

## **Adolescent peer relations and socioemotional development in Latin America : translating international theory into local research**

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### **Abstract**

Peer relations constitute a main developmental context for adolescents. Peers offer an instance for identity definition and set the norms of acceptable and valued characteristics, behaviors, and attitudes, representing a societal model that allows and restrains avenues for adolescents' socioemotional development. The present article departs from these considerations to review research on adolescents' peer relations in Latin America from a socioemotional perspective. First, approaches to adolescence are discussed, with a main focus on attachment and identity theories, based on a bioecological framework. Then, a review of research in Latin America on friendships, school climate, and intergroup relations is presented. The discussion addresses the tension between theories and evidence generated in developed societies and highlights the particularities of Latin American youth, stressing the need for collecting local data..