

Relevance of promoting risk and protective factors for promoting development and equality in young people

Alfredo Oliva

Departamento de
Psicología Evolutiva y de
la Educación

Universidad de Sevilla



The starting point



**Negative image of
adolescence**

Consequences of negative image of adolescence

Negative Consequences

- Social support for punitive laws
- Reduction or suppression of adolescents' rights
- Increase of intergenerational conflicts at home / school

Positive consequences

- **High sensibilization to some adolescent problems (sustance abuse, bullying, risk taking behaviors, etc.)**
- **Increases in investment in intervention and research focused in these problems**



DEFICIT MODEL

**Beyond the deficit:
Building a model of Competence or
Positive Youth Development**

Adolescent positive development Study: 1st phase

Goal

To build a model of adolescent positive development from the point of view of experts in adolescence .

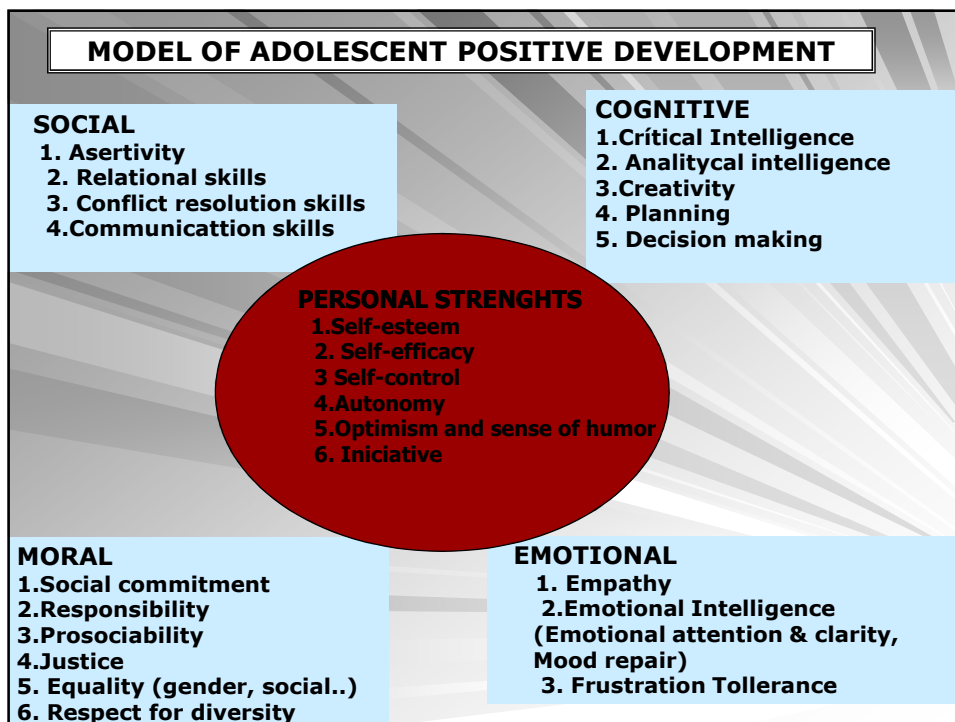
Adolescent positive development Study: 1st phase

Method

***Nominal Group:* 12 professionals with expertise in adolescence (psiquiatrics, psychologist, teachers)**

***Delphi Technique:* 30 professionals (3 rounds)**

Results



■ ¿Which are the family, school and neighborhood assets that promote adolescent positive development?

Adolescent Positive Development Study: 2nd phase GOALS

- 1. To validate our theoretical model**
- 2. To analyze developmental assets and risks in the family, the school and the neighborhood**
- 3. To elaborate and validate instruments to assess competences and assets related to positive development**

METHOD

Sample

- 20 Secondary Schools selected in Andalucía
- 2400 students from 12 to 17 years

Method

Instruments

- Competencies : 11 scales - 170 items-
- Adjustment (YSR) 101 items
- Life-style: 16 questions
- Family: parenting style (41 items) and marital conflict (13 items)
- School: students perception of the climate and functioning of the center (30 items)
- Neighborhood: students perceptions of their neighborhood (22 items)

RESULTS

Our empirical model (EFA)

1. Personal Strengths (51%):

Self-esteem, Optimism, Life-satisfaction, Self-efficacy, Emotional Clarity and Mood repair

