Research summary: Young adolescents' developmental characteristics.

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Abstract
Early adolescence is a distinct period of human growth and development situated between childhood and adolescence. During this remarkable stage of the life cycle, young adolescents (10- to 15-year-olds) experience rapid and significant developmental change. Recognizing and understanding the unique developmental characteristics (traits associated with human growth) of early adolescence and their relationship to the educational program (i.e., curriculum, instruction, and assessment) and to the structure of the middle school (e.g., flexible block scheduling, advisory programs, and team teaching) are central tenets of middle grades education.

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