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In the area of **Social Development**, young adolescents:

- Have a strong need to belong to a group, peer approval is more important as adult approval decreases in importance.
- In their search for self, model behavior after older esteemed student or non-parent adults.
- May exhibit immature behavior because their social skills frequently lag behind their mental and physical maturity.
- Experiment with new slang and behaviors as they search for social position within their groups, often discarding “new identities” at a later date.
- Must adjust to the social acceptance and athletic success of early maturing girls and boys.
- Depend on parental beliefs/values but try to make their decisions.
- Are often intimidated/frightened by their first middle level school experience because of the large numbers of students and teachers and the size of the building.
- Desire recognition for their efforts and achievements.
- Like fads, especially those shunned by adults.
- Often overreact to ridicule, embarrassments, and rejection.
- Are socially vulnerable because, as they develop their beliefs, attitudes, and values, the influence of media and negative experiences with adults and peers may compromise their ideals and values.