

***PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
A TEXTBOOK***

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TEXTBOOK

UNIT 5

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UNIT 5

PREADOLESCENCE: (10 TO 13 YEARS)

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A TEXTBOOK***

UNIT 5

PRE-ADOLESCENCE: FROM 10 TO 13 YEARS OF AGE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 5.1 PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT THAT DETERMINES WHAT THE CHILD CAN DO
 - 5.111 Human Development: Degree of Adaptive Capability/
Degree of Helplessness
 - 5.112 Child Rearing: Degree of Adaptive Capability/
Degree of Helplessness
 - 5.121 Human Development: Physical-Sexual Maturation
 - 5.122 Child Rearing: Physical-Sexual Maturation
 - 5.131 Human Development: Central Nervous System Maturation
 - 5.132 Child Rearing: Central Nervous System Maturation

- 5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT
 - 5.21 The Child's Abilities to Adapt -- Part I
 - 5.2111 Human Development: The Child's Abilities to Adapt
-- Overview
 - 5.2112 Child Rearing: The Child's Abilities to Adapt -- Overview

- 5.212 The Child's Abilities to Adapt -- Affects
 - 5.2121 Human Development: Affects
 - 5.2122 Child Rearing: Affects
 - 5.2131 Human Development: Cognitive, Play and Fantasy Activity
 - 5.2132 Child Rearing: Cognitive, Play and Fantasy Activity

- 5.22 The Development of Self and Relationships
 - 5.2211 Human Development: The Development of Self and Relationships
 - 5.2212 Child Rearing: Self and Relationships

- 5.222 Social-Play Interactive Activities
 - 5.2221 Human Development: Social-Play Interactive Activities
 - 5.2222 Child Rearing: Social-Play Interactive Activities

- 5.23 Sexual-Reproductive Life
 - 5.2311 Human Development: Sexual-Reproductive Life
 - 5.2312 Child Rearing: Sexual-Reproductive Life

- 5.24 Aggressive Behavior
 - 5.2411 Human Development: Aggressive Behavior
 - 5.2412 Child Rearing: Aggressive Behavior

- 5.25 The Child's Abilities to Adapt -- Part II
 - 5.2511 Human Development: Dependence and Self Reliance

5.2512 Child Rearing: Dependence and Self Reliance

5.2521 Human Development: Psychic Defense Mechanisms

5.2522 Child Rearing: Psychic Defense Mechanisms

5.2531 Human Development: Other Adaptive Capabilities

5.2532 Child Rearing: Other Adaptive Capabilities

5.26 Conscience Formation

5.2611 Human Development: Conscience Formation

5.2612 Child Rearing: Conscience Formation

UNIT 5: PRE-ADOLESCENCE (10 to 13 YEARS)

5.1 PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: WHAT THE CHILD CAN DO

As in prior units, we address only those physical developments on which emotional (psychological) development directly depends. Of course, emotional well-being and optimal development depend on physical good health and well-being. But specific physical maturations and developments make possible, trigger, and direct emotional (psychological) maturations characteristic for sequential stages of development.

As with prior stages of development, pre-adolescence is introduced by a new maturation of biological processes which undergo change to a new level of functional organization. This more mature functional organization leads to the physical, behavioral, and emotional phenomena which we recognize as typical for pre-adolescent girls and boys. Some theorists, clinicians and educators, believe that on the average girls tend to undergo pre-pubertal and pubertal maturations one to two years earlier than boys. But the same general maturational principles apply and except where critical differences occur, we will speak of pre-adolescent development as it applies to both. Three major lines of physical maturations stand out: the degree of adaptive capability, physical-sexual maturation, and central nervous system maturation.

We emphasize again that physical development is optimized when children feel valued, loved and respected, that emotional stress burdens physical maturation as well as the function of bodily systems, as, for instance, it can affect adversely the functioning of the immune system of the child, and can cause stress disorders like headaches, gastrointestinal symptoms, heightened allergic responsivity, and more easily subject the child to infectious diseases.

5.111 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Degree of Adaptive Capability/ Degree of Helplessness

The ten to twelve or so year old has by now stabilized remarkable capacities that serve adaptation, from well developed motoric functioning (locomotion, manual skills [writing, hammering a nail, sewing], specialized skills as used in sports [e.g., swinging a bat or a racket], in playing a musical instrument, dance, etc.). Interestingly, while these are stabilizing at an early developmental level (especially when it comes to the specialized skills of sports, playing a musical instrument, dance, etc.), the rapid physical growth we see in most ten to thirteen year olds seems to also make many a child go through a period of awkwardness, even clumsiness. Just what causes this is not clear, whether it is the need to gain control over longer legs and arms, or due to anxiety over, or biological factors associated with emerging secondary sex characteristics (see 5.12).

The ten to thirteen year old has become fully self-reliant in all functions that serve self care including bathing, toileting, feeding and even doing work. Similarly physical functions that serve socialization like speech and emotional communication are developed to the degree that the child needs no one to speak or communicate for him/her.

5.112 CHILD REARING: Degree of Adaptive Capability/ Degree of Helplessness

Good nutrition, a good balance of rest and activity, comfortable enough surroundings, good enough relationships, a modest amount of unavoidable, frustration and disappointment, each contributes its share to good physical development. Where these are not attainable, facing deficits honestly, acknowledging their effects on the child, and dealing with them with considerateness for child and parents themselves, will help both child and parents better tolerate these deficits.

Parents should expect the ten to twelve year old to be capable of handling school, homework, preparation for tests, practicing specialized skills -- though help from parents at this stage is commonly still needed --, being home alone, taking care of feeding oneself snacks, toileting, and helping with chores in the apartment/house.

The parent can expect swings in feelings of capability which may not be signs of inadequate underlying physical development but may, rather, be due to feelings of competence over early elementary school year experiences and functioning which yields to feelings of incompetence and anxiety about the tasks of adolescence visible on the horizon. It is likely that the genetic and hormonal stirrings which make this developmental period unique contribute to the swings in feelings of competence and capability (see 5.121).

5.121 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Physical-Sexual Maturation

Among the most dramatic changes resulting from maturations during the 10 to 13 years, are those which begin the process of transforming the child into the adult. This transformation occurs over the decade that is adolescence. We now know that the 10 to 13 or so years is that period during which the maturation from the child's body to its adult form is set in motion. The physical body, in its size and mass and its gender-sexual specific characteristics, now begins the process of change that by the beginning of adolescence will visibly reveal the 13 to 14 year old's sexual identity. During the 10 to 13 year old period, we assume that genetic and hormonal factors act on the body (anatomically and physiologically) to bring about this remarkable metamorphosis. Although the changes are slow to reveal themselves, the inner stirrings which bring them about are progressively in motion. Biogenetic, hormonal, physiologic activity all contribute dramatically to inner feelings, mood states and reactions, from irritability and

sadness to excitement and joy, from feeling inadequate and bewildered to feeling strong and hopeful. The metamorphosis of pre-puberty, from being a fourth grader to being a seventh grader, is but the pre-stage to the long travel of adolescence, but it is remarkable, full of doubts, fears, even bewilderment, as well as questions, hopes and excitement.

The skeleto-muscular changes which go hand in hand with the slow emergence of sexual characteristics, bring with them periods of feeling out of control over one's body, of clumsiness, and demands a new mastery of movement as well as inner feelings. We will address these later, suffice it to say now that many a 10 to 13 year old feels awkward, embarrassed and proud by the changes in her/his body and acutely sensitive to and about them.

5.122 CHILD REARING: Physical-Sexual Maturation

We must assume that any developmental period during which such major bodily physical changes occur requires adequate nutrition, rest and activity, and parental supervision and guidance. The many emotional and psychological implications of the changes brought about at this time will be discussed later as will the child rearing concerns they bring about.

5.131 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Central Nervous System Maturation

We assume now that every developmental period is triggered by a biopsychological reorganization at a new level of functioning which is effected by our unique biogenetic program. Invariably this includes a maturation in central nervous system functioning. We find evidence for central nervous system maturation in cognitive (intellectual) functioning as well as in those central nervous system functions that operate in conjunction with the dramatic hormonal changes of this period.

From direct observation and clinical experience we learn that children now become capable of understanding reality and the complexity of life in ways they did not before. For instance, though the child has been aware by now that living things die, that from the time grandmother died she never again came to visit during the holidays, but that she is truly dead, cannot physically return to visit, is not certain in the child's mind. It is during pre-puberty that children become able to recognize and be aware of not only the finiteness of physical life of others but, even more difficult to comprehend, of oneself. Prior to age 10, awareness of the finiteness of one's own physical life is generally not known. After 13, it seems inescapable. Some brain development makes this frightening knowledge now possible.

5.132 CHILD REARING: Central Nervous System Maturation

The same requirements exist for adequate nutrition, rest and activity, a growth-promoting environment and relatedness including emotional support for those functions which arise out of central nervous system maturations as for the other physical developments addressed. For instance, parental support of a child's efforts to study, are enormously useful. Answering questions the child asks about all aspects of life except the parents own private lives, enhances learning and interest. We will address this further in Unit 5.2.

5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

5.21 THE CHILD'S ABILITIES TO ADAPT -- PART I

The 10 to 13 year old youngster enters pre-adolescence with a great deal of capacity for adaptation having achieved a relative degree of mastery of the many challenges encountered during the elementary school years both at home and in school. The 10 year old child is well known both by the family and by himself/herself for the characteristic ways in which the child deals with his/her needs, wishes, frustrations, disappointments; the family already knows how the child is going to react to the daily demands of both home and school as well as of unexpected events. We assume a consolidation of characteristic ways the child has developed of dealing with life as it is visible to the eye but also with his/her fantasies and internal conflicts. The characteristics for which the child is now known are produced by the child's dispositions, temperament, and by the psychological defenses the child typically uses to adapt to both internal feelings as well as external events which challenge and/or create difficulty for the self.

Side by side with this already well consolidated characteristic way of dealing with internal and external life, the child more and more becomes burdened by the new stirrings within him/her produced by biogenetic and hormonal activity typical for this age. The stirrings of pre-adolescence bring with them new fantasies, new wishes, new fears, doubts and bewilderment as well as excitement and hope for oncoming puberty and adolescence.

In other words then this transitional developmental period which we identify as pre-adolescence is one in which a well established and consolidated adaptive system becomes challenged not only by new challenges in the environment but especially by new inner stirrings of enormous consequence and meaning to the child, namely, the beginnings of the metamorphosis into eventual adulthood, with the enlarging body and the remarkable changes of sexuality. This unavoidably brings with it a vacillation in adaptation between stability and expectability on the one hand and uncertainty, anxiety and even bewilderment on the other hand.

5.2111 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: The Child's Abilities to Adapt -- Overview

Many a 10 year old boy and girl is quite comfortable having attained a degree of stability and self confidence which are the product of the 4 or so years (from 6 to 10) during which the child has gained a good degree of mastery over the challenges of elementary school years and the child has consolidated into a well functioning, well-enough adapted individual. The characteristic effort to organize life, organized by the use of psychological adaptive mechanisms have by now served the child well. Most 10

year olds bring some structure into their daily life both at home and in school, having developed a fairly good rhythm of getting up in the morning, preparing to go to school, going to school, functioning in school, returning home, etc. in such a way that the reliability of the routine makes for a fairly stable inner sense of adaptation. We have describe in Unit 4 (4.2521) how a major psychological defense of obsessive-compulsive operations has played a key part in stabilizing adaptation during the 6 to 10 years period.

The 10 year old has pretty well learned to deal with peers one on one and in groups now through the use of activities in school, and especially the use of games with their well defined rules of conduct. Of course many children have already learned much of group activity and socialization through years of preschool and daycare followed by elementary school years experiencing. The socialization brought about by learning how to play in accordance with rules is a major means by which adaptation to the group and socialization is brought about during those years from about 6 to 10. This preliminary socialization is essential for what will be required to adapt to adolescence.

Also, the years from 6 to 10 have brought with them a sufficient repression and suppression (see 4.2521) of the emotional activity stirred by the emergence of sexual life during the 3 to 6 years of life period which has led to a calming in this sphere of experiencing.

All in all then we find a fairly comfortable, quite effective 10 year old in terms of functioning at home and in school, as the 10 year old enters pre-adolescence. The stirrings produced by genetic and hormonal activity, the physical growth, the emergence of secondary sex characteristics, in many a 10 to 13 year old brings about a degree of disequilibrium which calls for new efforts at adaptation. The well organized 10 year old now faces changes which will each step of the way require coping, adaptation, which will challenge the existing capacity for adaptation by making new demands on it. Fears, doubts, and even bewilderment as well as the excitement and pleasures of oncoming puberty (see 5.23 and 5.2311) will again bring psychological defenses into play in order to mitigate (lessen) the intensity of these reactions. It is important to point out that the new challenges to the child come much more from the stirrings that are going on within the child's body and mind rather than from new demands made on the child from either school, home or the beginning peer group. The 10 to 13 year old is not entering a new school, is not leaving home, does not generally sustain other than average-expectable traumatizations; the principle challenge to the pre-pubertal child is that emanating from the changes within the child's body which has enormous psychological, emotional, developmental consequences.

5.2112 CHILD REARING: Adaptive Functioning -- Overview

Caregivers are of course well aware of the dramatic changes that occur in both girls and boys during the 10 to 13 year period. Again, we note that there is a tendency for girls to develop physically earlier than boys at this stage of life. Caregivers recognize that external life events do not change dramatically at this time, under usual conditions, that

external events are only moderately more taxing during this period than they were before. The exception is the child who might be in transition from elementary school to junior high school during this time period. Observant, attuned caregivers become well aware that the internal changes that are occurring at this age have a large impact on the child in a number of ways.

In terms of helping the child adapt to the events of this age period, it is well first of all to support the child in her/his continuing efforts to organize her/his life by means of supporting the child's efforts to structure some routine about doing homework, effecting good self care, carrying out chores assigned at home, by supporting efforts that are routinized, yet allowing for the development of a degree of flexibility making possible the child's continuing efforts to put more effort and energy where greater demands are made from the activities mentioned above.

It is also important for caregivers to recognize that superimposed on the 10 or so year old's already well known ways of coping and adapting, that the new internal stirrings produced by biogenetic and hormonal factors will bring some degree of instability in the child's reactivities, with fluctuations of mood and heightened emotional reactions, effective study habits becoming burdened by periods of daydreaming and preoccupations reflective of internal, private thought activity. Caregivers who are sensitive to the new experiencing which accompanies burgeoning sexual and physical developments will appreciate the interferences with the child's usual, expectable comfortable functioning.

