Making Choices as an Adolescent: How to Minimize Risk Taking

Laurence Steinberg
Distinguished University Professor and Laura H. Carnell Professor of Psychology

CURRENT RESEARCH

Understanding why adolescents make risky choices

The greatest threats to the health and well-being of young people in developed societies are not illness and disease but choices youth make -- the things kids do that jeopardize themselves and others, including reckless driving, unprotected sex, experimentation with drugs, and delinquency. Because most forms of risky and reckless behavior peak in adolescence, Dr. Laurence Steinberg, of Temple University, has sought to understand these behaviors and explore ways of preventing behaviors that have harmful and life-threatening consequences. His research is concerned with the treatment of adolescents and youth in contemporary society and is at the intersection of adolescent brain and behavioral development. His research has numerous applications that will improve the well-being of young people and their families.

Dr. Steinberg's research solves pressing social problems with rigorous scientific research. His previous research has had a systemic impact on America's youth, as evidenced by the Supreme Court citing his research supporting their decision to abolish the juvenile death penalty. While his research is grounded in empirical science, it has had a significant impact on public policy. Dr. Steinberg explains that as a researcher, he has "an obligation to do work on things that are important in people's lives and to try to do work that will improve the well-being of kids and their families." This obligation is lived out as he approaches his research by beginning with a societal problem and then tackling how such problems can be solved scientifically. As one of the world's leading experts on adolescence and as the author or editor of 17 books, Dr. Steinberg is a researcher who aims to provide strategies for...

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AFFILIATION

Temple University of the Commonwealth

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology 1977,Cornell University
- A.B. in Psychology 1974,Vassar College

AWARDS

- Urie Bronfenbrenner Award for Lifetime Contribution to Developmental Psychology in the Service of Science and Society, American Psychological Association, 2003
- Award for Distinguished Contributions to research in Public Policy, American Psychological Association, 2009
- Klaus J. Jacobs Research Prize for Productive Youth Development, 2009
- Henry and Bryna David Lectureship, National Academy of Sciences, 2011
- Elizabeth Hurlock Beckman Award for Inspirational Teaching, 2014
- and 1 more...

RESEARCH AREAS

Humanities, Veteran's Causes, Psychology, Neurological / Cognitive

FUNDING REQUEST

Your contributions will support the continued research of Dr. Laurence Steinberg, of Temple University, as he studies adolescent decision-making and risky behavior. Donations will support the necessary $300K needed annually to support large scale studies including personnel, subject payment, and brain imaging. In choosing to support Dr. Steinberg's research you will play a part in developing new insights into how best to protect the safety and well-being of youth.

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