

Understanding Child Development (Juniors & Earliteens)



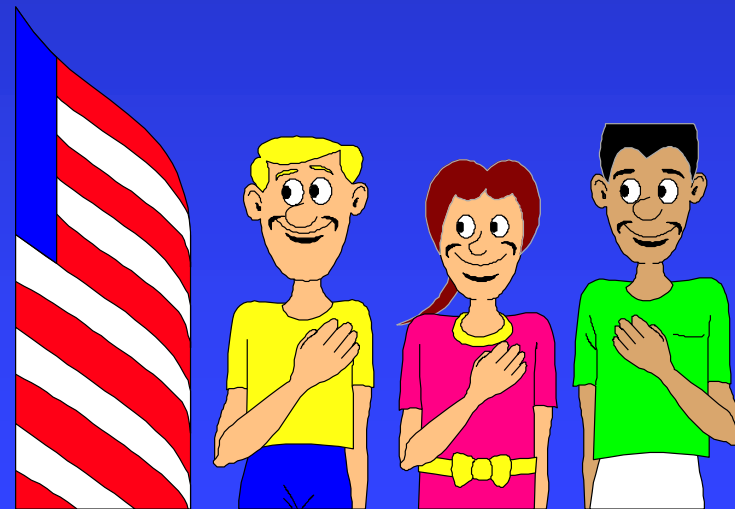
A Leadership Certification Course #8



Who Are These Kids?

Juniors -- Ages 10 - 12

Earliteens -- Ages 13-14



Physical

- Energetic, loud, talkative, and imaginative
- Well-developed verbal skills
- Different rates of growth rates
- Strong and healthy and eager to practice and display their physical skills



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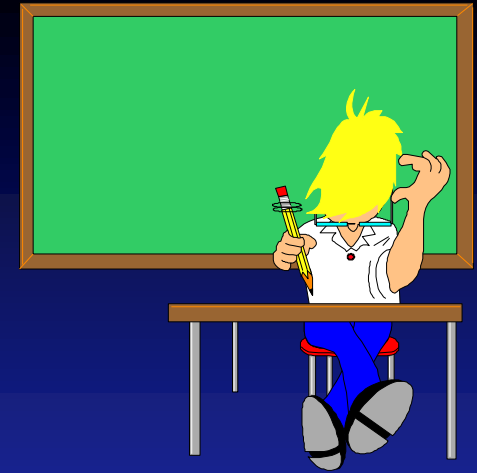
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Mental



- Begin doing abstract thinking
- Very realistic but also imaginative and creative
- Capable of thinking and reasoning
- Learn to reason from cause to effect
- Begin to question authority



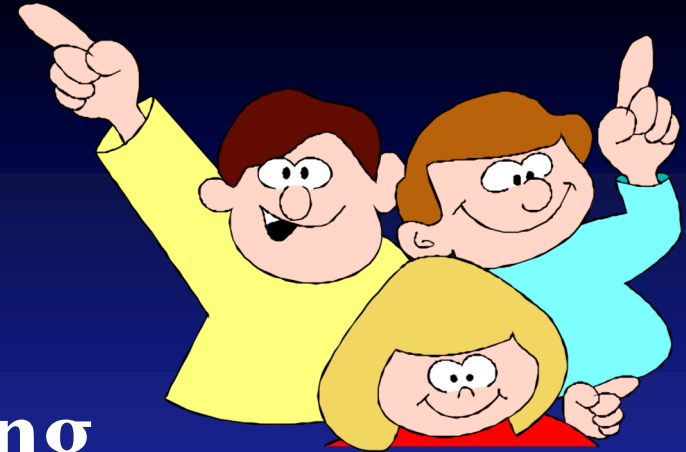
Emotional



- Lack self-esteem
- Are subject to mood swings
- Crave success and affirmation
- Get bored unless they see purpose in what they are doing
- Are acquiring values
- Search for a close relationship with adults who trust them

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Social



★ Care about pleasing their peers

★ Are hero-worshippers

★ Are action oriented

★ Develop gender roles

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Spiritual

- Want Bible teaching to be practical, related to life
- Are developing consciences
- Are ready to make salvation decisions



Spiritual

- Feel responsibility for their sins
- Are rule-oriented
- Are looking for adult models



Developmental Needs

Juniors have the basic needs of childhood plus the need to:

- Be responsible
- Achieve competence
- Grow in self-esteem
- Master social, academic, and physical skills
- Earn from parents a greater measure of personal freedom