Caregivers who understand the play of these new stirrings will make efforts to help their pre-adolescent cope with these, not only by supporting the child's efforts to function effectively but also by making themselves available to talk about whatever the pre-adolescent brings up. Being skillful as a parent in listening to one's child will at this time, like before, pay high dividends. Prepubertal children have many questions about life, about growing up, about bodily changes, about what other kids are doing in their peer group in school and elsewhere, and those caregivers who have already made a point of letting their children know that talking about what they think and experience is important to them, will here again benefit from such interactional pathways in helping their child go through this developmental period with less anxiety, fears, doubts, and indeed with more hope and the expectation of gratification. It is important for caregivers who have facilitated pathways of verbally communicating with their children to be careful not to become intrusive into, to need to know too much of, the private life of their child. Just as children must allow their parents privacy in certain areas of their life, so too parents need to allow privacy for their children in those areas of life they will not be able to share with their parents. It is important for parents to know that to talk with children about those things the child can talk about may be enormously helpful in helping the child deal also with those things the child cannot bring up with the parents. Sometimes children have ways of talking indirectly about things that really concern them and a good dialogue with the parents can help the child solve very personal problems, answer very personal questions, indirectly. Taking cues from a child who can usually talk with the parents will prevent parents becoming intrusive.

This 10 to 13 year period, being a transitional period during which a major internal development brings with it new challenges to the child is likely to cause anxieties. These

may in turn bring with them some transient symptoms like bad dreams, fear of the dark, the need to excessively organize one's pencils, papers and books, or quite the contrary make an excessive mess in one's room, in the apartment or house, or lead to periods of loss of control in anger, all due to the enormous challenge the child experiences over which she/he has not yet achieved mastery. As a result, some degree of failure in adaptation should not be overly alarming to parents, requires patience, support, tolerance, and helpful suggestions all while keeping a close eye on the degree of anxiety and distress experienced by the child. The beginnings of what will become adolescent (and adult) sexuality, the changes in the body, are experienced by many a child as a mixture of excitement and fear, hope and bewilderment. How the child deals with them will vary according to the child's inner resources as well as external supports. It is only fair to tell parents that a child's inner resources may at this time be more determining of the youngster's capacity to adapt than is the external environment in which the child lives. Obviously, the more supportive, tolerant and caring, guiding and judicious the environment, the better.

5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

5.212 THE CHILD'S ABILITIES TO ADAPT -- Affects

The emotions we experience, what we call affects, reflect what we are feeling at any time. These inform ourselves, children and parents (caregivers) of what we and the other feel. They indicate the quality of inner life we experience. A cheerful 11 year old feels pretty good; a sad 12 year old is hurting somehow; a raging 13 year old is very hurt and threatened, etc. Because affects reveal much of what is going on inside us, reading each other's affective expressions can guide both parent and child in interacting hurtfully and/or caringly and constructively.

Affects reflect not only what we are feeling but also communicate this to others, often expressing better and more truly than words what we feel, need, wish for. Humans rely on the "reading" of affects in ourselves and in others to know "where we stand", how we ourselves feel, and how the other person is reacting to us in our interactions with them. Children hope to be, although they at times dread being, understood by their parents at the level of emotional (affective) experiencing. Parents count on their children understanding what they mean by the quality of the feelings they express when responding or reacting to their children. In fact, the affective coloring of the parents communication is often more determining of the way the child hears what the parent is saying. For instance, a mother who, aggravated, tells her 10 year old for the third time to stop milling around and get to her work in a soft and guarded voice will not be convincing to the 10 year old that she means what she is saying. All in all then, affect, emotional expression, is a most reliable indicator of experiencing which serves interaction exceedingly well and can be most valuable to parents in their care-giving.

5.2121 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Affects

10 to 13 year olds are capable of experiencing the full range of affects from exhilaration, joy and happiness to humiliation, mortification and despair. They are fully capable of experiencing love and hate. Adults are wrong when they assume that children don't know what love and hate are.

The degree to which they achieved mastery over the tasks of elementary school, of being away from home 6 hours of the day, of learning, over the challenges of learning to play by rules in groups and one on one, and feel well enough accepted in both, to that degree will 10 to 13 year olds feel good about themselves, their overall affective state and mood is positive. To the degree that their mood is positive, it enhances their inner well-being, self-esteem, esteem of others, and self acceptance as well as acceptance of others. To the degree that they have failed to achieve mastery over these six to 10 years of age

tasks, their basic mood will be negative and their inner feelings poor, self-esteem and esteem of others and self-acceptance and acceptance of others low. Simply then, the more successfully the child has developed so far, the more likely will the child's inner being feel good, the better the child's basic moods, self-esteem, esteem of others, and the better the acceptance of others and themselves. The more troubled these first 10 years of life have been, the less likely the developmental mastery of these 10 years, the more likely the basic moods of hurt and hostility, the lower self-esteem and esteem of others, as well as the lower the acceptance of others and of the self.

As is the case during every developmental transitional period, superimposed on what has been achieved and developed so far, every 10 to 13 year old will be subjected to changes in mood, to swings of affective reactions created by the inner biopsychological changes that lead the child from being a typical 3rd or 4th grader to being at the doorstep of burgeoning adolescence. The awe, the fears, the doubts, the anxieties produced by bodily changes, by becoming bigger and stronger, and more dramatically, becoming bodily sexual, are all likely to upset the equilibrium and adaptation achieved up to years 9-10.

Again, where these early years have been poor, the chances are greater that the 10 to 13 year old's transitional period will create more havoc, more doubts, anxieties and fears and as a result intensify negatively colored affects and moods. In some hurt and abused children, the feeling of becoming bigger, stronger, and the flowering of sexuality will bring feelings of hope, of being able to free oneself from hurtful and abusive adults, and elevate the child's moods. We all know only too well how often these hopes become dashed by further experienced abuses at the hands of other troubled peers or adults by premature sexual activity, pregnancies, being drawn into other adolescent activities too long before the 12 year old is ready to handle these self-protectively, constructively.

In general, feelings of love again, like during the three to six years period, begin to reemerge and create some problems. Whereas feelings of affectionate love and of hurt, resentment and anger continue to stabilize in family and other close relationships, affectionate feelings become amalgamated gradually with emerging erotic love feelings stirred by the bodily processes that produce the metamorphosis of secondary sex characteristics. Such emerging erotic feelings most naturally follow the path forged by affectionate love feelings and find their way into all meaningful relationships, those with parents, siblings, peers, loved teachers, etc. Emotional reactions associated with these sexual bodily feelings and changes bring excitement, fears, anxieties, a common part of this period of transition. They bring with them instability in affects and moods.

Especially anxiety producing are the erotic feelings experienced toward the most valued persons in the child's life, the child's parents and siblings. We will talk more about these in Unit 5.23 (Sexual-Reproductive Life).

Also of large importance are the feelings activated in the 10 to 13 year old by the degree to which they succeed in their work efforts (i.e., school), in their peer-social relationships, and in their sublimational activities, i.e., in sports, arts, in any creative endeavor. Many a talent will emerge at this time, some in fact mobilized, focused, and activated to cope constructively with emerging inner stirrings that cause so much anxiety, fear, and bewilderment. (See Unit 5.213, below).

5.2122 CHILD REARING: Affects

One of the caregiver's greatest avenue to understanding the child, now as well as before and as will be the case later, is to keep in sight, search for, and patiently try to feel, through empathy to "read", what the child is experiencing. Having a pretty good idea of what the child is feeling will serve parenting (caregiving) most advantageously.

Bearing in mind that knowing what we are dealing with always makes us solve problems better, it is advantageous to keep the following in mind. Not only keeping sight of and empathically reading the pre-adolescent's feelings, but (1) respecting them, feelings and the child, and (2) being aware of the inner emotional instability and insecurity caused by the remarkable biopsychological stirrings of this period will better insure growth-promoting parenting. Teasing, ridiculing the preadolescent's awkwardness, shaming requests for dressing and bathroom privacy, ignoring or ridiculing questions pertaining to burgeoning sexuality, injure healthy self-acceptance, self-valuing and esteem -- as well as acceptance and esteem of the parents.

The affects and the moods children experience need to be allowed expression in acceptable ways, will no doubt need to be guided to be expressed in acceptable ways, and should equally be guiding of the parent's behavior toward them. The moods may call for cheering, for calming, for reassurance, for comforting. Empathy, putting oneself in one's child's shoes and asking how one would want to be treated will usually be guiding to growth-promoting parenting. In sum, affects, again, are a great avenue toward understanding one's child.

5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

5.2131 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Intelligence -- Cognitive, Play, and Fantasy Activities

Cognitive Activity:

10-13 year olds who have fared well in developing good learning skills in school continue to stabilize and further exercise these skills during the years from 10 to age 13. The stabilization of these skills during these years is facilitating of the capacity for abstract thought which will emerge during early and mid-adolescence, a capacity much needed for advanced, high school and later college level academic work. For children who have fallen behind in developing learning skills during the years prior to 10, these subsequent years from 10 to 13 are crucial in attempting to advance their needed learning skills before the greater demands of high school arrive.

Motor skills, mechanical, sport-related, instrument-playing, etc., usually continue to improve with continuing effort (practice). Well-coordinated youngsters tend to accommodate to their growing limbs without substantial loss of skill. Some less well-coordinated ones may require more effort in accommodating their growing limbs to the tasks attempted.

Especially with regard to thought activity, it is expectable that the inner biological stirrings which are determined by oncoming puberty, make for greater distraction and with it may impede the child's efforts to concentrate while learning in school or doing homework. This is especially due to the stirring up of fantasies activated by the bodily changes and feelings produced by the child's changing biology.

Fantasy Activity:

While fantasy is amply and richly developed already from the 3 to 6 years period on, it seems to get a new burst of activity during the 10 to 13 years period, and will continue well into and through adolescence. Bear in mind that fantasy formation is adaptive, that it allows trial experience in one's mind without risk of danger, that it allows us the expression of forbidden wishes without harm or external reprimand.

Fantasy is experienced especially within the privacy of one's own mind. But it can also be shared and may determine play and social interaction. It is especially that which is experienced privately that is the stuff of daydreams and which intrudes in the child's efforts to concentrate and learn in school or while doing homework. The biologically determined inner stirrings bring with them feelings that fuel wishes and with these, fantasies. In well cared for and well treated children such fantasies generally serve the fulfillment of wishes to be heroic, admired, emotionally desired, successful in school and sports or art, etc. In most children, such wishes may also contain fantasies of victory over pain, over evil-doers, of right over wrong. Traumatized, abused youngsters are

likely to also fantasize retaliations against those that have hurt them, fights to victory being often more detailed in bloodshed, torture and destruction. Sexual feelings will stir sexual fantasies, some idealized; in children in whom much hostility has accumulated due to excessively hurtful experiences, such sexual fantasies may become sadistic toward others and toward the self. Many factors enter into the formation of our fantasies which accounts for their richness and great variety.

One of the problems for the 10 to 13 year old, as well as will be the case for adolescents, is that while these private fantasies help the child contain and master the many inner forces active in the child's body and mind, heightened fantasy activity can intrude into and interfere with the child's efforts to attend to school tasks, to concentrate and to learn.

Fantasy that is shared with others, whether in play or other social interaction (such as sharing jokes, stories, or even in early sexual activity) tend to be put into action in social contexts, not usually during individual efforts to work or practice skills. In these contexts fantasies become more organized, tend to be tamed under optimal conditions, camouflaging wishes for more overt sexual activity during these pre-adolescent years. Of course, 10 to 13 year olds who are abused or taken advantage of may enter into sexual activities precocious for their years with at times seriously detrimental consequences (we will speak more of these issues in Unit 5.23).

Special note should be made of the fact that the 10-13 year old's increased capacity to think and understand life more realistically brings with it not only a mounting interest in matters of sexuality and becoming bigger, becoming an adolescent, but also the gradual recognition of the finiteness of the child's own life. Prior to pre-adolescence the child increasingly came to recognize that things that die do not return to visit, like grandfather, or the dog that got killed by a car. But these thoughts seem to not turn to the self. There is also question as to how truly the irreversibility of death even of others than the self is fully accepted or understood before about 10 years of age. Now, the 10-13 year old seems to gain this anxiety producing understanding and it may indeed become very upsetting to him. The anxiety may reach such proportions following upon the recognition and understanding of the irreversibility of death as well as of one's own eventual death that symptoms may result which may need professional help.

Play Activity:

Solitary play is often fueled by fantasy, before and during this age period as well. Because some of the fantasies will be fueled by sexual and/or hostile wishes, many a child will try to fend off such fantasies by a variety of psychic defense mechanisms (see section 5.2521). In addition solitary sexual fantasies will also lead to masturbation (see Unit 5.23). Of the defense mechanisms implemented, sublimation will lead to the setting up of highly valuable creative activities propelling some youngsters to practice more be it in sport skills, artistic skills, etc. Some will begin or continue already started stamp collections, collections of coins, dolls, butterflies, etc. The channeling of increasingly higher levels of sexual and/or destructive stimulation into such creative activity starting again now (it was quite high during the 3 to 6 years period) and increasing through

adolescence, can be most salutary for the child.

5.2132 CHILD REARING: Intelligence -- Cognitive Play and Fantasy Activity

Cognitive Activity:

Most parents want to insure that their child is developing good learning skills in order to secure for himself/herself the best opportunities for that child's eventual life work opportunities. One can best insure such development by being attentive to the child's report cards, the child's teachers' views of and recommendations for the child. And above all, parents can insure the development of good learning skills by keeping an open channel for communication about school activities with the child and by being aware of the child's homework, its load, and by supporting and encouraging the child's efforts to become disciplined about these. Of course, parents highlighting the value to the child of making major efforts in and of developing discipline about work is among the best ways parents have of helping the child.

If school skills have not developed well to date, the 10 to 13 years period is a must period to gain ground on developing basic learning skills better. Extra help, often more readily accepted by children when it comes from tutors rather than directly from the parents themselves, may well be worth the cost. To be sure, parents should offer help as best they can; our caution that tutors may be more effective comes from the added difficulty children experience when parents become their school teachers given the complex conflicted emotional relatedness that exists in even the best of parent-child relationships. Suggestion for extra help at this time for children who are not succeeding in developing age-appropriate skills for learning is that it will not get easier in adolescence due to two compounding factors: (1) the greater homework load as well as schoolwork load which comes with high school years, and (2) the greater intensity of inner sexual and aggressive pressures, fantasy life and distractions of efforts to concentrate, study, and do work.

Supporting and encouraging a 10 to 13 year old's interests in and efforts to learn, to repair broken household things or a bicycle, or sewing and knitting, or to develop special skills be it in sports or artistic endeavors, is valuable because they enhance a feeling of competence and raise self esteem. In addition they become effective and constructive pathways for the channeling of large sexual and aggressive energies that come with adolescence. Given that sublimation organizes psychic experiencing in probably the most constructive way possible, supporting such efforts on the part of the 10 to 13 year old, now as it will be during adolescence, is most growth-promoting.

