**Psychological Development of Adolescents**

Personal identities crystallize during adolescence. Through experimentation and evaluation of experience and ideas, the adolescent should establish some sense of who he or she really is. In other words, people get to know themselves during adolescence.

—Zaslow, Kirst-Ashman and Hessenauer (2019, p. 321)

At the same time that adolescents are undergoing dramatic physiological changes associated with puberty, they are also trying to negotiate psychological developments and milestones. Identity formation, the continued development of a moral code, and trying to understand issues involving gender and sexual identity are only a part of the rugged terrain through which adolescents must maneuver. For some populations with whom social workers engage, the psychological development of adolescents can sometimes take a turn into exploring boundaries of pain and self-harm. This week you will explore the indicators, symptoms, and interventions of, and for those, who self-harm.

**References**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hessenauer, S. L.  (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

**Learning Objectives**

**Students will:**

* Identify indicators of self-harm
* Analyze responses to self-harm indicators
* Select indicators and interventions of self-harm

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hessenauer, S. L.  (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

* Chapter 7, “Psychological Development in Adolescence” (pp. 320-360)

[Moorey, S. (2010). Managing the unmanageable: Cognitive behavior therapy for deliberate self-harm.](https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1080/02668731003708061" \o "Managing the unmanageable: Cognitive behaviour therapy for deliberate self-harm" \t "_blank)*[Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, 24](https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1080/02668731003708061" \o "Managing the unmanageable: Cognitive behaviour therapy for deliberate self-harm" \t "_blank)*[(2), 135–149](https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1080/02668731003708061" \o "Managing the unmanageable: Cognitive behaviour therapy for deliberate self-harm" \t "_blank)

Plummer, S.-B., Makris, S., & Brocksen S. M. (Eds.). (2014). *Social work case studies: Foundation year*. Baltimore, MD: Laureate International Universities Publishing. [Vital Source e-reader].

* Working With Children and Adolescents: The Case of Dalia

**Discussion: Dalia’s Behavior**

Argumentative behavior, engagement in physical altercations, and evidence of mood swings can all indicate that an adolescent is experiencing anger and depression. Self-harming can surface in adolescents, too, as they experience difficult emotions.

For this Discussion, read the case study of Dalia and consider what you, as her social worker, would do if you observed self-harm indicators.

**By Day 3**

**Post** a brief explanation of self-harming behaviors that Dalia is exhibiting. Describe theoretical approaches and practical skills you would employ in working with Dalia. How might familial relationships result in Dalia’s self-harming behavior? Please use the Learning Resources to support your answer.

**By Day 5**

**Respond** to a colleague’s post by explaining why you agree or disagree with your colleague’s use of a particular theoretical approach and/or practical skill in working with Dalia.