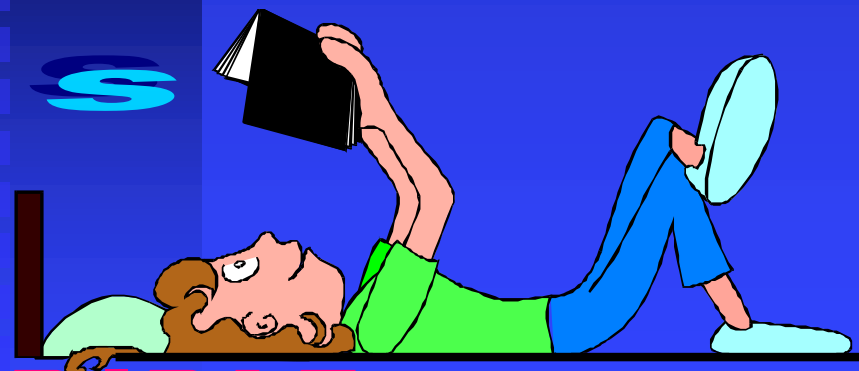


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Spiritual Needs

Juniors need:

- To know God loves and understands them
- A Savior who can give them victory over sin
- Confirmation that God answers prayer and encouragement to trust Him
- To know how God affects their daily lives
- To experience forgiveness and freedom from guilt



BIBLE STUDY

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Ways Juniors Learn

- An emphasis on group membership
- Better analysis of facts and intentions
- Logical thinking
- Love for facts
- A strong sense of 'right and wrong'



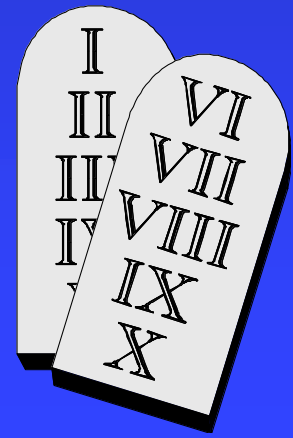
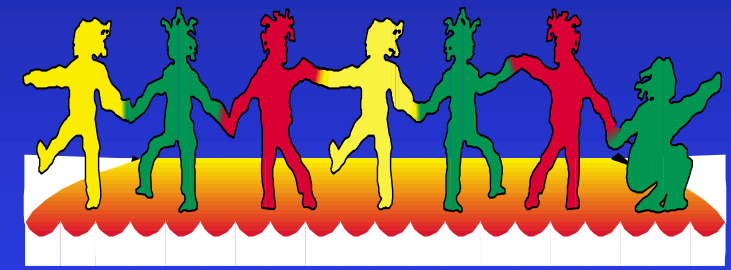
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Do This



Provide opportunities for them to study the Bible and look up texts

Encourage acceptance of all God's children – vary the seating frequently



Allow juniors to come to a group about classroom rules

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Give students choices
of activities



Offer concrete and
experiential instruction

Provide group work
as well as study



Don't Do This



Don't tell Bible content as they passively listen

Don't allow students to sit in cliques or always with same peers



Don't have only independent individual projects/activities

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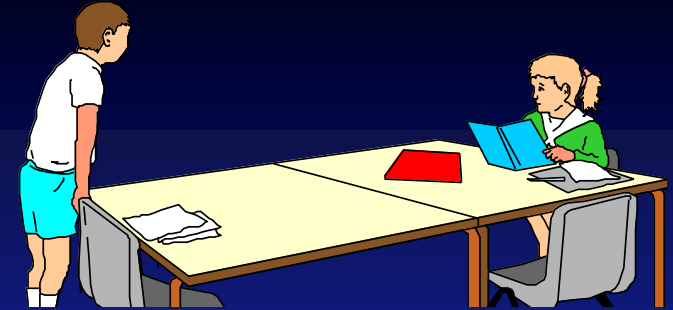
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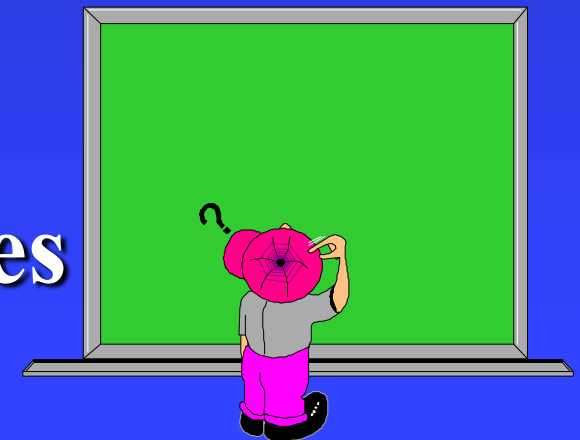
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**Avoid pre-setting rules
consensus where
students have no input**