Among the many factors that concern parents regarding their children pertaining to facilitating thinking, problem solving, carrying on a conversation, talking about important things in life, etc., we want to emphasize the following. As we stated in Unit 5.2131 (Human Development Aspect of Cognitive Functioning), children are terrified at times, much anxiety is produced in them by the realization that the life of each of us is finite and

that our eventual death is an irreversible phenomenon. Parents should be prepared to talk to their children about this concern like about any other concern.

A 12 year old asked his father: "What is a brain tumor?" which he then followed with a number of further questions. His father soon learned that a 16 year old in his school had died of a brain tumor. From the mental health vantage point, the school administration served its student body well by announcing this death in an assembly and the calling for a moment of silence. This 12 year old was able to let his distress surface when he found the environment receptive to his questions. He was told by his father that a brain tumor is an abnormal growth of body tissues which can cause serious damage and if it goes far enough, can kill a person. "What is cancer?" he asked, he'd heard it was cancer. His father tried to explain. This was followed by what kind of cancer could develop in the brain, which was then followed by how would such be discovered, treated, and while he clearly showed much anxiety and revulsion at how a surgical brain procedure would be carried out (which was given in very simple, as mild as possible details) he was nonetheless able to explore this very frightening subject and seemed relieved at being able to talk about it. Clearly, frightening details, going beyond the child's tolerance for such a discussion, are not desirable. It is clear, however, that caring parents, as well as other caregivers, can address these issues in ways that can be most beneficial to the 10 to 13 year old.

Fantasies:

Fantasies are activated by internal concerns, by experiences and by physiological (biological) inner stirrings. Fantasizing serves not only the expression of wishes and needs but also efforts at mastery, at controlling inner pressures and at problem solving. Therefore, it is constructive, adaptive. But fantasizing can also interfere with learning, by its interference with concentration, study and doing homework. The 10 to 13 year old's fantasy life will unavoidably be energized by bodily stirrings and freshly emerging sexual interests, by the changes that begin the 10 year process of becoming an adult. It is helpful to encourage the 10-13 year old child to put herself/himself back on track when daydreaming (fantasizing) interferes with learning efforts. How this is achieved, however, is critical. Depreciation, ridiculing, hostility because the child is daydreaming and not working, should be avoided because they tend to cause injury while they may be an effort to help. Humor can be very useful, again if it is not depreciating or ridiculing of the child. Firmness to get back to work, drawing attention to the interference of daydreaming can be very helpful.

Children who have been abused, physically and/or sexually, are likely to be more preoccupied with mastering their hurt feelings or their sexual over-excitement, fears and guilt, and the hate these feelings generate within them. The higher the level of hurt, sexual over- excitement, fear guilt and hate, the more will fantasizing take place in an effort to handle these feelings. The more will work efforts be interfered with. The hurt and hate must be dealt with by the parents and professional help may be warranted where efforts to study and learn continue to be interfered with in a significant way during this age period.

Play Activity:

It is well for parents to bear in mind that play activity grows out of very real concerns children have, and that in the 10 to 13 year old boy and girl a substantial sector of play activity is likely to become sexualized or aggressivized, given that these result from the developmental intensification of these two powerful behavior-influencing factors at this age. These of course activate the fantasies which lead to play activity both solitary and in interaction with peers. More will be said of sexual and aggressive activity in Sections 5.23 and 5.24.

Both solitary and interactional activity are enormously important for constructive development, adaptation, the capacity to enjoy experience, develop methods for relaxation, entertainment and pleasure, and a component of one's time and energies needs to be allocated to that sector of experiencing. Psychologically, it is quite clear, that "all work and no play make Johnny a dull boy" has a great deal of merit. From the vantage point of mental health, it is essential that humans be able to not only work but also to play and love. Therefore, benevolent supervision of play activity, especially in interactional activity that is prematurely sexualized or excessively aggressivized, is beneficial. So is the encouragement and guidance in how to interact at a play level with peers for some children who seem to be inhibited in this sphere. Again, more on this in Sections 5.23 and 5.24.

5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

5.22 THE DEVELOPMENT OF SELF AND HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

In the first six years of life our self, our identity, sense of entity, and the representation of these in our minds, develop in reciprocity with our constructing a sense of and inner representation of the other (be it parent, sibling, or other meaningful person). To the extent that our self is well developed and has, in balance, a positive valuing of this self, to that extent will the awareness of and positive valuing of others develop. In the early years, to the extent that those in our lives are hated and not trusted, to that extent is the self felt to not be trustworthy, to be depreciated and hated. Interestingly, a clear and sound sense of entity, of identity, and of deserving love and respect, of both self and other, is profoundly determined by the quality of child rearing and reciprocal relatedness between child and parents (others).

With the increased separateness from parents and the progressive need for self-reliance brought about by "going out into the world" of the early school years (5 to 10 years), this early reciprocity of influence between the development of our sense of self and of other decreases. Although such reciprocity continues to play a part in our own emotional development, to some degree some aspects of the development of self, such as the development of intelligence and capacities for learning and for work, of adaptive skills, of creativity and sublimation, can evolve to a substantial degree apart from relatedness to others.

We have not yet sufficiently studied and are, therefore, not yet certain to what degree and how regular, many hours daily separations from parental caregiving (primary care, see Unit 1 or 2) brought about by the increasing need of young parents to place their very young children in daycare, will influence the development of those personality factors that depend on direct, preponderant emotional reciprocity with primary caregivers. Report from daycare studies in the U.S., suggest that where the parent-child relationship is of good quality from early on in life, the more likely the child's satisfactory experiencing of daycare without substantial detriment to the child's relatedness and adaptation. Reports from European countries that have long used early years daycare to free mothers for the workforce (outside the home), tell us of both benefits and detriments to personality development. Benefits tend to be along the lines of earlier developments in certain cognitive (school learning) functions, in compliance to group pressures and in peer relationships. Detriments are reported in a weakening of individuality, self-initiation and self-reliance in later development, with a shift to greater dependence on peers and the group, a shift of greater ties to the group and government authority rather than to family (especially in totalitarian systems). In the U.S., studies suggest greater problems in age-expectable attachment to family, increase in hostility and resistance to benevolent demands for compliance with both parents and teachers (classroom). Studies to date suggest that stressors in parent-child relatedness from early on tend to be correlated with more detrimental adaptations than where parent-child relationships are warm, not overly

burdened with stress, and gratifying to both parents and child. But more work is needed to more thoroughly understand the conditions under which earliest years daycare is beneficial and when it may be detrimental.

Addressing the concern of this unit, the period from about 10 to 13 years, the development of self now continues on the parallel tracks of the self developing in interaction with others, family and increasingly now peers, as well as on the individual track of self as a separate entity, as an autonomous being with skills, intelligence, talents, capacity for work, etc.

5.2211 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: The Development of Self and Relationships

The Self:

10 to 13 year olds universally become aware of biological changes in them which herald the oncoming of adolescence. Awareness of the self's body is especially heightened by the beginning signs of secondary sex characteristics, pubic hair in both girls and boys, budding breasts, enlarging hips and menstruation in girls, enlarging shoulders and chest and leg muscles as well as voice changes in boys. Both boys and girls tend to have a spurt in height as well, often bones growing faster than muscle mass and weight, which in many a pre-teen causes a temporary problem in coordinating longer legs and arms resulting in an apparent clumsiness and "gawkiness". In some pre-teens at least, some clumsiness is more due to embarrassment and bewilderment of sexual bodily changes which, of course, become apparent to others well before the self has assimilated and mastered the emotional stirrings these physical changes bring with them. Many a pre-teen experiences these changes gleefully, with pleasure and excitement, at "growing up". Most 10 to 13 year olds experience both pleasure and anxiety, excitement and alarm at these changes.

The development of adaptive functioning (detailed in Section 5.21, as well as those detailed in 5.24, 5.25, and 5.26) also heighten the awareness of the self and set the stage for the adolescent task of developing a sense of self-identity which will frame the personality of the adult-to-be. The sense of identity is a critical factor making for an increasing consolidation of the sense of self as an individual in a world of relationships, challenges, and enormous needs for adaptation and work. During adolescence, the many possible types of persons the child is capable of becoming will become sorted out and a much more specific personality type and individual will develop. This process is preceded during the pre-teen years by a loosening of adaptive patterns, self concept, and concepts of others which have stabilized during the 6 to 10 years period. We mean this in the sense that each new phase of development brings with it a reorganization of inner experiencing and adaptation, usually at a higher level of organization, and that this occurs during this period of development as well. See Sections 5.21 (Adaptive Functions), 5.23

(Sexual Development), 5.24 (Development of Aggression), 5.25 (Adaptive Functioning, Part 2) and 5.26 (Conscience Formation), for specific component developments that are integral to the changing self.

Relationships:

To Parents:

10 to 13 year olds continue to rely quite heavily on their parents for the gratification of emotional, adaptive, and physical needs. Parents also continue to serve as primary models for identification; the admiration for the parents continuing and wishes to be like the parents, where relationships between child and parents are good enough, continue to influence the child's efforts at coping with the many demands of life. Side by side with this continuing large reliance on the parents, the world of peers including siblings, acquires a new meaning and a new level of interest.

To Siblings:

There is an intensification of relatedness to siblings which may manifest in an increasing sense of comradeship but at the same time may bring with it increased harshness and hostility under the influence of a number of factors. For instance, the painful experience the child may have with her/his parents, or with a peer, may lead by displacement to the discharge of hostility toward a sibling. This may be toward an older or toward a younger sibling; it may be toward a same sex sibling or toward an other-sex sibling. On the other hand, gratifying experiences in relationships with the parents, or with peers, or in a classroom situation, may also by displacement lead to a warming of relatedness toward siblings.

The development of secondary sex characteristics which results from substantial biological stirrings within the self, will lead to an intensification of interest in the sexual characteristics of siblings. The natural condition in a home makes for a special problem: the constant presence of an other-sex sibling in the same house, exposures to varying states of dress, use of the same bathroom, the proximity of sleeping arrangements, make for more frequent exposure of a sexually stimulating kind, in the home more at times than in the external world. As a result, siblings are unavoidably attracted to and interested in each other's sexual developments and experiencing. These lead to conflict within the self due to already existing conflicts over sexuality which have their origins during the three to six years of life period, including among which are the child's own imposing of incest taboos. (More on this issue in Section 5.23).

Sibling rivalry will, of course, continue along the pathway that already exists between siblings and will be co-determined by the quality of experiences at home as well as experiences in the world outside the home. Because the peer group acquires a new level of importance, experiences in peer relationships both positive and negative will also become reflected in the relationships to siblings.

Siblings are in the unique position of being highly emotionally invested as a member

of the family and now increasingly as a member of the peer group. In a sense, siblings "bridge" a relationship between the universe of the home and the universe of the world outside. As a result they become critically important now at a new level of experiencing, even more than before although not yet to the level of importance that they will acquire in adolescence and even adulthood; yet they are important during the 10 to 13 years period in a unique way. That is, the child experiences the sibling as a "bridging" person to relationships, at a time when the peer achieves a new level of importance which brings with it the anxiety and stress created by the pre-teen task of preparing for and entering adolescence. We wish to emphasize that, of course, adolescence is the long period of development during which the child becomes transformed into the adult. This process is now beginning and brings with it the loosening of past internal stabilized patterns of adaptation, creating thereby a degree of instability, greater vulnerability to anxiety and inner stress. The sibling can then serve as a member of the family and a peer and under good conditions of sibling relatedness be enormously facilitating for the self, and under poor conditions of sibling relatedness intensify problems with peers and the world outside the home.

Relationships to Peers:

From 10 to 13 years of age, the development of self and relationships is influenced by the emerging awareness of new attractions to and interests in peers, both of the other sex and of the same sex. Crucial here is the influence of sexual growth which stirs much feeling toward, thought and fantasy about "the other" peer (in contrast to parent) as well as to the changing self. The peer of the other sex generally stirs high pitched feelings of excitement and of fear, even of bewilderment. The peer of the same sex generally is turned to in a new way, to share the excitement, fear and bewilderment these stirrings create.

As has already been said, the importance of the peer rose as the pre-teen experiences those remarkable biologically-induced bodily changes which initiate his/her evolving into an adult sexual being. We may wonder why the peer becomes so important to the self during adolescence, a development which has its beginnings now, during the pre-teen years. It is after all important that the centrality of our relationships to our parents shift to making the peer a central person in our lives. The selection of a mate in the early adult years is necessary for the survival of the species, for procreation as civilization has come to depend on. Changing from making the parents the most important persons in our lives to placing peers at a level of primary importance to us, must be set up by certain conditions; we cannot assume that such a shift would occur spontaneously. A number of factors can be called upon to explain this shift. First, is the fact that the peer has become over time, at the very least from preschool years on, the type of person with whom the child spends much of her/his time. The more the time spent in any situation the more one is likely to interact with that person or persons. And the better the chances for forming relationships with them, both for good and for bad. It is possible that in some instances, a peer relationship can be of such good and rewarding quality over the years that a child may develop a preference for peers rather than for members of his/her own family,

including the parents. It is however not likely, that in good family relationships, a peer will attain at this age the level of emotional importance to the self as the parents.

Psychoanalytic theorists and clinicians hold that some obligatory internal experiencing to which every child is subject, make an important contribution to this shift toward making the peer a more central person in one's life and to shift away from the central importance of the parents to the self. Because this development is primarily influenced by the evolving of the self as a sexual human being, we will discuss this issue in Section 5.23.

Relationships to Teachers, Other Adults, Idealized Figures:

Many a 6 to 10 year old child has already formed a relationship, at the very least within the child's own mind, with a preferred teacher, or a fantasy figure such as Superman or Spiderwoman, and has consolidated an attachment to one or more non-family person or such figure which serves the child in a variety of ways. A teacher may become an anchor for the child during the school hours. Moments of feeling isolated or distressed can be calmed by thinking of a preferred teacher who is in the same building. Experiencing the classroom which that teacher teaches may be a high point for the child which makes the school experience a valued one. Approval by that teacher can be elating, and disapproval painfully deflating. Idealized figures such as Superman or Spiderwoman, or other figures from myths and fiction may serve in the child's fantasies which are generated by the child in an effort to cope with feelings of smallness, low self esteem, or as goal models to aim for which sustain the inner feeling of self. Such figures can in fact be enormously influential in a child's self determinations and serve as models for the self for even a lifetime.

