

TEEN TOPICS

What Experts Say You Can Expect From A Teen

(NAPSA)—What's normal and what's not? That's a question many parents of teens and professionals who work with teens may occasionally wonder.

To provide basic information about healthy adolescent development, the American Psychological Association has created *Developing Adolescents: A Reference for Professionals*.

The booklet presents research-based information about the physical, cognitive, social, emotional and behavioral development of teens and offers tips on how to relate to them more effectively.

Although much has been written about adolescent development, much of the information is published in specialized journals not easily accessible to professionals in other fields.

Some of the changes in how adolescents think, reason and understand can be even more dramatic than their obvious physical changes.

For example, it's normal for adolescents to argue for the sake of arguing because this is a way for them to exercise their new reasoning skills. Adolescents can also be self-centered; it takes time to learn to take others' perspectives into account.

It's also normal for teens to constantly find fault in an adult's position. Their newfound ability to think critically encourages them to look for discrepancies, contra-



Some teenage behavior goes with the territory. Knowing what's normal can make it easier to communicate with a teen.

dictions or exceptions in what adults say.

Despite their rapidly developing capacity for higher-level thinking, most adolescents still need guidance from adults to develop their potential for effective decision making. And in fact, most teens prefer to talk with their parents or other trusted adults when making important decisions. Adults can help teens by taking the time to listen about what is important to them.

Knowing more about what happens during adolescent development can make it easier for parents and professionals to put what teens say and do in perspective.

Developing Adolescents is available online at www.apa.org/pi/pii/develop.pdf.