2. Socio-Emocional (moral) Competencies (14%):

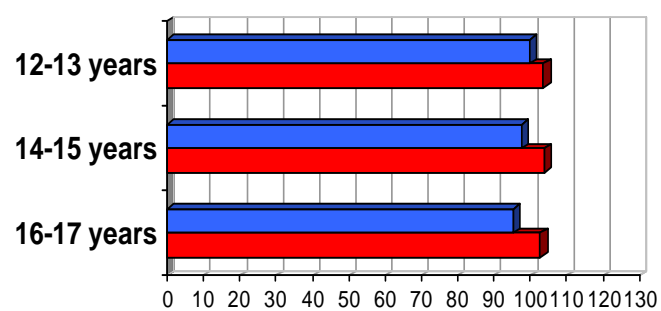
Empathy, Emotional Attention, Personal values (responsibility, honesty, integrity), Social values (social commitment, justice & equality, prosociality), Peer attachment, Social skills

3. Academic Competencies (12%):

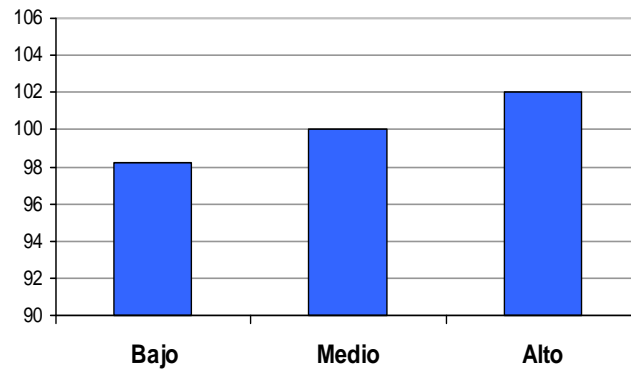
Motivation to school, Commitment to learning, Grades, Study time

The competencies

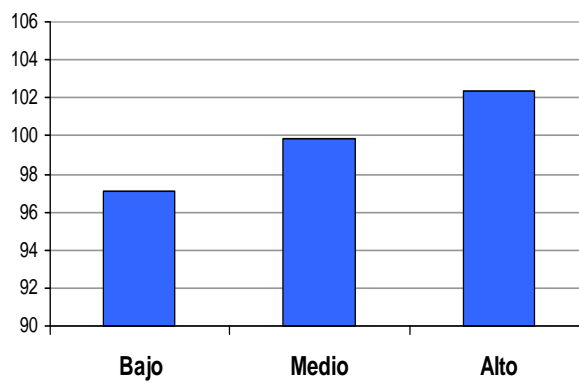
Personal strenghts by sex and age



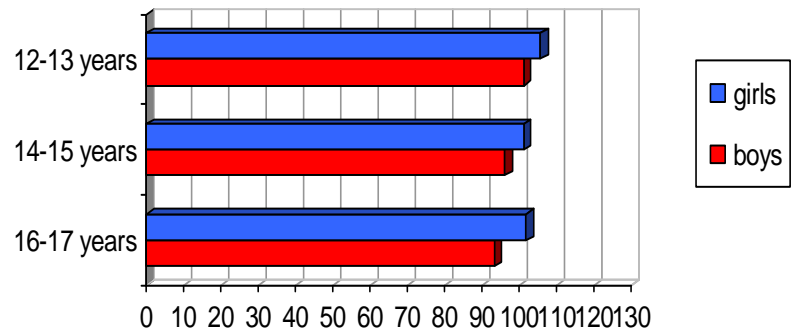
Personal strenghts by parent education level



