

Chapter 8

1. I think it is very important for minority youths to have a bicultural identity, especially in the United States where it is sometimes difficult for adolescents to choose an identity. Although cultural conflicts will sometimes occur as the values of one culture will clash with the values of the other culture, I feel it is important for adolescents to know their heritage. It is important for minority youth to learn to navigate both cultures and it is important for them to find a way they feel they belong. Ethnic preservation and a positive self-concept are some of the advantages of a bicultural identity. Parents need to help them have pride in their ethnic minority membership and they should promote racial socialization. Parents can help adolescents in their identity quests by providing them a home with an abundance of racial culture that teaches them the values and norms of their race. If possible I think it would be beneficial if the parents take their children on trips to their country of origin. The challenges that minority youths may face make their parent's support vital in their identity quest and can determine their future.

2. I think the three most important things parents can do to prevent high-risk behavior is practice an authoritative parenting style, monitor their adolescent's activities, and maintain a close or secure relationship with their adolescent. The authoritative parenting style has been shown to have a positive effect on adolescent development and adolescents with authoritative parents are less likely to participate in risky behavior. This is because the authoritative parenting style is neither strict nor permissive and creates a balance that gives an adolescent freedom but also requires them to behave responsibly. Adolescents with authoritative parents usually have higher levels of self-esteem and psychosocial maturity which plays a role in the adolescent avoiding drug use, smoking, and other delinquent behaviors.

Parental monitoring is also important when it comes to preventing high-risk behavior in adolescents. Adolescents with parents who use effective monitoring practices are less likely to participate in high-risk behaviors. The key to effective parental monitoring is to clearly discuss expectations and the penalties for not following the rules. Also know where your child will be and what his/her plans are. Get to know your child's friends because they can influence your child and sometimes the company they keep can provide valuable insight into their lives.

Parental-closeness or secure attachment plays a critical role in the prevention of high-risk behavior in adolescents. Secure attachment is important especially during adolescence because it encourages autonomy development and at the same time ensures the adolescent that they are still emotionally available. Adolescents with secure attachment to their parents are less likely to use illegal substances or participate in other detrimental activities. The positive outcomes associated with parental closeness or attachment is due to the high levels of support that parents provide and the confidence adolescents have to explore external social relationships. To maintain a close relationship parents need to continue to be supportive and responsive to the adolescent's feelings.