Non-Human Relationships:

Stress and anxiety brought about at this time by the obligatory changes in the self, may lead in many instances to an intensification of a relationship with a pet, a dog, a horse, in which the animal may become the object of intimacies, of worries, and even of affection. It is not uncommon for a pre-teen child who experiences difficulties in relationships with family members, be it more than average anger toward parents and estrangement from siblings, to turn to an animal and to feel the animal as a source of comforting, solace, and even understanding. Of course, many a child with a good relationship with parents and siblings may experience a pet in this kind of way.

5.2212 CHILD REARING: How to Optimize the Development of Self and Relationships

The Self:

Parents who are aware of the child's experiencing of the bodily and psychological changes which occur at this age period, and quite especially those resulting from emerging sex characteristics in their children, are more likely to appreciate their child's pleasures and excitements but also anxieties and bewilderment these changes bring with them. Given that they will know that their children are very sensitive to these changes, that when these changes occur earlier than usual or when they occur later than in other children of their child's peer group, will know that thoughtfulness needs to be exercised in drawing attention to these new developments. That is to say, parents who are accessible for questions, relatively tolerant of the ups and downs of feeling, of the mood swings that begin to be apparent, will obviously be better able to help their children. The child will experience the parent as one to whom the child can turn, can count on. Teasing about these changes may be experienced by some children as mortifying. Of course, the character of the teasing, how much it is loaded with hostility, is going to be highly determining of how the child experiences these.

In the same way, the emergence of clumsiness, the child's heightened self consciousness, will be better accepted by children whose parents do not react negatively to these changes in appearance as well as in behavior. Respect for the child's feelings while enormously important, does not mean that demands on the child to continue to act as a member of the family, to share in responsibilities around the house or for the child's own clothes, school materials, room or part of the room, should in any way be diminished. While the 10 to 13 year old is undergoing important physical and psychological changes, it does not mean that he/she is becoming less capable of meeting the demands made on him/her by family life, school life, etc. The thrust of what we want to say here is that continuing sensitivity, respect for, empathy for the child at a time of substantial inner stirring, can be enormously growth-promoting; and that such respect and considerateness carry with them a continuing expectation that the 10 to 13 year old will be a responsible member of the family.

In this vein as well, parents' continuing support of the child's academic efforts, doing homework, participating in and practicing sports or musical or other-talent activities is of enormous value, given that these extra-curricular activities serve pathways for sublimation and for creativity. All of these, of course, are an opportunity to enhance the child's self-esteem, feeling of increasing competence, the development of goals for oneself which at this time, in many a child, may have life long implications. (See Sections 5.21, 5.23, 5.24, 5.25, and 5.26 for specific aspects of the developing self and the ways in which parents can contribute to their growth-promoting development).

Relationships to Others:

To Parents:

Parents, sensitive to their children, will recognize their continuing importance to the child, especially in the functions they fulfill as a source of affection, concern and appreciation, as individuals who will help in organizing the child's work, in doing homework against the child's own resistance; as promoters of success in efforts, and to be

sure, as those most appreciative of the 10 to 13 year olds successes in all efforts and endeavors. The need for parental approval for what the 10 to 13 year old does, for controls over behaviors that are hurtful to the self and to others, is heavily relied upon by the 10 to 13 year old. In other words, parents are much needed by the child for continuing emotional needs as well as for guidance in adaptive skills, in effort and work, and in guidance for ethical and moral conduct.

Relationships to Siblings:

By now, the challenge to parents of mediating the relationships between their children has a long history. Like before, at times of heightened stress resulting either from development or from life circumstances, sibling relationships are vulnerable to becoming more troublesome and parents are by now well acquainted with the patterns of difficulty that emerge among their children at such stressful times. Given the biological stirrings of the 10 to 13 year old period and the psychological stresses these bring with them, parents should not be surprised if the relationships between their children tend to become more difficult at this time.

It is well to bear in mind that sibling relationships have both positive and negative experiencing components to them. Siblings are often very considerate, thoughtful and generous with each other. They often turn to each other for emotional support, for support in the community outside of the home, and even within the home at times of parent-child strife, many a sibling has attempted to protect another from parental hostility. Equally, sibling relationships can be hurtful, need parental guidance and parental mediation. Also important to know is that sibling relationships not only tend to be more difficult at times of stress for a given child, but that because there are more stresses during childhood than there are in adulthood, contrary to widespread conviction, it is well to anticipate that relationships between siblings will improve as the years pass and that even somewhat difficult early childhood relationships may evolve from late adolescence on and especially during adulthood, into relationships that are valued and occupy an important place in a person's life. It is well to bear this in mind because parents often wonder, at times of heightened difficulty in sibling relationships, whether their children will ever value their relationships to one another.

Especially valuable a contribution can be made by parents in the supervision of interactions between siblings of the other sex. Because of the conditions we described in Section 5.2211 (and we shall further elaborate on in Sections 5.23 and 5.24, sexual interest and feelings between siblings can lead to sexual activities between them which usually bring much guilt and often long standing emotional problems. It is, therefore, protective of their children for parents to thoughtfully and considerately keep an eye on interactions between brothers and sisters. Rationale for such behaviors between siblings will be further detailed in Section 5.23.

Relationships to Peers:

Parents' recognition of the growing importance to the 10 to 13 year old of peer

relationships places a large responsibility on the parents. Many parents are convinced of the importance of peer relationships for their children even from the second year of life on. Our position on this is as follows: The most important relationships in a child's emotional life during the first 6 years of life is to family members, parents especially, but siblings as well. Peer relationships during these early years can be very pleasant; but they become important only when there is an absence of good relatedness to family. Of course, when young children are in daycare, peer relationships become important because the child must learn to live with them from moment to moment. During the 6 to 10 years period peer relationships begin to acquire a greater meaning because first, by virtue of the child's being in school, he/she spends much time with that population. Secondly, a shift away from the parents at this age thrusts the child toward peers (see Unit 4, Section 4.23). Learning to get along with peers is important now in order to form a congenial enough environment in which the child spends many hours and where the child feels accepted. During this 6 to 10 years era, although the shift away from parents begins, the family continues to be by far more important to the child than are peers. But from 10 to 13 years on, the major shift in relatedness which we described in Section 5.21, namely, that life will eventually require the selection of a mate from a group of peers, that this will require heightening the importance of the peer to the self with a concomitant relative diminution of the importance of the parents as relationships at the center of our lives, this shift now gives the peer a new importance. Although this major shift eventually occurs during adolescence, a point we will elaborate in Unit 6, this shift to making peers more central to the self has its beginnings during the 6 to 10 years period with yet another increase in this shift occurring during the 10 to 13 years period when a new interest in peers emerges, one especially governed by the development of sexuality.

Parents, therefore, need to recognize the importance to the child of peer relatedness and to try to facilitate this in reasonable ways. Parents who welcome their children's friends into the home will facilitate the formation of peer relatedness. Parents who are respectful and considerate of their child's peers will become known for that. Children 10 to 13 years of age, and even younger, are highly aware of the reactions of their friends' parents to them. Invariably, 10 to 13 year olds value being welcomed, being respected and treated in a friendly manner. It is possible for a child who is well liked by peers to not be able to invite peers to his home where there is much strife, family problems, and especially a high level of free-floating hostility.

Here again, like with siblings, relationships between peers of the other sex require supervision and guidance. Needless to say, not all relationships between boys and girls become sexual relationships. Many a boy will appreciate the friendship of a girl and vice-a-versa, without it becoming governed by sexual interest and excitement.

Relationships to Teachers and to Other Valued Adults:

Parents know that their children develop special feelings for particular teachers from very early on in school life experience. During the 10 to 13 years period, they may find such a special teacher and find their child to have strong special feelings for him/her. A parent's approval, appreciation of such a teacher in the child's life will facilitate the child's

beneficial experiencing of such a relationship, even facilitating the child's identification with this teacher. By contrast, parents experiencing such an affection for a teacher with rivalrous feelings, or the parents' disapproving of such a teacher may be troublesome for the child and interfere with possibly desirable identifications.

Of course, parents may at times experience some concern when a child is especially courted by a teacher who may have some personal problems, leading to parental anxiety that their child may become enmeshed in a troubled teacher's problems. Such concerns are reasonable and have to be dealt with thoughtfully by the parents. For instance, the parents of a 10 year old boy were at a loss to know what to do when their son was invited by a male teacher to go to a ball game and to spend the night at the teacher's home. The teacher had always been very pleasant, very sensitive and attentive to this boy who was himself a very sensitive and affectionate child. The parents became concerned about the possibility that this good and pleasant teacher might have some sexual identity problem; knowing nothing of him, they were worried that he might be a child-interested homosexual. Concerns as these are unavoidable, even though they may be totally unwarranted. And, of course, sexual transgression of children are known to be carried out, more than is reported, by heterosexual adults as well.

Because children's fantasies at this age are usually essentially kept to themselves or brought into play in relationships with peers, parents may not learn about some of the child's idealized figures which play a part in their child's fantasies. These may become evident to the parents by some of the child's communications, or by the pictures the child may hang on his/her walls, but these may stay somewhat removed from the parents' awareness. Where they do become evident, parents have an opportunity to exert an influence by their approval or disapproval of particular idealized figures. The idealization of sports figures is quite common and may be prominently displayed on some children's walls. It is well for parents to know that such figures tend to serve as meaningful models for their child.

Non-Human Relationships:

Parents know when their children form a special relationship with an animal and recognize that such an animal can achieve much importance to the child. Some supervision in the way a 10 to 13 year old handles an animal may be required in terms of expressions of anger and hostility as well as extensive interest in the animals genitals and the child's attitude toward them.

5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

5.222 SOCIAL-PLAY INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES

Interactions with peers and adults undergo a higher level organization during the 10 to 13 or so years span. This is part of the maturing and relative decentralization in importance and de-idealization for the self of one's parents which is accompanied by an increased degree of centralizing peer relatedness and the outside world. As we noted in Section 5.22 (Introduction to the Development of Self and Relationships), peer relatedness begins from even the first year of life (siblings) and then in daycare and preschool settings, but is of far lesser importance than the relationships to parents. Peer relatedness then acquires a new meaning during elementary school years due to actual as well as daily experience (being in school, having to adapt to peers one on one and in a group) as well as by psychological-emotional development (see Section 5.23, Sexual-Reproductive Life) which thrusts the child "outwardly" from the family toward the child's outside world, a world most populated by peers. The attraction to peers, which is evident from toddlerhood (second year of life) on, acquires new importance with an increase in social organization, the learning and setting up of rules by which to interact, by which to play (games as well as fantasy play), of social interactive patterns for one on one and one on group relatedness, varying with social contexts (classroom, playfield, parties, etc.). During the 6 to 10 years period, games and social play -- which differ in some respects between boys and girls (see Unit 4, Section 4.22) -- are among the pre-eminent contexts in which children learn to live with one another and to develop societal interactive patterns. The degree of stabilization of these developments brings with it an equivalent degree of comfort and adaptation in outside-the-home social interactions.

This stabilization, however, during the 10 to 13 years period is challenged by the pubertal bodily and psychological-emotional changes which begin to stir and emerge. The unavoidable recognition of bodily changes in self and peers becomes a powerful determiner of feelings, fantasies, and behaviors in social interaction. This results in more complex codes of behavior emerging in interaction between self and peer, one on one. With this too then, there is a beginning loosening of prior interactive regulations which will progressively re-organize and stabilize during the adolescent years to come.

5.2221 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Social-Play Interactive Activities

Games:

Much play activity during the 10 to 13 years period occurs in the context of games. These, as we have emphasized, are enormously important for the development of social

interaction by their structuralization, their reliance on rules and regulations, governing the way individuals interact with each other. A major forms of games consist of table games and sports. Table games tend to mostly be carried out one on one, such as checkers, chess, but can also be carried out in a small group, such as in Monopoly, Trivial Pursuit, etc. Similarly, sports games can be carried out in the one on one context or in the one on group (team) context. Individual competitive sports pit the self against either one's own past efforts as well as against one opponent such as in tennis, wrestling, etc. Other individual competitive efforts pit the self against a group such as in swimming, track, etc. The other major context of sports is in team efforts, where the self is an integral part of a team effort, such as in baseball, basketball, etc.

These activities during the 10 to 13 years period apply to both boys and girls. It is important to bear in mind that games are not only organizing of social interaction, of regulating the self's action and competition (aggression), but they are also sublimations, that is, they channel emotional energies into acts of creativity.

Other Sublimational Activities:

In some cases artistic endeavors are either continued or begun at this age in group contexts that make for social interaction, and again, structure conditions for peer interaction. Experiences in groups such as in the performance of music, vocal as well as instrumental, efforts in plastic arts (painting, pottery, sculpting, sewing, etc.) also create conditions for individual interaction with peers. Other artistic activity such as dance and theater tend to occur more during the adolescent years than at this time. There are of course exceptions. Such artistic group endeavors provide opportunities as well for competitive activity which again, is regulated by rules of social interaction. Pathways of sublimation are constructed gradually over the years, beginning usually during elementary school years and continuing during the 10 to 13 years period, opening important pathways for the channeling of vast emotional energies into acts of creativity, a magnificent pathway for adaptation.

Religious Group Activities:

Growing religious identifications accruing by now from prior religious school, church and temple attendance and family practices begin to stabilize during the 10 to 13 years period. This is in substantial part due to the recognition of society that the 10 to 13 year old child's capacity for understanding increases. For instance, increased cognitive functioning (with the emerging capacity for abstraction) brings with it an increased recognition of "facts of life", conceptualizations of God, the universe, the finiteness of one's own life, etc. This increase in capacity for understanding and abstraction brings with it not only much thought and even anxiety, but occasion for social interaction in these domains as well. Awareness of religious grouping affiliation and identity increases during this age and sets the stage for the remarkable intellectual activity, concerns for society, of a philosophical nature, typical of mid and late adolescence.

Sexual Activity in the Context of Interaction will be discussed in Section 5.23.

Antisocial Activity:

Although antisocial activity is more a phenomenon of first and second phase adolescence (see Unit 6), some 10 to 13 year olds small group activities can lead them into socially destructive acts of vandalism, violence, and even beginning drug and alcohol use. Often, children 10 to 13 years who are inclined to challenge authority and society may be the first to smoke cigarettes and drink alcohol, skip classes, etc. Cigarette smoking, is not of course considered an antisocial activity, but tends to be picked up quite later by some healthy adolescents. As with all other activities there are exceptions. Those 10 to 13 year olds most inclined to antisocial activities are most often driven to these by excessive loads of internalized hostile destructiveness accumulated in them by excessively painful deprivations and traumatic child rearing, and/or by rebelliousness against what they experience as too harsh parental authority of many years duration.

