide for ages 10 to 20.* New York: Harper Perennial. Advice for parents of adolescents from Laurence Steinberg, one of the most eminent scholars on adolescence. Chapters include "Family Communication and Problem-Solving," "Sexual Awakening," "How Young Adolescents Think," and "Your Role in Your Adolescent's Education."

Kelly, J. (2002). *Dads and daughters: How to inspire, understand, and support your daughter when she's growing up so fast.* New York: Broadway. Joe Kelly is the founder of a national group called Dads and Daughters, and he has written this book to help fathers develop a healthy relationship with their daughters and prevent the estrangement that often occurs at adolescence. Although he is a journalist, Kelly relies on research in addition to tapping his own experience and the stories of other dads, as he addresses topics such as body image, sexuality, substance use, affection, and conflict.