



Editorial

Tossed coin in the air, sexual health, and adolescents: Role of adults

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Sexuality during adolescence is as rightly described as “A bumpy ride”(Kar et al., 2015). It is a period of rapid development with lots of turmoil, a period of exploration and confusion. The current adolescent generation ‘alpha’ (2010- current) are not only part of the traditional struggles of adolescence but also face the challenges of the rapidly changing world and ever-expanding dimension of the virtual world, making them vulnerable in novel ways. Therefore, this issue was brought out to discuss relevant topics on adolescent sexuality.

The first feelings of desire and companionship start during this stage, retrospectively reported as “this was the time I first had a crush” (Fortenberry, 2013). The adolescents go through physical changes and start attaining adult-like stature. They also go through changes at cognitive, psychosexual, and psychosocial levels. The expectations from self, society, and the environment, the life

events at this time, and the choices or the lack thereof have tremendous impacts on life (Friedman, 1992). The introduction to social media and the internet as independent users also start. Sexual experimentation and the desire for it (Deng et al., 2007), and the availability of erotic stimulations, mostly in the form of non-partnered sexual activities, are initiated during this time (Román García et al., 2021). Sexual exploration and its effects leading to the growing number of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections are few among the major challenges in this age group. The impressionable mind of the adolescent is vulnerable to misinformation, societal biases, and peer pressure. The expression of an individual as a sexual being begins mostly during this period. Identification of self as sexual minority (LGBTQ+) and acceptance of the fact brings about many challenges. Pop culture and media bring more stimulation to adolescents of native culture. The growing mind is affected by the nuances of hormones and the environment. Gender identity issues, peer rejection, body image, and perceived desirability (sexy) not only affect the domain of sexual health but also self-esteem and perception.

The age predisposes them to vulnerabilities and negative life experiences during this period, especially related to sexual activities.

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This can impact self-esteem, carrier, and over all health across the life span. Hence, educating adolescents on sexual health and related aspects of life and its life-changing capacity is not just the responsibility of the health care professionals but actually should be a combined effort of all the adult members of society. It is a dire need for inclusive development and progress to a better-adapted society.

The dialogue of sexual health, however, does not end at the healthcare provider level but moves across the domains of school, extracurriculars, and religion, stigma-free communication at all levels is necessary for the overall well-being of adolescents. Putting the key topics under modest coverings and omitting the important message complicates the conversation about sexual health. One can find themselves drowning in the ocean of information while searching for a pearl of truth, furthering the tangle of scientifically accurate facts. Additionally, I want to underline how challenging it is to reach the ocean floor with a good outlook, even when people successfully decode the oyster of truth. Therefore, it is advised that the key players in society, religion, science, and health care

carefully work together and validate the pearls of wisdom to pass down knowledge to the next generation so that they can grow up to be at ease with and accepting of themselves.

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