5.2222 CHILD REARING: Optimizing Social-Play Interactive Activities

Games:

Many a 10 to 13 year old has learned to play games accepting the rules and regulations set down by the peer group (which they inherit from the adult world) and no longer require parental guidance. Of course, in peer relationships, both with siblings and non-familial peers, parents are often still needed to mediate disagreements, to comfort a hurt loser, to help a gloating victor contain his/her vanity, to mediate their experiences in ways that are more congenial to social interaction and do not stir excessively hurt and hostile feelings among game participants. Complimenting a victor and helping him contain hurtful gloating, can be very helpful. We do not mean that children should be deprived of the pleasure of feeling victory; quite the contrary, feeling victory, feeling success, can enhance a child's well-being and self-esteem and should be supported by parents. It is when children become abusive of others with their victory that parents can help in containing that kind of behavior. It is also well for parents to recognize how painful loss in a game can be and to be sympathetic as well as supportive of a child who feels unduly hurt by a loss. Shaming and ridiculing tend to be hurtful themselves and compound the pain of having lost, and are generally not constructive strategies to use with children. Setting limits on too much complaining, on feeling sorry for oneself too much is better than humiliating and shaming.

Mothers and fathers who give some of their parenting time to coaching a sports team or any group activities in which their children participate, generally make an enormously important contribution to their children's as well as other children's increasing adaptation in social-play interactions. Although children may occasionally have difficulty with "Dad/Mom being the coach", or "Mom/Dad being the instructor", such difficulties tend to

arise from personal, common and normal problems children have such as in sharing their Mom or Dad, or in seeing Dad or Mom as authorities in the nonfamily world, or feeling the parent is intruding in the child's nonfamily world, etc. These need attention as well as discussion between child and parent so as to try to optimize the child's experience of the parent's generous contribution to the child's peer group. Many factors of very different kinds can operate to make a child feel embarrassed by or feel inhibited by a parent being a coach or group instructor. Usually, when these become apparent to the parent, talking with the child about his/her discomfort can be enormously helpful.

As is the case with other sublimational activities, parents attending their 10 to 13 year old children's group activities such as games in organized sports, can be of enormous importance to children. Although children may feel embarrassed when they don't succeed in their athletic efforts, feeling supported by their parents presence can be of large comfort to them. Then, of course, those children who do well in their efforts are much rewarded by being able to do so in front their parents. Many a child has reported, as have adults as well, on the profound disappointment of not having their parents attend a sporting event or a concert where the young 10 to 13 year old has excelled. Memories of such events can be retained for many years after.

Other Sublimational Activities:

The same principles apply to artistic endeavors as to the question of games. Parental support of children's creative efforts, whatever the artistic endeavor, make for much facilitation of such efforts.

It is especially in the domain of artistic endeavors that parents are needed to encourage a 10 to 13 year to practice his/her instrument of music. Parents know only too well the enormous effort that is required to attempt to master a difficult instrument, be it the piano, clarinet or a cello. No instrument is easy to play, and no one masters an instrument without enormous and continuous effort. Given the load of school and home responsibilities young 10 to 13 year old children already carry, it is an arduous task to practice in order to learn to play an instrument. Here, as in other parental efforts to encourage their children's work, a balance of encouragement, reminding, helping, complimenting work well done, are needed. Excessive efforts, too severe restrictions, of a child who resists making the effort necessary to develop such "extracurricular skills" can be costly emotionally (psychologically).

Religious Group Activities:

These activities are usually totally dependent on parental participation, identification, and valuing. Such activities, whatever the religion, whatever the parents own personal convictions, help the child to organize his/her own inner structuring of religious belief. This is equally the case for families that are highly religious as it is for families whose philosophy of religion does not include well structured participation in religious activities and practices.

Children who have the opportunities to speak with their parents, to engage in

discussions about facts of life, concepts of God and religion, the universe, death, are far advantaged over children who cannot discuss such issues with them. The hazards of parents not making themselves available to their children for such discussions with their children, is that they will seek answers elsewhere which will include their peers and where the information they get may not be as constructive as might that coming from the parents themselves.

Here again, as in games and other sublimational activities, parental involvement in group activities pertaining to religious life, can be a source of pleasure, pride, but also occasionally embarrassment to children. The same principles apply for parental involvement in such activities as for those discussed before.

Sexual Activity: Parental handling of sexual activity will be discussed in Section 5.23.

Antisocial Activity:

Children 10 to 13 years of age who engage in acts of vandalism, violence, or who begin to explore the social use with their peers of alcohol and drugs, are in strong need of parental intervention. While all 10 to 13 year olds will engage in some lying, petty stealing (such as of change from parents' drawers), perhaps even a minor degree of vandalism, parents should be alert to such activities and intervene in a guiding and limit setting way. Where youngsters engage in such individual or group activities repeatedly, parents are wise to turn to professional help for intervention given that the conditions underlying such activity usually need professional attention. Mental health professionals have much experience in helping parents and children who become overly involved in antisocial activity. Parents are especially well advised to consult professionals when repeated antisocial activity occurs at this age because it is a much easier task to intervene early than to allow such activity to continue into mid and late adolescence when treatment intervention of antisocial problems is much more complicated, requires much more effort, and may not succeed as well.

5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

5.23 SEXUAL-REPRODUCTIVE LIFE

During the 10 to 13 years, the biological and with it the long psychological-emotional transformation of the child into the adult is set into motion. Genetically preprogrammed sexual maturation, triggered and mediated especially by hormonal activity, creates sexual bodily transformations which become evident in puberty, the biological-physical event which launches adolescence. It cannot surprise us that what becomes visible bodily changes, the emergence of secondary sex characteristics, is the result of hormonal activity of months' and perhaps years' duration. The various factors that cluster into male and female secondary sex characteristics probably evolve after a preparatory period of hormonal and physiological-somatic²² activity. In girls, the growth of pubic hair, the budding of breasts, enlarging of the pelvis, and eventually the beginning of menstruation must be preceded by hormonal and physiological-somatic activity perhaps of some months' duration; these evolve gradually, overlapping in time. Step by step, these changes evolve into what we call puberty. Similarly, in boys, the growth of pubic hair, the enlarging genitalia and torso (including bones and muscle mass), the emergence of facial hair, the change in voice are preceded by hormonal activity probably of months' duration and "pubertal" boy.

Psychologically-emotionally, such biophysical transformation creates quite a stir within the self. It is a two-or-so years process which stirs and may jar the psychic adaptive equilibrium attained by the 9-10 year old, stirring feelings, fantasies, conflicts and anxieties, as well as pleasure and excitement all of which will launch adolescence. It is well to remind the student that the upsurge of sexual interest which is produced by these changes now is the **second** upsurge of sexual life. In Unit 3 we described extensively the **first** upsurge of sexual life which organized into the "family romance". Because of the critical conflict brought about by this family romance, as we described in Unit 3, a massive effort is made by the child to **repress** the child's sexual interests (see Unit 3, Section 3.23, The Beginnings of Sexual-Reproductive Life). As a result of the massive repression much of the child's sexual interest

and preoccupation goes "underground", into that component of psychic life which is repressed, becomes unconscious and is, therefore, not in the child's awareness. This repression which occurs in the 5 year old child, brings some degree of quieting to the 6 to 10 year old child's sexual experiencing, although such repression is never complete under normal conditions, but nonetheless leads to a substantial quieting of sexual interests and preoccupation. Now, with the biological changes which occur during the pre-puberty

²² **Physiological** activity refers to the functioning of bodily systems such as digestive (the internal processing of what we eat) or neurological (how the brain and nerves function), etc. **Somatic** activity refers to activity of bodily tissues and of the body as a whole. Thus a somatic illness is one where bodily tissues are affected by a disease process be it an infection like the flu, or an internal tissue destructive process like cancer.

period there is a gradual re-kindling of sexual interest and preoccupation, of sexual life.

5.2311 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Sexual-Reproductive Life

The Second Upsurge of Sexual Life:

There is clear evidence in 10 to 13 year old children's behaviors, in the interests they turn to, the questions they ask, the remarks they make, that there is an enlarging interest in sexual matters. Biology causes the awakening of the 10 to 13 year old's conscious interest in sexual matters. The psyche has to be ready for it, to tolerate it, allow it, and be able to deal with it constructively. Behavioral evidence shows that children of this age do experience a good deal of difficulty in mediating well at all times their sexual interests and preoccupation.

Anxiety about sexual matters manifests itself in a number of ways. Many a girl and boy will begin to be more protective of privacy when they change clothes or use the bathroom. They will no longer be as tolerant of nudity, of themselves or others, and will often react with embarrassment and, where allowed, demand for privacy when they are in the bathroom. Such request for privacy is a reasonable sign of discomfort and anxiety and, of course, is quite appropriate as a means of holding to oneself those changes and the fantasies they normally bring during this developmental period.

Some evidence of anxiety is also visible in the "regressive" behavior sexual interest brings with it. For instance, boys perhaps more than girls are likely to use crude "bathroom" language, begin to use vernacular expressions for sexual matters and at times obscene language. Many bathroom function jokes are heard during this time. Also indicative of regression is a child's toileting functions becoming messier. The child's room may become more messy than it had been in some time. The way the child dresses might be sloppier than has been. This increased disorganization and slovenliness seems dictated by more infantile behavior than had been current.

Of enormous importance emotionally, changes in the body make the child aware perhaps more than ever before that the child is a girl or a boy. The normal fantasies both already well-established boys and girls each now have of wondering at times, respectively, what it would be like to be a girl and what it would be like to be a boy, are now subjected to the test of reality. It is important to know that this psychological activity grows out of biological bisexual factors operating in each young person and is furthermore complemented by the identifications every boy and girl makes with **both** their mother and their father. Even children whose fathers are not in the home find some important father-figure with whom they identify. Whatever hopes a boy may have had, even if kept secret and shared with no one, of wishing that he were a girl will now be confronted by the biological changes which unequivocally tell him he is a male. Similarly, a girl whose identity formation has at times turned her to wishing she were a boy will similarly be confronted by the biological changes that affirm her femaleness.

The 10 to 13 year old child now has to come to terms with his or her specific gender given its clearly emerging physical manifestations. Needless to say, most male and female 10 to 13 year olds derive much pleasure and excitement at these new developments within them which can, indeed, affirm a long awaited ability to demonstrate being male and the proof of being female. Many children have long yearned for these developments.

A common other source of anxiety is that which is created in the child by either being one of the first of the child's peer group to develop secondary sex characteristics or being among the latest in the group to do so. Some children, of course, welcome being the first to develop such proof of their femaleness or their maleness. Others may experience these developments as being ahead of their own readiness for them and they induce in the child much anxiety with a wish to mask these developments, which in part accounts for the slovenly dressing some children evidence.

Yet another way in which the 10 to 13 year old's anxiety may manifest is in negative reactions toward parental love behaviors, be it in terms of hugging and kissing or in overhearing more private sexual events. Evidence of parental love behavior is, however, not always productive of negative reaction given that it is often understood as evidence of closeness between mother and father, which is enormously reassuring to children. Nonetheless many a 10 year old will react with disgust, with rejection of "mushiness", all in reaction to the anxiety sexual experiencing produces in the child.

Still another way in which their anxiety may manifest itself is in children's rejections of affirmations of their sexual interest. For instance, many a boy will deny that he likes a particular girl when his behavior makes it very clear to those around him. Similarly a girl may say that she hates a boy whom all of her girlfriends have ample evidence of her liking. Such denials and turning the feelings into their opposite (reaction formation) can take on a serious note, may last for some time, even until quite later in adulthood.

Sexual Activity:

Masturbation:

Most people, from adolescents to adults, are convinced that masturbation, a normal activity in both boys and girls, occurs for the first time at prepuberty and early adolescence. Most are unaware of the universal masturbatory activity that is amply evident in young children from about two years of age on. The five year old's repression which arises out of the conflict created by the child's "family romance", generally leads to a stopping of masturbation and the forgetting of early masturbatory activity. This is why the emergence of masturbatory activity in puberty or early adolescence is in fact a second emergence of it albeit it is remembered by most people as being the time when masturbation first began and now again, as before, is triggered by increasingly powerful inner sexual forces.

Because of the conflicts contained in the fantasies which stimulate sexual excitement and lead to masturbatory activity, efforts are made by the prepubertal child and adolescent to inhibit, to limit masturbation. Sometimes the inhibition can become as

powerful as the urges to masturbate and lead to a cessation of such activity in both boys and girls. In general, in boys more than girls, the inhibition is not as powerful as the inner propelled urges and while masturbatory activity can be contained, most normal pre-adolescents, boys more than girls, do not succeed in preventing masturbation. This matter becomes even more prominent in early and mid adolescence than during prepuberty.

Sexual Interactions with Peers:

One also can recognize the play of sexual pressures in symbolic form. Sexual jokes are discovered, as is pornography. Many a prepubertal child will share pornographic materials among peers with much joking and excitement.

Actual sex play between prepubertal children is common. It is not universal, but a number of children do engage in sexual explorations, both of the same-sex peer as well as of the other-sex peer. Many children who engage in such activity do so under some pressure both from within themselves as well as from the peer group, yielding both, again, in reaction their own internal stimulation as well as the fear of rejection by peers.

And we cannot close this section without drawing attention to the sublimations that emerge during this period of development, sublimations which emerge in large part as a means of channeling the sexual feelings that begin to be stirred up during the 10 to 13 years period in anticipation of their marked increase during adolescence. The development of these sublimations, artistic, academic, in mechanical skills, sports, structured group activities, serve the child well in creating a safety value for the benign discharge of sexual feelings.

5.2312 CHILD REARING: Sexual-Reproductive Life

The Second Upsurge of Sexual Life:

Parents can be enormously helpful to their children in their coping with the emergence of sexual feelings and interests. They should, however, bear in mind that, while children need parental guidance, they have much difficulty in talking with their own parents about matters of sexuality. Obviously, those children who have had the advantage of talking about all kinds of matters with their parents from early on in life are most likely to continue to be open to a degree with their parents about their sexual interests and what goes on in their world. The major inhibition children encounter in talking with their parents about sexual activity comes from the fact that having repressed their "family romance", (see Unit 3, Section 3.23) and given that the persons in the child's family romance are these same loved parents, there is an underlying problem (i.e., inner conflict and anxiety) to talking to these same parents about the child's sexual interests. Given that the component of the family romance experiencing which has become repressed still operates within the unconscious (pushed out of awareness) part of the

child's psyche, talking about sexual matters to the parents becomes overburdened with anxiety coming from this repressed source. This is one major reason why even most tactful, sensitive, thoughtful parents may find much resistance in their children's talking to them about their sexual concerns, activities, and even worries. This is also why schools can get more information across to children about sexual matters than parents themselves. Again, those parents who have had a talking relationship with their children from early on in life are more likely to succeed in this very sensitive and difficult sphere.

