



PARENTING SKILLS FOR ADOLESCENTS: CHALLENGES, BEST PRACTICES, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

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ABSTRACT:

Adolescence, spanning roughly from 10 to 19 years of age, is one of the most transformative periods of human life. Parents act as the primary socializing agents who influence adolescents' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral outcomes. In India, where more than 253 million adolescents represent over one-fifth of the population (UNICEF, 2023), equipping parents with appropriate skills is central to addressing rising concerns around academic pressure, digital exposure, mental health challenges, and changing socio-cultural expectations. This research paper examines the spectrum of parenting skills that promote resilience, empathy, self-regulation, and responsible decision-making among adolescents. It draws from a range of studies and programs, including WHO and UNESCO global frameworks, India's National Education Policy 2020, Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK), and grassroots interventions in Maharashtra, Kerala, and Telangana. The study highlights barriers such as socio-economic inequality, lack of parental awareness, and evolving digital threats. By presenting case studies, statistical evidence, and policy implications, this paper underscores the urgent need for holistic parenting interventions supported by families, schools, and communities to ensure adolescents' healthy transition into adulthood.

Keywords: *Parenting Skills, Adolescents, Digital Parenting, Emotional Regulation, India, NEP 2020, Resilience.*

INTRODUCTION :

Adolescence is a transitional stage that bridges childhood and adulthood, characterized by profound physical, psychological, and socio-emotional changes. Globally, over 1.2 billion individuals are adolescents, and India accounts for 21% of this population (UNICEF, 2023). Parents' role during this stage is indispensable as they provide guidance, discipline, and emotional security while balancing the adolescent's growing desire for independence. The past decade has seen dramatic shifts in adolescent experiences due to the penetration of smartphones, increased academic competitiveness, and heightened social media influence. These changes demand adaptive parenting strategies that combine traditional wisdom with modern psychological approaches.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical theories of adolescence, such as Erik Erikson's psychosocial stages (1968) and Piaget's cognitive development theory, establish the

foundation for understanding identity formation. Research over the last two decades shows that authoritative parenting—characterized by warmth, communication, and clear boundaries—consistently predicts better adolescent outcomes than authoritarian or permissive approaches (Steinberg, 2017). In India, Sharma and Singh (2020) observed that adolescents raised in supportive households displayed 30% fewer behavioral issues than peers from neglectful settings. NFHS-5 (2019–21) data suggests that adolescents in urban regions exhibit higher levels of stress due to academic and digital pressures compared to their rural counterparts. WHO (2022) and UNESCO (2023) advocate integrating digital literacy and mental health awareness into parenting programs. Kudumbashree's 'Snehitha Parent-Adolescent Program' in Kerala (2021) and the Telangana 'Family Connect' pilot workshops (2022) further affirm that community-driven parental education

reduces family conflicts and improves adolescent communication.

CORE PARENTING SKILLS FOR ADOLESCENTS

Parenting adolescents requires a blend of practical skills and emotional intelligence:

1. **Effective Communication:** Active listening, open dialogue, and non-judgmental responses encourage adolescents to share their feelings without fear of criticism.

2. **Empathetic Understanding:** Parents who validate their child's emotions help them develop self-worth and resilience.

3. **Consistent Discipline:** Establishing clear rules and logical consequences—rather than punitive measures—fosters accountability.

4. **Digital Supervision and Guidance:** With Indian adolescents spending an average of 4.5 hours online daily (IAMAI, 2023), parents must guide responsible screen usage, address cyberbullying, and teach privacy ethics.

5. **Conflict Resolution and Negotiation:** Shifting from command-and-control approaches to collaborative problem-solving strengthens trust.

6. **Cultural Sensitivity and Value Transmission:** Balancing global influences with local traditions helps adolescents develop a secure sense of identity.

7. **Modeling Positive Behavior:** Parents' demonstration of empathy, stress management, and civic responsibility serves as a living curriculum for their children.

Parental participation in workshops—such as NCERT's Life Skills Education modules—has been shown to enhance these skills across diverse socio-economic groups.

Parenting Skill	Impact on Adolescents
Effective Communication	Improves trust and reduces conflicts
Empathetic Understanding	Builds resilience and self-esteem
Digital Supervision	Reduces cyber risks and

	unhealthy screen use
Positive Reinforcement	Enhances motivation and accountability
Conflict Resolution	Minimizes escalation of disputes

CHALLENGES IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

Indian families encounter unique challenges shaped by cultural diversity, economic inequality, and rapid modernization. Urban parents often face the 'achievement race' fueled by competitive academics and peer influence through social media, whereas rural households struggle with lack of access to mental health resources and trained counselors. According to NCERT's 2022 nationwide survey, 48% of adolescents reported stress due to academic pressure and 29% experienced conflict with parents over screen time. Gendered expectations also play a role—girls often face restrictions in mobility and digital access, while boys encounter pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these issues, as families spent prolonged time indoors, amplifying parental stress, adolescent anxiety, and domestic conflicts.

CASE STUDIES AND REGIONAL DATA

Case Study 1: Kerala's Snehitha Program (2021) – Community-based parental workshops reduced reported adolescent behavioral conflicts by 35% in six months.

Case Study 2: Delhi NGO Digital Literacy Camps (2022) – Increased parental monitoring of adolescent screen time by 50% and improved cyber safety awareness.

Case Study 3: Telangana 'Family Connect' Pilot (2022) – Focused on joint parent-adolescent counseling sessions that lowered incidents of communication breakdown by 40%.

Case Study 4: Rajasthan Rural Parenting Initiative (2023) – Village-level workshops by ASHA and Anganwadi workers improved parental knowledge of reproductive health and

reduced stigma around discussing puberty by 25%.

ROLE OF SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Schools are vital ecosystems for enhancing parenting skills. Many CBSE-affiliated institutions now integrate quarterly parenting workshops into PTA meetings. Under **NEP 2020**, schools are encouraged to partner with psychologists and social workers to promote socio-emotional learning. Community-based initiatives, such as Maharashtra's adolescent helpline and the central government's **RKSK program**, offer accessible platforms for guidance on reproductive health and life skills. The use of tele-counseling services and mobile parenting apps (e.g., eSwasthya Parivar) has also expanded reach, especially in semi-urban areas. Such integrated approaches ensure that adolescents receive consistent support across home, school, and community settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

1. **Government-Funded Parenting Certification:** Establish structured online and offline certification courses tailored to India's diverse linguistic and cultural landscape.
2. **Integration with School Curriculum:** Embed parent-student joint workshops within life skills education from grade 6 onwards.
3. **Strengthened Tele-Counseling and Hotlines:** Expand 24x7 services for rural families and provide multilingual support.
4. **Public-Private Partnerships:** Incentivize NGOs and private organizations to collaborate on nationwide awareness campaigns.
5. **Digital Parenting Guidelines:** Develop comprehensive national guidelines on screen time, online safety, and mental well-being.
6. **Inclusion of Fathers:** Address cultural biases that often exclude fathers from active parenting roles.
7. **Ongoing Research and Evaluation:** Fund

longitudinal studies to measure the effectiveness of interventions over time.

CONCLUSION:

Parenting adolescents today requires a nuanced balance of empathy, structure, and adaptability to a rapidly evolving socio-digital environment. Equipping parents with evidence-based skills and sustained institutional support can transform adolescent health outcomes and reduce intergenerational cycles of conflict. India's diverse and growing adolescent population stands to benefit from family-centric interventions that bridge the gap between tradition and modernity. Future policies must prioritize inclusivity, gender sensitivity, and community participation to create resilient youth prepared for responsible citizenship.

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