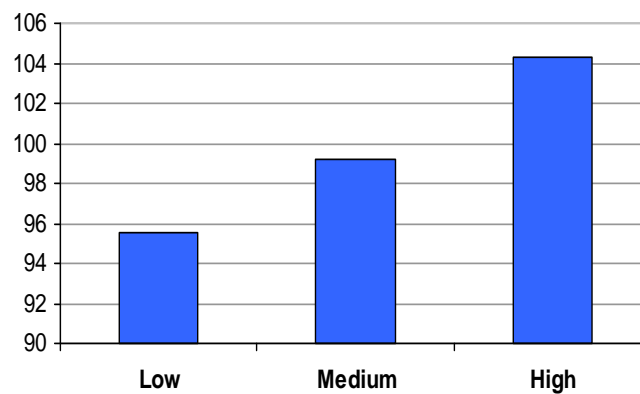
Personal strenghts by family SES



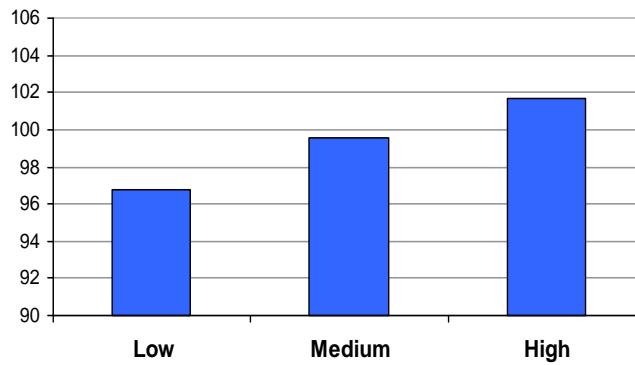
Academic Competencies by sex and age



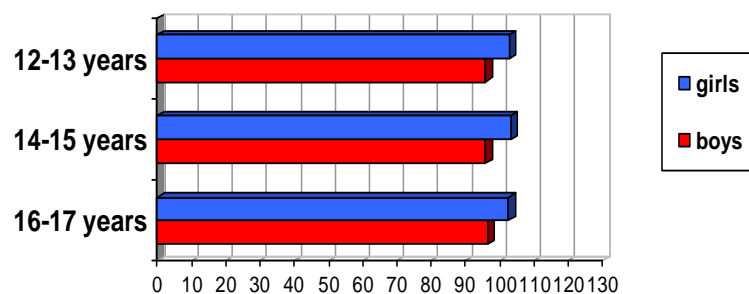
Academic Competencies by parents education level



Academic competencies by family SES

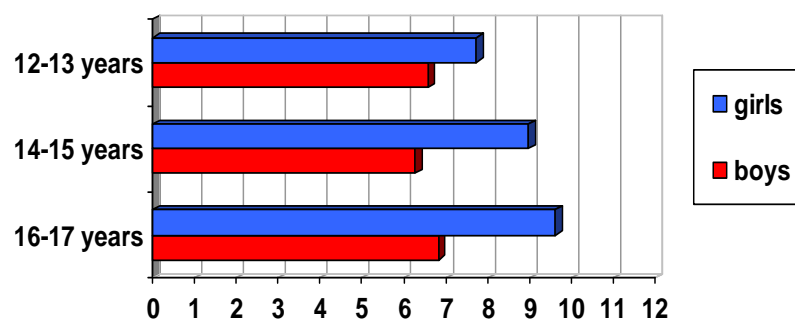


Socio-emocional competencies by sex and age

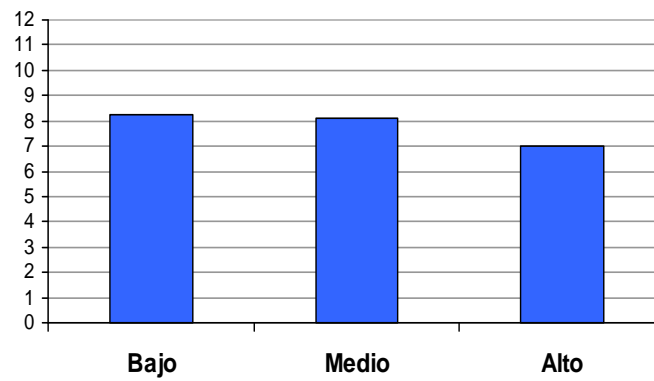


Adjustment (The problems)

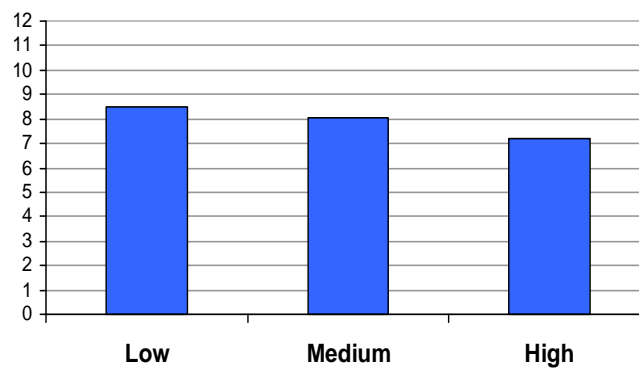
Internalizing problems by sex and age



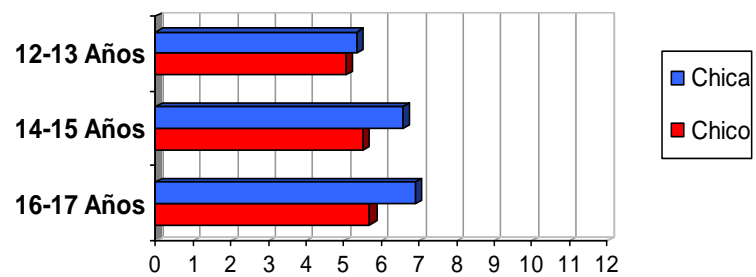
Internalizing Problems by parent education level