Parents are, of course, quite right to be concerned that their children might get into sexual difficulty, very much to their own detriment. The sexual drive, even though it is only beginning to stir again at this 10 to 13 years period, is powerful and the child does require parental guidance as well as controls in the activities to which it may lead the child. Much caution is required. Sexual activity which the child will unavoidably engage in, is quite reasonable and healthy and can, if too harshly treated, too severely prohibited, bring with it a marked inhibition which the child may have much difficulty shaking off in later life. Given that sexual activity is part of good love relationships in later life, part of a good marriage, part of the preservation of the species, too harsh and irrational attitudes towards sex will often, if not invariably, create problems for the child more than they will help.

The various ways anxiety may become manifest, some of which we described in the section on Human Development (above), should be handled by parents with consideration and sensitivity. Excessive sloppiness, excessive sexual joking, should be dealt with in constructive ways and not ignored. Reactions of disgust to parental signs of affection with each other, or to television programs which show a couple kissing, might be recognized by parents as evidence of the anxiety created in their child by his/her re-emerging sexual feelings and thoughts. Ridiculing children who so react is not helpful; humor can be. So can casual, brief if necessary, discussion about normal showing of love and its rich contribution to a good marriage.

Similarly, attention needs to be given to 10 to 13 year old children who never verbalize a sexual thought or reacts with severe criticism of any peer who makes a sexual joke. Too strict a prohibition or too severe a criticism of any sexual thoughts could be as problematic as too much sloppiness, and rampant sexual language, given that the extremes are problematic and should be mediated by parents. Here, when a child is too severe regarding a sexual joke parents might allow their humor, not teasing, to come into play to convey to the severe child the normalcy and acceptability of sexual interests.

Handling Sexual Play:

Masturbation:

Normal masturbatory activity is a private activity. It becomes part of parents' concerns only when it is carried out in public or in abusive ways. Masturbatory activity during family gatherings is inappropriate and here, parents can intervene to guide their child to carry out masturbatory activity in private. Parents are well advised to allow their children privacy, to not barge into their children's rooms without first knocking or to

disallow private use of the bathroom. Parental intrusion into the private self explorations of children at this age, tend to create more problems than be helpful. Profound embarrassment will often come with such intrusions and intensify children's prohibitions against sexuality to a degree that may be detrimental. All in all, children 10 to 13 years of age on, and even before this age, have needs for privacy, and however economic conditions make it possible should be respected by parents.

Sexual Interactions with Peers:

While children have a right to and deserve privacy in terms of their own bodily explorations and masturbation, such hands off policy does not apply to their discovery of sexual play between their child and a peer. Here, parental guidance, limit setting, and discussions of sexual play between peers being premature can be very helpful.

Parents may find it somewhat difficult to deal with the common occurrence of sexual interests between siblings. Such sexual interests may lead to intense curiosity as well as exhibitionism both of which need guidance by parents. In only too many cases, some actual sexual interaction occurs from this period on most commonly initiated by a prepubertal boy or girl with a younger sibling, or by a mid adolescent with a prepubertal sibling. Given that sex play between siblings can lead to much conflict, shame and guilt, and have even life-long negative consequences, parents are well informed to be alert to the possibility of sexual play between their children. It is not necessary to be harsh about such supervision, and it can become highly protective of children for parents to be aware of such possibilities especially starting from this age on.

Regarding children's interests in sexual jokes and in pornography, again parental guidance is warranted, given that pornographic materials can be highly stimulating to children this age; parents are wise to set reasonable limits on their distribution and availability to children this age. This does not, however, mean that children should never have a look at some nudity or even pornographic materials, but excessive preoccupation with these and too easy access to such materials should be measured and limited.

Sublimations:

Parents are well advised to know that sublimational activities serve as a magnificent channel for the discharge of sexual pressure in highly constructive and productive form. Supporting children's artistic, academic, sports, activities and the like are enormously helpful by giving the children outlets that are constructive and which will help them delay engagement in sexual activities to a more appropriate age.

5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

5.24 AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

The 10 to 13 year olds genetically-hormonal induced bodily changes influence sexual development more dramatically than others. With these, bones and muscle mass grow more or less dramatically too. Of these, the bone growth precedes muscle frame and mass growth. The latter is more a phenomenon of mid-adolescence. This is critical for understanding whether or not there is an increase in aggressive behavior because of the intimate relationship between the heightening of aggression and the growth of the muscular system. Theorists of adolescence tell us that a large increase in both muscle frame and mass as well as aggression is part and parcel of normal adolescent growth, especially in boys. During the 10 to 13 years period, though, this upsurge of aggression which co-emerges with the enlarging muscle mass is only beginning to be set in motion. Only stirrings anticipatory to such development are evident. Observation and clinical experience point to increases in aggression during the 10 to 13 years period to be mostly reactive to stresses and anxieties commonly stirred in the 10 to 13 year old by her/his developments, namely, the sexual bodily changes that culminate in puberty (see Section 5.23), greater demands of school and the shift to middle or junior high school (see Section 5.21), and stresses in relationships at home and in school which accompany the increased shift of relatedness to peers (see Section 5.22).

5.2411 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Aggressive Behavior

The Continuing Development of Assertiveness and Hostility:

The demands of school, of peer relationships, and the physical transformations of the 10 to 13 year old and the stirrings caused by them are accompanied by some increase in aggressive behaviors. As we noted in the Introduction above, the physical changes that occur during this period tend to be more influenced by sexual development than by the development of aggression. An increase in aggression due to bodily-related and psychologically-related factors will occur during mid-adolescence; it does not yet occur during the 10 to 13 years period. It is more likely that the largest generator of increased aggression, be it assertiveness or hostility, are stress and anxiety; in other words, it is a reactive type of aggression. Even assertiveness during this age period may be of a reactive type.

There are differences in the expressions of aggression and in the intensity of aggression experienced by boys and girls during the 10 to 13 year period. The stresses and anxiety of this period bring an increase in reactive assertiveness especially evident in

boys in that well known masculine "macho" behavior, aggressive behaviors typical of sports efforts, where self aggrandizing and large muscle mass acts are especially exercised. This assertive aggressive behavior may be part of the boy's increasing "masculine" identity stirred now especially in some boys by the beginning sexual physical changes of their bodies. Recognizing their increasing masculine development, the pleasure of this beginning to emerge adult-form masculinity will bring an increase in such exhibitionistic assertiveness to a greater or lesser degree in different boys.

Such an increase in assertiveness is also evident in girls, especially among those who experience their changes in secondary sex characteristics and their increasing feminization with pleasure. Many a girl who has impatiently waited for emerging signs of her being like her mother or like grown women, will feel a boost of self-esteem with these changes and commonly with it, an enlarging degree of non-hostile, confidence boosting, assertive feeling.

In both boys and girls this reactive assertiveness will be further fueled and enhanced by feelings of hurt and injury which will generate hostility. The predominately well-treated 10 to 13 year old may channel such hostility-imbued assertiveness toward constructive goals, such as "I'll prove to them that I can do better!". However, in those children who have suffered much past injury and hurt, in whom a substantial load of hostile destructiveness has accumulated in their psyche, this reactive assertiveness may become overly invested with hostility and lead to antisocial behaviors. In general in children who have been treated quite well, have good family relationships, manage to do well enough in school, experiences that generate hostility in moderate doses can lead to an increase in healthy reactive assertiveness and increase their self-esteem, and fuel stronger efforts at school work and social interactions.

The Emergence of Antisocial Behavior:

Antisocial behavior which may have antecedents during the 6 to 10 years period in excessive lying, destructive behaviors, persisting rage reactions with destructiveness, are likely to become organized during the 10 to 13 years period at a new level. Whereas such earlier behaviors tended to occur within the family setting, the new shift toward peers and the outside world brings expressions of an overload of hostile destructiveness which has stabilized in the psyche to be enacted upon society and the external environment.

There is furthermore a clearer differentiation now in the ways boys and girls manifest their antisocial acts. We want to emphasize though that antisocial acts are not extensive during the 10 to 13 year period; they become much more of a problem during mid and late adolescence. But they do emerge in some prepubertal children, in some boys thrust by inner hurts and large loads of hostile destructiveness accrued in them at the hands of their parents and environment, and frustrated by numerous past failures in relationships and in school. Such boys may engage in defiance, rejecting, rebellious behaviors, flaunting rules and even safety regulations which may bring harm to property, to others, and to themselves. This is when, for instance, a boy may react to the stirrings within him of increasing masculinity burdened by much hostility by demonstrating to his peers how brave and powerful he is, like the 12 year old who climbed upon a local train

and, disregarding the information he had gathered in the past regarding its dangers, became electrocuted by touching the power line which energized the train. Obviously, such acts happen infrequently, but they do occur and may do so especially during this transitional time from childhood into adolescence.

Similarly, girls maltreated and abused may disregard the many warnings they have heard against dangers they may face. Some maltreated girls who yearn for a promising peer relationship, for the promise of love, may engage in premature and unprotected sexual activity that may lead to much too early pregnancy. Some maltreated and abused girls 10 to 13 years of age, in such acts may also yearn for a baby who they hope will love them, feeling that expectations of love from adults as well as peers is hopeless. Although hidden, the play of accumulated hostile destructiveness is large in such girls, becoming expressed in a rejection of past cautions and warnings as well as in directing hostility toward the self, a major contributor to their derailed behavior.

Other Manifestations of Aggression:

The increases in aggression generated by the stresses of this developmental period will play a part in 10 to 13 year old children's interactions with their family as well as with their peers. It is common, given that siblings are both part of family and are peers, that a heightening of aggression between siblings occurs at this age. Although siblings are a large source of mutual support, of cohesiveness in relationships, as all parents know only too well, they also get much of whatever hostility the 10 to 13 year old feels displaced upon them. Such sibling hostility may be transient and does not need to predict long lasting harsh and hostile relatedness. Nonetheless, parental guidance and supervision are very helpful.

We must also mention that some reactions include regressions as we noted in Section 5.23, in this case, however, it is in the face of increasing strength in aggression. Our children become frightened by the stirrings of their sexual feelings, they also become frightened by stirrings of aggression both by assertiveness as well as by hostile destructiveness. Again, among the defenses children may use in the face of an increase in aggression is the magnificent pathway of sublimation. And with regard to aggression, no sublimational pathway is better than that of sports and constructive physical activity.

5.2412 CHILD REARING: Aggressive Behavior

The Further Development of Nondestructive Aggression and Hostility:

We all recognize that nondestructive aggression (as in assertiveness) and hostility both fuel action, self protection and mastery, are essential ingredients for adaptation, the fulfilling of our goals, the mastery of challenges in the world, and that both are essential for successful life. At the same time, we all know only too well, aggression in the form of hostility can create enormous problems within the self, in human interactions, and in

society. It is essential that parents are aware of this complex contribution aggression makes to our children. It means, here as before and as it also will during adolescence, that parents must foster that aggression which is constructive and promotes good mental health and adaptation as well as achievement, on the one hand, and that they must help their children mediate successfully whatever hostility is generated within them by the numerous possibilities for pain and injury that exist in the young child's life.

With this in mind, it is well for parents to support the modest increases in both their boys and girls in assertiveness while they try to help their children mediate constructively whatever hostility is generated within them by current events. A boy's prideful display of hair on his lip accompanied by some assertive claim of growing prowess and strength is more likely to increase reasonable self-confidence when supported by parents than when ridiculed. On the other hand, such a boy's emergent defiance possibly accompanied by some nasty language could be dealt with by supporting his growing vigor and strength while limiting its expression in unacceptable language or manner. It is important to restrict the hostile component of the behavior without restricting the assertive component of it.

Similarly, a girl's larger claim to doing what she wants to do, expressing in non hostile tones a disagreement with her mother or her father should meet with tolerance, an appreciation of her increasing self confidence and assertiveness, and not be the subject for ridicule. Just like for the boy, hostile displays of defiance can be dealt with by limiting the hostile expression, especially when the language is foul, while the increasing assertiveness and confidence is supported.

It is of course important for parents to recognize that in supporting assertive behavior at this age they are also giving their children permission, both boys and girls, to strengthen in their respective identifications as male and female, an increase in feelings which accompany their emerging secondary sex characteristics and gives specificity to their evolving gender-self.

Antisocial Behavior:

All normal children 10 to 13 years of age will occasionally lie, occasionally cheat be it in games or in snitching a quarter from a parent or a sibling, events which are an opportunity for parents to reaffirm the expectation of honorable conduct with respect for others and what belongs to others. Such events are no cause for alarm.

Where children 10 to 13 become involved in acts that cause problems for other peers, family, home and property, on a recurrent basis and show strong evidence of disregarding reasonable rules and regulations requires parental attention. Behaviors as these, which we all recognize as antisocial, as disregarding of other people in a harsh and offensive manner, cannot be assumed to be part of normal development. In fact, the assumption must be made that some underlying disregard for others and society is at play and that this is usually the product of an overload of hostility toward others and authority accumulated from past experiences. It is well for parents to know that antisocial behavior which is persistent enough will probably require some professional input. Even in circumstances where parents believe they have been devoted, respecting and considerate

of their child, such behavior may indicate some underlying strain in the parent-child relationship or it may originate within the child himself/herself or come from some strong influence from a peer or a peer group. Whatever the origins of the behavior, when it takes the form of antisocial acts which repeat themselves with some regularity, strategies for intervention by parents can be facilitated by professionals who have expertise in preadolescent and adolescent behavior. Parents are well advised to know that such behavior during preadolescence can be seen as an opportunity for constructive intervention which can prevent the stabilizing of antisocial behavior during adolescence, a time when it is intensified and facilitated by normal adolescent developmental processes.

Other Aspects of Aggressive Behavior:

Again given the stresses and anxieties produced by this developmental period, hostile behaviors can be expected to come from even the best of 10 to 13 year olds. Again, parents can be guiding in such behaviors. This will especially be the case when such behaviors occur toward siblings, who is both family and peer and who is most targeted for the displacement of hostility.

One special caution to parents regarding hostility expressed by boys toward girls, or girls toward boys, be it in peer relationships or in relationships between siblings. It is common, perhaps more so in boys than in girls but girls are equally capable of it, for a boy to express hostility toward a girl whom he finds attractive and for whom he has difficulty containing his feelings and wishes. It is not uncommon for a boy to be hostile to a neighbor girl, or his older or younger sister as a means of protecting himself from a strong sexual attraction that he might not be able to restrain. The same can be said for a sister toward a brother or toward some nice enough neighborhood boy. In other words then, hostility in this case serves the child to protect against what he/she may feel to be feelings of sexual attraction experienced by the child as threatening. It is easy enough to identify whether this is the case or not, given that such hostility is usually directed toward a person of the other sex. This will be even clearer, when that type of behavior is experienced toward a girl, sibling or other, with whom the boy had a good relationship in the past. The same applies for the girl.

