

Study: Young adults happier than children

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A Canadian psychologist says although young adults are faced with a diversity of life choices, they seem to come to terms with themselves early in life.

The University of Alberta research suggests psychological well-being improves after adolescence and girls improve faster than boys.

Psychology Professor Nancy Galambos followed a sample of the same cohort during a seven-year period, studying how 18- to 25-year-olds transition from adolescence to adulthood. She said few studies have tracked changes in psychological well-being in that age group.

She said the study suggests average 18-year-olds will show improved mental health during the course of their next seven years, although that's an average trend since some mental health problems first appear during one's early 20s.

Another interesting finding was that improved psychological well-being reduced the gender differences first appearing in adolescence. As expected, women showed significantly higher levels of depressive symptoms and lower levels of self-esteem at age 18 than men, but on both indicators women improved at a faster rate than did men by age 25, bringing the two genders closer together.

The research appears in the current issue of the journal *Developmental Psychology*.

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