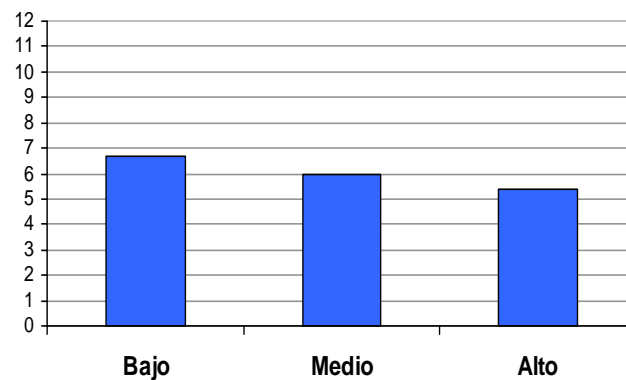
Internalizing Problems by family SES



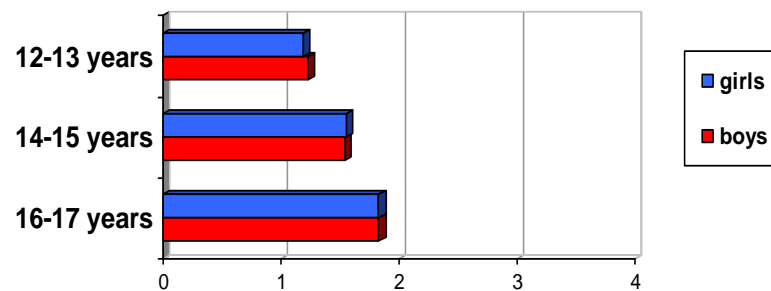
Problemas externalizantes según sexo y edad



Externalizing Problems by parent education level



Sustance use by sex and age



Competencies, ajustment, sex and age

- Girls presented higher socioemotional and academic competencies and lower personal strenghts. They also showed more internalizing and extrernalizing problems than boys
- Boys presented higher personal strenghts and lower academic and socioemotional competencies, and more internal and external adjustment than girls.

Gender health inequalities

Competencies, adjustment and age

- Substance use increases with age
- Internalizing and externalizing problems increase and personal competencies decrease with age....But only in girls
- Academic competencies decrease in boys

Gender inequalities increase during adolescence

The assets

Family assets & competencies/problems

Demograph. Variables were partiating out in first step

Competencies

Problems

$R^2 = .27$

$R^2 = .18$

■ Affection/Communic.	.10**	-.12***
■ Autonomy Granting	.20***	.01
■ Behavioral Control	.07**	-.01
■ Self-disclosure	.12***	-.08**
■ Positive Humour	.10***	-.03
■ Psychological Control	-.04	.21***
■ Marital Conflict	-.08**	.13***

School assets & competencies/problems

Competencies

Problems

$R^2 = .21$

$R^2 = .10$

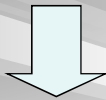
■ Good school climate (Peer relations and y security)	.01	-.13***
■ Attachment to school (belonging, satisfact., support)	.23***	-.14***
■ Clear values and rules (Límits, rules, promoted values)	.23***	.04
■ Empowerment & opportunities (Percepcion of influence/ activities...)	.01	.01

Neighborhood assets and competen./problems

	Competencies $R^2 = .19$	Problems $R^2 = .11$
■ Empowerment	.10***	-.12***
■ Attachment	.13***	-.02
■ Security	.07***	-.16***
■ Social Control	.17***	.02
■ Youth Activities Avail.	.00	.02
■ Services/Infrastructures	.10***	.06***

The importance of youth activities

- Participation in youth activities was associated to competencies and adjustment
- But availability of activities was not related.