With regard to the channeling a substantial load of hostility, parents encouraging their child to put some of that energy into some constructive purpose such as practicing some basketball or some gymnastics, or some other motoric activity the child enjoys can be very useful. We do not mean the directing of such excessive energy into activities the child dislikes such as taking the garbage out, or raking the leaves. Obviously such activities are called for on the part of children in a household, but it is not wise to attempt to channel their hostile energies into such activities since proposing such activity may further heighten a feeling of being put down, taken advantage of, etc., and the varied minor distortions an angry child is subject to.

Of course, the best way of supporting a child's channeling higher loads of hostility into sporting activities is to support that child's interest in these and to be there when a child participates in games as well as complimenting success and encouraging effort even when that effort does not always succeed.

5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

5.25 THE CHILD'S ABILITIES TO ADAPT -- PART II

We return now to the major area of developmental concern, the child's growing capacity to adapt, to cope with external and internal challenges of life. In Adaptive Functioning -- Part I, Section 5.21, we took up the child's overall adaptation, his/her affective (emotional) reactivity and the development of cognitive functioning (intelligence). We held off the discussion which follows of other categories of adaptive functioning, because we felt that detailing some of the large demands made on the child by sexual and aggressive maturations would give greater clarity to why these adaptive efforts are made by the child and how parents might best help their children achieve good adaptation.

Now then, we will first discuss the continuing evolving of dependence and self reliance, then psychic defense mechanisms, and thirdly other highly valuable adaptive capacities such as empathy, altruism, and sublimation.

5.2511 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Dependence and Self Reliance

The 10 to 13 year old continues to be dependent on parents for **physical** (shelter, clothing, food), **emotional** (affection, emotional availability, comforting, etc.), and **adaptive functional needs** (guidance, limits, homework support, home chores, etc.). However, there clearly is a shift to greater self-reliance in many a 10 to 13 year old in the adaptive functional needs, many such a prepubertal child having already developed patterns of doing work (homework particularly) with no need for help from parents. Physical and emotional needs continue at the high levels as before.

As the 10 year old passes through the prepubertal stage, the increasingly clearer inner sense and image of self produced by the emergent physical verification (secondary sex characteristics) of being male or a female raises the awareness of the self to a new level. Every progressive new awareness of one's self which better defines the self, makes clearer one's complementing dependence on others and reliance on oneself. During the 10 to 13 years era, the emerging physical characteristics and verification of the self as male or as female builds upon, but also loosens, past self concepts and sets the stage for the large adolescent task of organizing and stabilizing one's sense of identity, as psychoanalyst Erikson said. The 10 to 13 years period is a transitional period from child to adolescent and therewith, a period of loosening of internal structures which had stabilized during the 6 to 10 year period occurs.

The more the emergent changes bring with them pleasure, excitement, arrival of long-awaited developments, to this degree will the child feel better, stronger, more self-

reliant. To the degree that these changes bring with them disappointment, fear, lack of readiness for these changes, the less the well being and the feeling of inner-sustainment. In this case, the self, while basically as self-reliant as before, is like at all times of stress, more likely to need to turn to others for support, calming of anxieties, the soothing of uncomfortable and unpleasant feelings, the answering of worrisome questions, the reassurance that things will work out.

The gender related changes of prepuberty which tax the child and make for a greater need to turn to others, now tends to turn the child toward peers more than before. Many children turn to parents for answers to questions pertaining to these changes as well as for support and reassurance in terms of the anxieties these arouse. But because much of the child's fantasy life associated with sexual changes make it difficult for the child to approach the parents, the child more readily turns to the same sex peer who now becomes a preferred source of information and private confidences.

Of course, parents still very substantially are needed for love, approval, guidance, limit setting and protection, food, shelter, etc. Peers become more and more important in social interaction, are needed for one on one and in group interactions, school related contacts and the emerging sexual interests which for the most part -- though there are exceptions -- are not yet verbalized or put into action. Where these are put into action at this age, it is usually in response to seductions by older peers (or adults).

5.2512 CHILD REARING: How to Optimize Dependence and Self Reliance:

The task for parents at this time like at other times, is to be available for the child's needs of the parents, the physical, emotional and adaptive functional needs. It is highly advantageous that parents respond adequately, appropriately, positively to such needs, while at the same time allowing the child to exercise self reliance, as well as to turn appropriately to peers which increases at this time. The child needs the parent's approval of his/her continuing efforts at self reliance as well as the progressive establishing of relationships with the peer group. It is an interesting challenge for the parent to on the one hand support the child's efforts at self reliance while at the same time being available for responding to the child's wide-ranging needs, especially the need for parental support and approval of the many efforts the 10 to 13 year old child makes.

It is well for parents to help the child extend contacts with peers, help select peers who contribute constructively to relatedness, peers of whom the parents can approve. Children do need protection against engaging in relationships with peers who may bring problems with them that could be of substantial consequence to the child. Clearly peers who give evidence of antisocial tendencies and behaviors should be screened by parents. There is no better place to learn about such behaviors than by inviting the child to have friends come to the house, where parents can have one on one contact with the peers selected by their child. Although children will tend to be on "better behavior" when visiting another peer's house, sensitive and interested parents will pick up within the available behaviors whether or not there is evidence of behavior that is troublesome as

compared to being desirable and growth-promoting.

No doubt most challenging for parents will be the prepubertal child's continuing need for guidance and growth-promoting limits.

5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

5.2521 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Defense Mechanisms

The student has learned that psychic defense mechanisms differentiate out of the child's capacity to protect himself/herself in the face of what the child experiences as a danger. Whereas a barking dog will frighten a 3 year old, the 10 to 13 year old is more likely to fear threats from a hostile peer bigger than himself/herself or a group of antagonistic peers. In addition though the 10 to 13 year old experiences fears that arise from within herself/himself. The fear of loss of parental love continues but now also fear of rejection by peers is experienced as a danger. Fear of failure in school, or in sports; fear of humiliation abounds. These internal sources of danger lead the child to experience anxiety.

As we said earlier, **anxiety** is the feeling produced by experiencing a sense of helplessness in the face of what the child experiences as a danger. Like at earlier years, it can range widely from modest anxiety to panic. Here too, to protect himself/herself against this wide range of anxiety the child sets up a variety of defense mechanisms. As we discussed in prior Units (e.g., Section 3.2521), defenses are also employed against feelings of depression, that painful affect experienced in reaction to feeling that a terrible event has occurred. As we said before, whereas **in anxiety** the experience is a perception that a catastrophe **is going** to occur: "My peers will reject me"; **in depression**, the experience is that a catastrophe **has** occurred: "I am rejected, I am worthless".

Remember that defense mechanisms are triggered by internally initiated painful feelings and seem to be programmed by the child in ways which cannot be governed by the external environment nor for that matter, by the child himself/herself. But we can predict what kind of defense mechanisms a child may use by virtue of having seen the particular child use specific certain defense mechanisms in the face of earlier specific experiences or situations. For instance, some 10 to 13 year old children will tend to use **obsessive-compulsive** defenses (organizing their behavior in a routinized or even ritualistic manner) in order to master feelings of anxiety arising from the feelings and fantasies stirred up by their developing secondary sex characteristics. A child who has used obsessive-compulsive defenses in the past can be predicted to also use these in the face of this new source of anxiety. Other children will more selectively use **avoidance** (staying away from) and **denial** (acting as if the source of anxiety and the anxiety itself or the painful depression did not exist). Again, children known to use avoidance and denial especially at prior stages of development may very well use these at this new phase in the face of high levels of anxiety.

An especially crucial development makes for an intensification of the use of defense mechanism during the 10 to 13 years period. It is that the stirrings of prepuberty proper, the preparatory phase and the earliest emergence of secondary sex characteristics, tend to loosen the stability of adaptive functioning achieved by the 8 to 10 year old and also challenges his/her developing sense of morality. This is so because self identity is

developing further. One of the problems it brings with it is that the hope of being someone other than who one is further restricted. Most children welcome the long awaited highly distinguishable signs of growing up. But most will also be made anxious by them. Defenses will be used to protect against this anxiety, e.g., **denial** of interest in sex, or its **sublimation** into creative work. In addition, every normal child whose identifications with **both** his/her mother and father may occasionally fantasy being like mother, or like father, will now experience a further definition of the self according to the child's specific gender, male or female. The boy's wish to be like his mother, the girl's wish to be like her father, will be confronted by the emerging changes of bodily sexual characteristics. Of course, this will be especially distressing to the tomboy as well as to a boy with more than average feminine leanings and identifications.

There are other sources of anxiety as well. While the growth associated with prepuberty is gratifying to most children, the increasing strengths of their bodies, in boys the enlarging musculature, may make some abused and/or otherwise traumatized children fear increasingly losing control of their overload of hostility. They may defend against the anxiety it causes by adopting a feeling of being weak, inept, and of underachieving (**reaction formation** [turning a feeling or state of being into its opposite: "I am not strong, I couldn't even hurt a fly!"], and **inhibition** [to stop an action, force or process]).

Some 10 to 13 year olds may feel "not ready" for their bodies to change, a major sign of growing up, and they may **regress**, revert to younger ways of behaving feeling and being. Work may be a source of anxiety as well. Some 10 to 13 year olds who do not do well in school may protect against feelings of failure, shame and depression by devaluing (**denying** the value of) school performance and education, or, more positively, they may try to accommodate and **sublimate** by putting much energy into another endeavor where they feel more competent and capable, e.g., like in sports. All in all, any experience, and there are many individualized ones, which causes high levels of anxiety, depression, shame, guilt, i.e., any form of emotional pain, may lead the child to using defense mechanisms to protect against feeling such pain. Excessive pain is unbearable; if we do not make efforts to decrease the experience of pain, being alive could be too painful. Thus, children as well as adults use defense mechanisms as a means of coping, and most usually as a means of giving one a chance to adapt and cope constructively with life. Of course, defense mechanisms when used too vigorously and too persistently may prevent the individual's making efforts to cope more constructively with situations that can be solved and outgrown.

5.2522 CHILD REARING: Defense Mechanisms

As we have said before, defense mechanisms are instituted by intrapsychic processes (reactions and functions) which the child cannot control, and which do not lend themselves to being influenced by the parents. Parents, however, can be helpful to their children in this area of development as follows.

First, understanding that such defense mechanisms operate within the child as a

means of helping him/her cope with troublesome sexual or destructive fantasies, conflicts, and feelings like hate, anxiety, depression, guilt and shame, can facilitate the parents' understanding of some of their child's behaviors. For instance, in appreciating the need for the defense mechanism of **regression** (to act and behave in a more immature way) will no doubt make a parent more sympathetic to a child's reverting to younger behavior than has been evident in the recent past.

Thus, a 10 to 11 year olds reverting to needing a parent's help with homework can be experienced by the parent not as an actual and long term return by the prepubertal child to a preceding developmental stage, but rather, as a temporary strategy which will provide the child a degree of protection and security that will then make it possible for her/him to return to the level of current experiencing even as the child makes further efforts to overcome the anxiety stirred by her/his new experiences.

Similarly, the parent who understands that mechanisms of defense help the child cope are more likely to find ways of being helpful, supportive and guiding. For instance, the parent who understands the play of **reaction formations** (turning a feeling one experiences into its opposite, such as feeling hate making the child behave as though he/she were feeling love) will keep a vigilant eye out for a child who is just too nice, never gets angry, never displeases the parent, and if by chance does so then suddenly experiences marked anxiety. Helping the child understand that being angry with people we love is something we all feel and that hostility can be contained even when one gets stronger, can be enormously helpful. The parent may then be able to help free his/her child from oppressive inhibitions against first feeling and then coping in acceptable ways with such hostility. Thus, the parent helps prevent the child's internalizing hostility excessively, enhancing also the child's mitigation of it by her/his use of reaction formation and other defenses.

Parents can be helpful to their 10 to 13 year old who may develop secondary sex characteristics earlier than her/his peers or quite later than they. The prepubertal child who develops early may be prone to experience a variety of individualized reactions including anxiety, shame, fear, use of a variety of defense mechanisms including messiness (dressing slovenly), uncleanliness (not bathe for days), and become irritable, easily angry, tearful, etc. So too, with the 13 year old child whose developments have not yet begun. Recognizing that such feelings, behaviors, reactions may be caused by such either too early or too delayed developments tends to make parents more sympathetic, tolerant of such behavior to a point, and intervene more helpfully.

To intervene helpfully means to do so with respect and caution, without undue intrusiveness, without forcing a child to talk about what is troubling her/him. It also means making a series of efforts, not just one or two, and above all, it means being emotionally available to the child and to listen closely and with interest and concern to what the child is saying. Parents who are too busy to listen and pay attention to their children invariably cannot be helpful to them.

5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

5.2531 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Other Adaptive Capabilities

The demands made on the self by inner pressures, needs, wishes and transgressive fantasies which cause anxiety, depression, and other painful feelings lead not only to the erecting of coping defenses. These also lead to those remarkable adaptive capabilities that richly contribute to our well being: empathy, altruism, and sublimation. Having begun to emerge in the early years of life, they continue to develop with each stage of development.

Empathy:

Empathy, the ability to perceive and feel what another person is feeling without oneself being subject to the same intensity of feeling, is further heightened by the awareness of one's own inner physical and emotional changes. It is also further heightened by observing physical and behavioral changes in peers who are at the threshold of becoming increasingly more important to the 10 to 13 year old. The emergence of a higher level of importance of the peer group, preparatory to its heightened importance in adolescence, contributes to the need for better tuning-in with peers who will not be capable of the parental level of attending to, paying attention to, and altruistically yielding to the child. Being themselves 10 to 13 year olds, peers are not yet able to altruistically lend themselves to the well being of another -- a requisite for growth-promoting parenting. Of course there are exceptions, including those who may be precociously able to be parental at this age, as well as those who by virtue of their hurtful past experiences will be totally incapable of such empathy or altruism. The shifting, increasing importance of the peer will demand better attunement to that peer for successful, rewarding relatedness. With this, a new demand for increasing one's capacity for empathy occurs in the 10 to 13 year old.

Of course, the experiences the child has had so far will substantially contribute to the 10 to 13 year olds increasing capacity for empathy. So will the child's inborn dispositions. Some 10 year olds will already have been known to be very sensitive to the feelings of others; some others, much less so. Some 10 year olds whose family experiences have been depriving or traumatizing may find this time period and that of adolescence one during which a second chance presents itself to begin to form rewarding, need-fulfilling relationships. Other 10 year olds who were so deprived and traumatized may join a cluster of new friends and in a group do to others what they feel was done to them, that is, become hostile and destructive. Others still, may isolate themselves further at this time.

