

**SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOLESCENTS WITH
DEVIANT BEHAVIOR**

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Annotation: This article discusses the motives and causes that lead to deviant behavior among adolescents, the psychological features of adolescence, and the importance of educators, spiritual mentors, and psychologists in shaping youth behavior. It highlights the need to pay attention to the educational, emotional, and preventive aspects of upbringing to reduce the emergence of deviant behaviors.

Key Words: emotional state, adolescence, imitation, deviant, care, educational function, family upbringing, family problems, conflicts, delinquency, affective sphere, dysfunctional, aggressive behavior, family relations.

The concept of "deviant" comes from the Latin word "deviation," meaning deviation or departure. Individuals with deviant behavior are often referred to as those whose actions deviate from social norms. It can be said that there is a direct relationship between the increase in deviant behavior among young people and the rise in crime in society. The desire to engage in illegal behavior is growing, especially among adolescents. Therefore, preventive measures and psychological support programs in all educational institutions are crucial for addressing such problems.

To prevent deviant behavior and eliminate its causes, it is necessary to have educators, psychologists, and socially active individuals who can adequately assess the situation and understand the inner motivations of young people. In raising adolescents with deviant tendencies, social, biological, and psychological factors must be taken into account. Adolescence is accompanied by significant physiological, biochemical, and psychological changes. It is one of the most important periods of development, which can sometimes lead to the breakdown of adaptive mechanisms, including adequate social interaction.

Deviant behavior is defined as actions that deviate from generally accepted social norms. More than 50% of people in adolescence may exhibit some form of deviant behavior, though this is not necessarily considered a disease. Deviant tendencies in adolescents may manifest as:

- Aggression
- Lying
- Theft
- Vagrancy
- Phobias
- Depression
- Anxiety

Deviant behaviors may also include addictions (to nicotine, alcohol, drugs). In addition, suicidal attempts among adolescents are now seen as a severe manifestation of deviant tendencies requiring professional intervention. Individuals raised in socially disadvantaged environments are more likely to develop deviant behaviors in adulthood. Such conditions not only require medical but also psychotherapeutic correction.

Causes of Deviant Behavior in Adolescence:

Deviant behavior is shaped not only by biological but also social factors. The main causes can be divided into two groups:

****Biological Causes:****

- ****Puberty-related changes:**** The hormonal reorganization of the body can affect emotional stability. The immaturity of the cerebral cortex also contributes to impulsive behavior.
- ****Pathologies of the central nervous system:**** Neural damage or dysfunction can lead to emotional instability and decreased adaptability.
- ****Hereditary predisposition:**** Certain behavioral or psychological conditions may be inherited, such as tendencies toward alcoholism, intellectual disabilities, or antisocial personalities.

****Social Causes:****

- ****Incomplete families:**** Single-parent households often struggle to establish healthy parent-child relationships, increasing the risk of deviant behavior.
- ****Family conflicts:**** Domestic violence, alcoholism, and lack of understanding between family members negatively affect the child's psyche.
- ****Errors in upbringing:**** Teachers play a vital role in a child's education. The inability to build trust or engage the child in learning may lead to behavioral issues.

Most often, deviant behavior arises from a combination of biological and social factors, requiring a comprehensive approach in both medical and environmental interventions.

Diagnosis of Deviant Behavior:

Diagnosis involves consultations with psychiatrists and medical psychologists. Deviant behaviors rarely have purely organic causes. The diagnostic process includes:

- ****Interviewing the adolescent:**** The physician evaluates the symptoms, lifestyle, habits, and emotional state.
- ****Communication with relatives:**** Relatives can provide an objective assessment of the adolescent's behavior outside the clinical setting.
- ****Psychological testing:**** Clinical psychologists use special tests to identify personal traits and emotional disturbances.
- ****Projective methods:**** These techniques reveal hidden emotions like fear, anxiety, or aggression.

A comprehensive diagnostic approach involving educators, parents, and medical specialists ensures accurate assessment and timely intervention.

If an adolescent becomes influenced by a “street” environment, their desires to imitate adult behaviors—such as drinking, smoking, or displaying dominance—grow stronger. This often results from parental neglect or lack of emotional communication. Teachers must identify early signs of deviant behavior and collaborate with parents to improve the home environment. The problem of deviant behavior is especially relevant in the modern world. Economic inequality, globalization, and information accessibility all influence adolescents’ psychological development. Many teenagers spend more time on social media than in family or educational settings. When emotional support is lacking at home, they seek it elsewhere, often in unhealthy ways. Family plays a crucial role as the first social control institution. Parental attitudes, emotional warmth, and consistent communication form the foundation for moral upbringing. Research shows that children from dysfunctional families are more likely to display deviant or aggressive tendencies. According to Vygotsky, “Deviant behavior in adolescence is the sum of difficult life experiences.” He suggests involving adolescents in meaningful activities and giving them responsibilities as effective corrective strategies.

Psychologists classify adolescents with deviant behaviors into several groups:

1. Those with firmly negative social beliefs.
2. Those who imitate lawbreakers.
3. Those who oscillate between positive and negative behavior patterns.
4. Those who are submissive to stronger personalities.
5. Those who commit offenses accidentally.

According to social psychologist G.M. Andreyeva, socialization is a lifelong process through which individuals internalize social norms and values. This process begins in childhood and continues throughout life, shaping one’s behavior in various social contexts.

****Correction of Deviant Behavior:****

Treatment involves pharmacological, psychocorrective, and psychotherapeutic interventions.

- ****Psychotherapy:**** Helps adolescents understand their emotions, analyze conflicts, and develop coping strategies. Family therapy is also essential to restore healthy relationships.

- ****Psychocorrection:**** Aims to stabilize emotions, improve concentration, and enhance self-confidence.

- ****Pharmacotherapy:**** Used in cases with biological predispositions (neurological or psychiatric disorders) to manage aggression and emotional instability. With comprehensive treatment, adolescents often show positive outcomes. Early identification of family and educational problems significantly improves rehabilitation success.

****Conclusion:****

Preventing behavioral deviations among youth starts with a healthy family environment. Parents must communicate openly with their children, considering their developmental needs

and emotional experiences. Strengthening interests, cultivating love and empathy, and engaging adolescents in creative and social activities help build responsible individuals. Social-psychological training and community support are also vital in preventing deviant behavior.

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