Availability is important but is not enough. It is necessary to promote participation, specially among girls, older adolescent and from low SES families

Assets & competencies/Adjustment

	Competencies $R^2 = .34$	Problems $R^2 = .14$
■ Sex	.06***	.22***
■ Age	-.01	.07***
■ SES	.06***	.01
■ Parents Education	.10***	-.07**
■ Family Assets	.37***	-.25***
■ School Assets	.19***	-.05*
■ Neighborh. Assets	.14***	-.08***

- Assets showed stronger relationships with competencies than with problems.
- Family assets were the most influential ones.

**According to Positive
Development model
No problems ≠ Good Health**

COMPETENCE

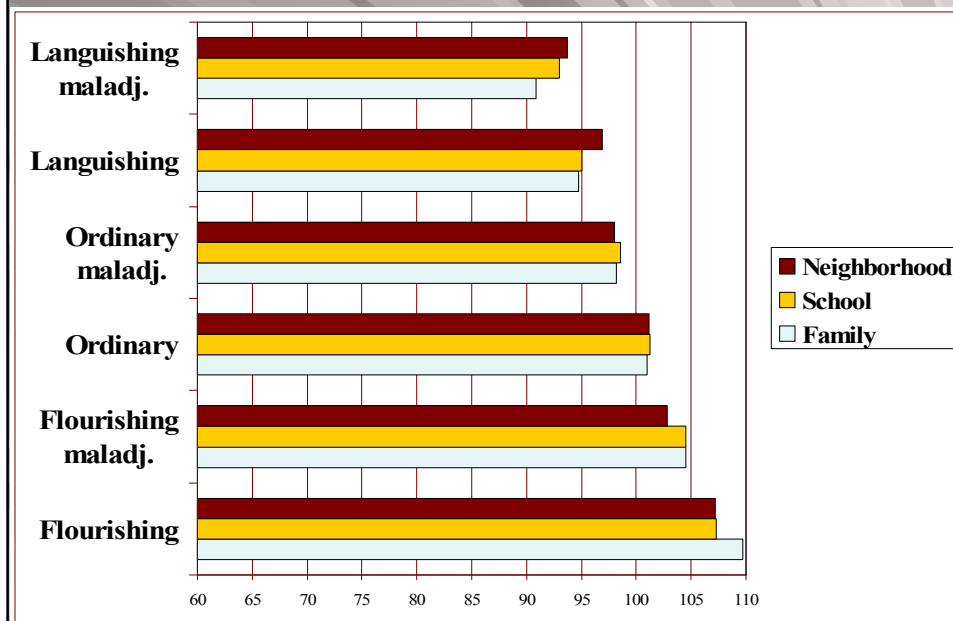


**MALADJUST-
MENT**

Mental Health Tipology

- ***Flourishing*** : High competencies well adjusted
- ***Flourishing maladjusted***
- ***Ordinary***. medium competencies well adjusted
- ***Ordinary maladjusted***
- ***Languishing***. low competencies well adjusted
- ***Languishing maladjusted***

Mental Health and Assets



Flourishing Adolescents

- Boys & girls, high parent education level, and high SES, early adolescents, many family, school and neighborhood assets.
- They devoted less time to watch TV, to use PC and to play video games
- They were involved in many activities and they slept more hours.

Prediction of internalizing problems (Girls)

	Internalizing Problems
	$R^2 = .35$
■ Affection	-.12**
■ Psycholog. control	.13**
■ Good School climate	-.11**
■ Peer attachment	-.19**
■ Self-esteem	-.29**
■ Empathy	.09*
■ Emotional clarity/repair	-.12**
■ Attention to emotions	.26**

CONCLUSIONS

**Family is very important for
children**



When parents are missing....



Authoritative parents are still the main assets for a healthy adolescent development



No blaming parents but supporting them



Parent Education Program



- **Pay attention to gender inequalities because they increase from early to late adolescence**
- **Parental psychological control should be replaced by behavioral control or self-disclosure**
- **Emotional clarity & control, and mood repair should be promoted among girls**
- **There are also important social inequalities in competencies and adjustment**

- **Involvement in activities should be promoted (girls, low SES youth)**
- **Security and social control in the neighborhood are important for preventing adolescent maladjustment**
- **Attachment to school, clarity in rules and values and good school climate are key developmental assets**

Empowerment (at home, school, or neighborhood) is an important asset, but.....

Is possible to empower when the social representation of adolescence is so negative?



Which adolescence do
we want to promote?

**A generation with no problems is
not a generation sufficiently well
prepared to face future challenges**



Muchas gracias