Altruism:

Much the same can be said for the continuing development of **altruism**, that wish and tendency to be generous to someone at the expense of some moderate deprivation to oneself. We note again, that when altruism becomes excessive, it can rob the self of self concern required for healthy development and a good enough achievement of one's own goals and ambitions. Altruism is needed in relationships with peers. It is preparatory for that required in later mate-hood and eventually in parenthood.

Sublimation:

Similarly, during the 10 to 13 years period, a further organizational level of **sublimation** is achieved, preparatory to the large increase in sublimational activity characteristic of adolescence. The changes in the self, the increasing interest in peers, the heightening of inner pressures (sexual and aggressive), the heightening of feelings painful to the self (anxiety, depression, shame and guilt) are all conducive to the relieving capacity of sublimations. In the face of the need to mediate, to deal with, to rid oneself of these burdensome reactions and feelings, sublimational channels will be further developed and implemented. We all know only too well how artistic, creative activity, sports, are constructive ways "to keep youth out of mischief". It is because such sublimation pathways can harness the energies and interests which might otherwise lead to premature, irresponsible sexual and destructive behavior, that we have come to know how to help young people "keep out of mischief".

5.2532 CHILD REARING: Other Adaptive Capabilities

As we said before, one of the principal ways by which parents can help their children develop empathy, altruism and sublimation is by their own modeling of these. Although this is no guarantee for their development, the 10 to 13 year old whose parents are empathic will have a substantial advantage in this regard. The same can be said for altruism and for sublimation. This is so because identification is a major contributor to the formation of every child's adaptations and character.

Another way in which parents can enhance the development of these capabilities in their children is to be supportive of them when these occur. A father telling his 11 year old how generous he is in helping his younger sibling will give the child a feeling of pride about behaving so, which will then in turn bring pleasure to the child. This applies to both the child's exhibiting a moment of empathy or a moment of altruism.

Parents who do not encourage and complement these behaviors lose the double opportunity to approve of and to enhance the invaluable adaptive capabilities of their children. It is important to bear in mind though that supporting a child's efforts at empathy, altruism and sublimation, should not be an exaggeration of the child's achievements. Such support will enhance the child's efforts at such activities when they are truly demonstrative of such capabilities. It is well to bear in mind that helping the child in his/her capacities for empathy, altruism and sublimation will help the child form

good relationships and increase her/his capacity to work and to learn. It is well to bear in mind that these developments are the ones which will be those the child will have as an adult.

5.2 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

5.26 CONSCIENCE FORMATION

We noted in Unit 3 as well as in Unit 4 that the child's conscience, as a structure of the mind which strongly determines the conduct and behavior of the individual, becomes organized during the 3 to 6 years period, and stabilizes at this new level during the 6 to 10 years. Contributions to conscience formation emerge from the near the end of the first year of life on, which from those early months already impact on and more or less influence and control the child's behavior. These, however, result straight-forwardly from the child's taking into her/his own mind the dictates, the prohibitions and the admonitions of the parents. It seems to be only during the 3 to 6 years period that the child begins to develop a conscience which has an authority that arises from within the child himself/herself. This conscience is organized and constructed at a level where the child's capacity has emerged for evaluating what is right and what is wrong, no longer just what is good and what is bad, a change powerfully determining of morality. This level of right and wrong knowing conscience stabilizes during the six to 10 years period.

We continue with discussing conscience as consisting of two major components.

(1) The **conscience proper**, the determiner of "Dos" and "Don'ts", that is of right and wrong, the **morality** component of conscience which by its disapproval produces feelings of guilt in the child. The clearest example of this component of conscience we propose is that wishing to destroy someone we value and/or love leads to feelings of **guilt**.

(2) The second component of conscience hold the image of the **ideal self**. Its contribution to conscience lies especially in the fact that when the child does or feels something he/she views as not in line with standards which constitute the ideal self, the child experiences feelings of **shame**. In other words, the degree to which the actual self behaves according to the standards contained within the ideal self, to that degree will the individual child or person feel pride and have a high sense of self-esteem; the more the individual behaves in ways that are removed from the standards that constitute the ideal self, the more the individual feels shame, a low sense of self-esteem, and a feeling of inferiority.

These two constituent parts of conscience operate hand in hand with some degree of reciprocity. That is to say, disregarding or violating a parental dictate brings with it not only a reaction of disapproval and some degree of guilt, it can also lead to a sense of behaving below one's standards which brings with it feelings of shame. Most commonly feeling guilt tends to also be associated with feeling shame. On the other hand, feeling shame does not always lead to feeling guilty. There are, however, differences between these two components of conscience; the most prominent, in addition to the different systems that govern each, are differences in their developments. Psychodynamically-oriented infant researchers and child developmentalists tell us that the first reactions of conscience which the child seems capable of and which pertain to the internalization of parental dictates and admonitions, are the reactions of shame. From near the end of the

first year of life when the child begins to internalize parental dictates, until into the fourth year of life, the predominant conscience reaction seems to be one of shame. It is the result then, of not living up to the standards the child is beginning to internalize which are laid down by the parents' dictates: "I like you when you do this", "I don't approve of your behavior when you do that". From about 4 years of age on guilt makes its appearance. A central theory of psychoanalytic conscience formation is that conflict due to ambivalence -- hating someone we love and, therefore, value -- created by the child's family romance (described in Unit 3) seems to be the central intrapsychic (within the mind) dynamic which leads the child to develop an agency within the self which determines what is right and what is wrong which stands in contrast to the earlier feelings of being good or being bad.

It remains an open question, whether the child younger than 4 years is capable of feeling guilt, i.e., "I have done something **wrong**". If we assume that the child experiences ambivalence, can feel he hates someone he loves (is attached to and values), prior to the age of 4 years, then it is possible that the child experiences guilt as well as shame prior to 4 years of age. That is to say, since the child is known to be capable of hating and loving from the middle of the second year of life on, then it is possible that a child is capable of feeling guilt from the latter part of the second year of life on as well as shame. One more note on the development of conscience.

The development of conscience is mostly determined by the child's relationship to his/her primary caregivers, whether there is only one parent or two. Conscience formation is strongly determined by a child's confrontation, especially from early life on in the context of limit setting, of approval and disapproval of conduct, of conflictual interaction (whether in actuality or in fantasy), **with those the child loves**. Prohibitions, punishments, by authorities whom the individual does not hold in high regard, in short for whom he/she does not feel love, does not lead to the internalization of right and wrong, and does not increase a sense of morality. School authorities, law enforcement agencies know only too well how frequently punishment fails even when it is quite harsh. The most powerful factor responsible for its failure, although there are other contributors, is that the person punished does not value, respect, in short "love" the authority administering the punishment.

Next to the parents, valued secondary relationships are next in line as effectors of the development of morality in the individual. Valued teachers, and especially now in the 10 to 13 year old the emerging in importance of the peer group, also have a substantial impact on conscience formation. This means that essentially, peers will begin to have a substantial impact on conscience formation from elementary school years on, although their contribution at this time is weaker than it will be as time goes by. It is especially during adolescence, when the child's internalized representations of the parents in their conscience is tested and revised against the morality -- rules of conduct and values -- of the peer group, that the impact of the peer group will be largest. Individuals vary in the extent to which the morality internalized from the peer group will modify or even dislodge the morality earlier internalized from the parent-child relationship. It is likely that where the relationships between child and parents has been good over time, the influence of the peer group in terms of changing the existing internalized morality will be

least. On the other hand, the more hostile the relationships between parents and child from early childhood on, the more likely the eagerness on the part of the individual to acquire new relationships which will be experienced less painfully, and the greater the impact of these new peer relationships on the modifications of conscience during adolescence.

Conscience formations continues to evolve and develop into adulthood and becomes more organized and stable during the third decade of life. It can, however, continue to be modified during the fourth and fifth decades and, under stress (e.g., conditions of war, torture, etc.) can undergo severe regression and reorganization.

5.2611 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Conscience Formation

The Development of Morality:

The 10 to 13 years period brings with it a soft loosening of conscience. The stability of conscience obtained during the early elementary school years, the 6 to 10 years period, is lessened by the increasing importance of the 10 to 13 year of the peer group. Seeing the peer group's different rules of interaction and conduct, of play and rivalries, from those of family life leads to the child's questioning the "Do's" and "Don'ts", what is right and what is wrong. But the play of this new influence on the child's existing conscience varies according to the kind of conscience which has developed so far. This however, does not decrease the 10 to 13 year old's capacity to experience guilt when he/she does something the child feels is wrong.

As noted above, theorists of conscience formation have proposed that the degree to which the child feels unloved, abused and hates, the degree to which hostile destructiveness has been generated within the child up to the time of conscience formation is a large determiner of how harsh the conscience will become or may lead to its mal-development and even non-development. Therefore, in children who are insufficiently well cared for and where a substantial degree of hostility has accumulated (resulting from frequent experiences of excessive unpleasure over the course of the first 10 years of life), the more likely is this child to develop a harsh conscience. Interestingly, given that conscience formation is dependent on feeling love for those one wishes to destroy, children whose relationships with their parents have been especially harsh and hurtful, where the child experiences the parents as rejecting and where a predominantly hostile attachment and relatedness have developed, such children's assessment of right and wrong will be biased or distorted by the excessive hostility they feel. Also, children who form insufficient attachments, who do not value enough those who care for them, will tend to have insufficient consciences, suffer from insufficient guilt in reaction to their hate and wishes to destroy, and will have the predisposition to becoming antisocial, delinquent individuals. All in all, children who are loved, respected and well cared for are likely to develop a substantially healthy conscience. A conscience

can be too weak, and it can be too harsh. The prime determiners of this are the degree to which the child loves and is loved in balance with the degree to which the child feels hated and hates. It is the balance of these two which in experiencing the wish to destroy the parent the child loves produces guilt.

The Development of Standards for the Self:

The fear of loss of love from those we need, value and love, and the fear of being abandoned by them, and the fear of being injured in punishment by them, give the child an inner sense of urgency to develop not only standards for what is right and wrong, but also standards for becoming the type of person the child ideally wishes to become. From this aspect of experiencing, standards for the self established during the first 10 years may lose some of their stability during the 10 to 13 years period, due to the beginning recognition of the wish for approval and acceptance **from peers**. This now still somewhat modestly active factor will be strongly influential to total development during the adolescent years.

This component of conscience gets its major contribution from the child's identifications with the loved and idealized parents. Just as the morality component of conscience can be too harsh or too low, so too the idealized image of the self can be too great and can be too little. Like with the play of love and hate in the structuring of the morality component of conscience, so too will love and hate play a part in the development of standards for the self. Namely, the better the relationship between child and parent, the better the child feels loved and loves, the less the intensity of hate (because less hostile destructiveness has accumulated over the first ten years of life), the closer the child will feel herself/himself to the idealized self, the more will the child's current self-esteem be.

During the 10 to 13 years period, idealization of individuals into heroes and heroines is directly linked up with the idealization of the parents. Although some of this continues during the 10 to 13 years period, an awakening importance of the peer begins to make some peer models for idealization. The highly cheered neighboring high school football star, or the pretty next door teenager, or the highly advertised all-A's achieving cousin, may add to the ideal self image and even modify the existing one.

5.2612 CHILD REARING: Conscience Formation

The Development of Morality:

By their behavior toward their child in approving or disapproving of the child's conduct, especially whether the approval is convincing and whether the disapproval is hostile or is mediated by sound love feelings, the parents will contribute to the child's own internalized approving and disapproving attitudes. The challenge to parents of setting limits in a loving but firm rather than in a hostile manner, in their expression of

feelings of love, of anger and even of hate toward their children heavily influence the way the child will experience herself/himself. In addition, by virtue of the degree to which they stir love or hate within the child for the self, by these they will determine the quality of the child's own conscience formation. During the 10 to 13 years period, the child's experience of hostility and hate toward the parent, never an easy experience for the hard-working parent, can become extraordinarily difficult to withstand. The child is growing now, is no longer small and it is much easier to feel "Oh, you don't mean that" in order to avoid the pain a child's hate causes the parents. Especially worrisome is the parent's wondering: "What she/he will be like in a few years" (i.e., as a teenager). Like earlier in life, how the parent reacts to such declaration of hostile feelings is critical. The parent who feels so injured that he/she reacts with sharp hostility to the child "You'll never amount to anything!", or "I hope your children talk to you that way!", is certain to create further hurt in the child with a further intensification of the hostile feelings and of guilt. The parent who reacts "I know you don't mean that" when this is exactly what the 11 year old means at the time, also creates intense feelings of self criticism in the child. In both cases the intensity of the child's counter-reaction against himself/herself will be intensified. This will add to the child's own substantial load of disapproval and self recrimination.

Like in earlier years, it is important that the parent takes the child's "I hate you" seriously but feels not hurt too harshly, trusting the child's long existing shows of affection. Where the parent is able to empathically (based on understanding the child's feelings) tolerate these, and at an appropriate moment -- not in the heat of battle -- reassure the child that the love the child also feels will win out over his hate is, indeed, certain to help the child resolve his/her feelings of rage and hate. Depreciating the child for expressing such feelings, inducing guilt beyond what the child will generate himself/herself, will only intensify the harshness of the child's own conscience and will bring with it more pain for many years to come. Understanding the child, knowing what the child's behavior means, what is causing it, empathy ("What is my child feeling and why?") in both attempting to understand and determining how to handle the child's behaviors, respect for the child, the use of some firm but non-hostile humor, being realistic, all can contribute positively to optimizing the child's conscience formation.

On Developing Standards for the Self:

Love, respect, firm limits, non-hostile humor in one's parenting are major facilitators in handling the unavoidable difficult (conflicting, hostile) interactions that occur between the growing 10 to 13 year old and his/her parents. It applies to this period of development as well as it has in the past and will in the future. Remember that when humor is hostile, becomes ridiculing and teasing, it then loses its ability of helping the 10 year old deal with painful reality and experience. The same can be said for limit-setting that is too harsh or too timid. Ridiculing, sarcasm, hostile teasing, taunting, bullying, inflexibility, too frequent punishment and abusing a child all make painful reality even more painful. These induce further pain and hostility as well as shame in the child, lowering the child's self-regard and self-esteem. Shaming the child when the child

expresses a feeling of defeat, or of rivalry, or of hate, also contributes to undermining the child's self-evaluation and self-esteem.

Given the high level of emotional investment the child has made over 10 years and continues to make in his/her family relationships, the child is in a vulnerable position for the induction of shame and guilt by harsh, inconsiderate handling of the child, his/her thoughts and feelings. Thoughtfulness, respect for the child superimposed on loving will protect the 10 to 13 year old against undue injury to his/her self-esteem, self-image, at the hands of his/her parents.