

NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

- Neil:** Hello I'm Neil. Welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm joined today by Finn. Hello Finn.
- Finn:** Hello Neil.
- Neil:** Now, I have a question for you: what age did you leave home?
- Finn:** I left home at 18, Neil.
- Neil:** That's quite young, isn't it? Why did you leave home?
- Finn:** Well, I really wanted to see more of the world.
- Neil:** We could say that was the end of your childhood and the beginning of your **adulthood**. It's a time when you begin to **stand on your own two feet**.
- Finn:** You mean it's when I started to be independent, to look after myself and act like a grown-up – well, maybe, a bit like a grown-up!
- Neil:** Yes, it's when you're supposed to think and act like a man! Well, according to some experts, the age when adulthood begins could be increasing. I'll tell you more about that soon and we'll look at some vocabulary to do with growing up. But before that, I have another question for you Finn. In England, people can get married without asking their parent – or without **consent**, at the age of 18. Do you know what the youngest age is men can legally marry in Bangladesh? Is it:
- a) 15
 - b) 18
 - c) 21
- Finn:** I honestly have no idea. So I'll say b) 18.
- Neil:** OK. I'll let you know the answer at the end of programme. Back to our discussion about the age we really become an adult. Leaving home or getting married could be some of the signs of **maturity** and becoming a grown-up.
- Finn:** There are many other signs too but, certainly in the UK, people regard 18 as the age when we reach the end of **adolescence** – a point where you've changed from being a child to being an adult. You should, in theory, think and behave like one.
- Neil:** Well, that is the theory. We know that people develop at different speeds and some never grow up. I'm sure we know people like that!

- Finn:** One or two! But child **psychologists** – the people who study how children behave – now think adolescence could last until the age of 25.
- Neil:** Twenty-five is when they stop being an adolescent. Medical and educational professionals now have a better understanding of how our **hormones** – the chemicals in our body – develop and how our brain works.
- Finn:** Yes. They say that we keep developing into our twenties.
- Neil:** A child psychologist called Laverne Antrobus, who works at the Tavistock Clinic in London, appeared in a BBC magazine article recently and said: "*The idea that suddenly at 18 you're an adult just doesn't quite **ring true**... my experience of young people is that they still need quite a considerable amount of support and help beyond that age.*"
- Finn:** So she says the idea that we become an adult at 18 doesn't *ring true* – that means, it doesn't sound true. Young people need help and support until they're older.
- Neil:** She also suggests that some young people continue to live at home because they need more support during these '**formative years**' – the time when you are growing up. Well, that might be true for some but I was ready to leave home at 18 – I was bored at home and ready for my freedom!
- Finn:** I know the feeling. Well, in the same BBC article, Frank Furedi, Professor of Sociology at the University of Kent, thinks what you did is a good thing. He says: "*There is a loss of aspiration for independence and striking out on your own. When I went to university it would have been a **social death** to have been seen with your parents, whereas now it's the norm.*"
- Neil:** So he thinks living at home makes you lose the aspiration – or the desire to be independent, and he says in his day it would have been social death – so embarrassing – to be seen by others to live at home!
- Finn:** Yes, and I think he's saying living at home stops you growing up quickly.
- Neil:** Does this mean we are developing a generation of big babies?
- Finn:** Maybe not Neil but this is an interesting subject. Could it be we are **mollycoddling** young people for longer – that means protecting them and looking after them?
- Neil:** Yes, or it could be that young people are living at home for longer for economic reasons – they can't afford to leave home.
- Finn:** Or maybe there is some truth in the idea it takes longer for us to grow up? I think I'll go with that theory.
- Neil:** That would explain your **juvenile** behaviour Finn! Now, let's find out if you got today's question right. Earlier I asked you if you knew what the youngest age a man can legally marry in Bangladesh is?
- Finn:** I said 18, I think Neil.

Neil: You were wrong. It was option c) 21. Apparently, it's 21 for men, and 18 for women. Now Finn, could you remind us of some of the growing up related words that we heard today.

Finn: Yes, we heard:

adulthood
stand on your own two feet
maturity
adolescence
psychologists
hormones
formative years
social death
mollycoddling
juvenile

Neil: Thank you. We hope you've enjoyed today's programme. Do join us again soon for 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. Goodbye.

Finn: Goodbye.

Vocabulary and definitions

adulthood	the period of life when you are an adult
stand on your own two feet	be independent; look after yourself
maturity	behaving and thinking like a grown up
adolescence	period in your life when you change from being a child to an adult
psychologists	person who studies the human mind, their emotions and behaviour
hormones	chemicals in the body that influence the development, growth and sex of an animal
formative years	period of time when someone develops their character and beliefs
social death	embarrassing situation
mollycoddling	over protecting or doing too much for someone
juvenile	young person but not yet considered an adult

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