As students reach adolescence, peer relationships become increasingly important. Adolescents are forming deeper friendships with those in their age group as well as the social, romantic, and professional relationships they will experience in adulthood.

**Adolescents are**

- More sensitive to rewards related to social evaluation, which include feelings of belonging, acceptance, admiration, and respect, particularly from their peers.
- More motivated to take risks, either positive or negative, when they are aware of the presence of peers.
- More motivated to engage in activities or behaviors that reflect the shared values and interests of their peers.

**Why? During adolescence young people are motivated by their peers.**

As students reach adolescence, peer relationships become increasingly important. Adolescents are forming deeper friendships with those in their age group as well as the social, romantic, and professional relationships they will experience in adulthood.

**What can you do? As an adult, you aren’t powerless.**

As adolescents become more independent, they need different types of support from adults. Adults should guide adolescents as they develop the knowledge and skills needed to function independently.

**Educators can**

- Build trusting relationships with students.
- Structure learning to include peer interaction.
- Identify and build upon students’ interests in their learning.

My students are so talkative in class. They pay too much attention to their friends and don’t engage in the lesson.
The Alliance for Excellent Education (All4Ed) is a Washington, DC–based national policy, practice, and advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that all students, particularly those underperforming and those historically underserved, graduate from high school ready for success in college, work, and citizenship. all4ed.org

SCIENCE OF ADOLESCENT LEARNING (SAL) CONSENSUS STATEMENT REPORT SERIES

Report 1: How Body and Brain Development Affect Student Learning
Adolescence is a critical window for student learning and development. The first report of the series highlights SAL research and describes the key biological, cognitive, social, and emotional development processes that occur during the adolescent years and their implications for education practice and policy.

Report 2: Risk Taking, Rewards, and Relationships
Supporting adolescent risk taking and relationship building can increase adolescents’ motivation to learn and even improve their ability to learn. Using neuroscience, and social and psychological research, the second report of the series highlights how educators and leaders can shift their thinking about adolescent behavior to capitalize on the unique learning opportunities of this developmental stage.

Report 3: Valuing Culture, Experiences, and Environments
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Report 4: How Identity and Empowerment Influence Student Learning
Providing adolescent students with opportunities to shape their own learning experiences supports their identity development and their learning outcomes. The fourth report of the series discusses how in-school and out-of-school contexts nurture or obstruct student voice and agency. The report also highlights neuroscience research for educators and leaders to inform their decisionmaking when designing developmentally appropriate adolescent learning opportunities.

Visit all4ed.org/SAL to learn more about All4Ed's SAL initiative.