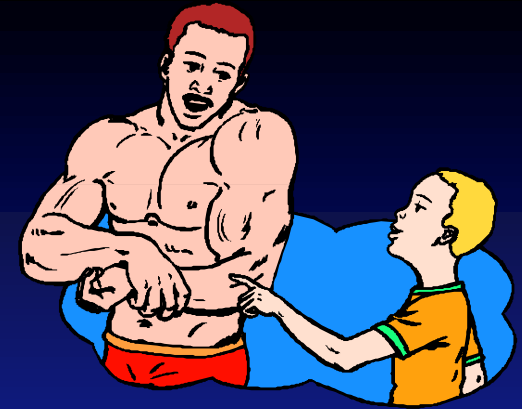
**Don't have the whole
class do the same thing;
Allow for creativity**

**Avoid abstract concepts
without concrete examples**



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Physical



- Mature at different rates; girls experience growth spurt before the boys
- Want action and want it now
- Often look more grown up than they act
- Can be quite awkward as they cope with growth spurts

Mental



- 🔥 Can reason from concrete to abstract
- 🔥 Capable of discussion and debate
- 🔥 Understand symbolism if explained
- 🔥 Have long attention span if interested in subject
- 🔥 Question everything and look for authoritative answers

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Emotional

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 **Lack self-confidence & self-esteem**

 **Get bored easily**

 **Test the values they grew up with**

 **Experience wild mood swings**

 **Take themselves seriously**



Social

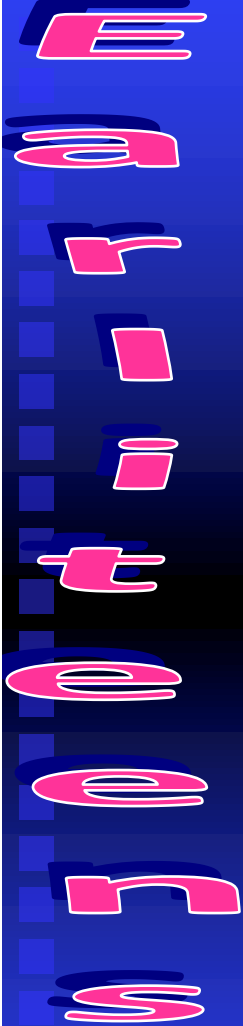
- Cave in to peer pressure
- Quite clumsy in relating to each other
- Avoid doing anything in isolation from group
- Extremely interested in the opposite sex



Spiritual



- * Questions spiritual truths
- * Challenge religious beliefs while needing help to clarify them
- * Want a practical religion to live by
- * Need to hear adults talk about their personal faith
- * Need to recommit to God



Developmental Needs

- Collect and sift through information
- Make more of their own decisions
- Express their individuality in various ways
- Crave affirmation



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- **Need increased freedoms from parental control and corresponding increases in their responsibilities**
- **Need more time with peers**
- **Need increased emotional distance from parents**
- **Need authoritative standards by which to just right from wrong**



Spiritual Needs

- > To know there is a God
- > A Savior who can give them victory over sin



- > Learn how to forgive and to accept forgiveness
- > To be told what is in it for them if they commit to living God's way

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Do This

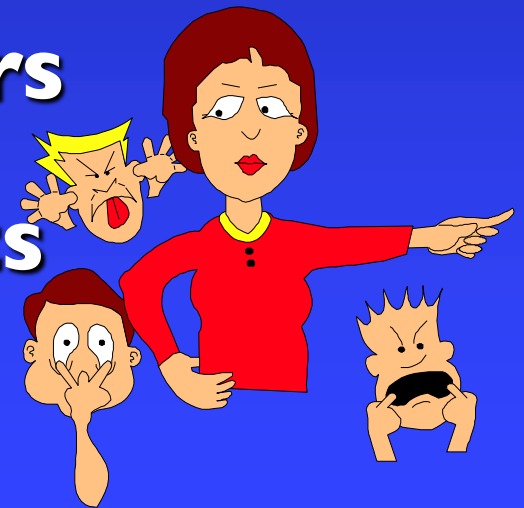
- **Allow for plenty of groups**
- **Encourage acceptance**
- **Provide active games and team activities**
- **Encourage exchange of ideas and discussion**
- **Encourage personal application of lessons learned**



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Don't Do This

- Don't allow students to sit in cliques
- Don't do all the talking and expect the students to listen
- Don't always do the same thing
- Don't give all the answers
- Don't dictate to students how



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Understand Juniors and Earliteens

Lead them to Jesus

