

Adult Development Research Guide

I. Getting Started

General Notes about the Topic:

Scope Note from *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors*: Physiological, psychological, and sociological growth or maturation occurring throughout an adult's lifetime.

Scope Note from *Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms*: Process of physical, cognitive, personality, and psychosocial growth occurring from age 18. Cross-disciplinary, encompassing psychology, sociology, education, etc.

Sources listed relate to the study of adult development, as defined above.

Encyclopedias & Reference materials

American Psychological Association (2000). *Encyclopedia of psychology*. Washington, DC: Author and Oxford University Press.
REF BF31 .E52 (Volume 1, pages 64-85).

Four articles on Biological Processes and Physical Development, Cognitive Processes and Development, Personality Process and Development, and Social Processes and Development comprise the section on Adult Development. Each article discusses major theories and issues in adult development.

Valsiner, J. and Connolly, K. , Eds. (2003). *Handbook of developmental psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
REF BF713 .H364

Part 6: Development in Adulthood contains several articles on cognitive development, goal-directed activities and life-span development, development of the self, and wisdom.

Birren, J. and Schaie, K. W. (2001). *Handbook of the psychology of aging*, 5th Ed. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
REF BF724.55 .A35 H36

This handbook “provides reviews and evaluations of the growing volume of literature on adult development and aging”, emphasizing “the basic behavioral processes and how they change over the adult years. “

Demick, J., and Andreoletti, C., eds. (2003). *Handbook of adult development*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.
BF724.5 .H36 2003

Highly recommended by CHOICE, this handbook summarizes major theories and research in adult development. The book focuses on theoretical and methodological issues, as well as issues of practice.

II. Finding Books

Search the FLO catalog:

1. Go to library homepage (www.lesley.edu/library) and click on Search FLO catalog.
2. Good keywords to use: “adult development”, “lifespan development”, “life span” and development. Also try “midlife development” and “middle age” and development.
3. When you use a keyword phrase (two or more words), put quotation marks around the phrase.
4. Limit your search to Lesley University.

III. Finding Articles

Relevant Databases:

- Academic Search Premier
- ERIC
- Medline
- PsychInfo
- SocIndex

Searching Tips

Keywords to use when searching for information on adult development include “adult development”, “lifespan”, “life span”, or “lifespan development”. These can be linked with other terms such as “adult development and aging” or “adult development and learning”. For information about middle age specifically, use terms such as “midlife development” and “middle age and development”.

IV. Online, print and other resources

• Websites

Census data

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/age.html>

This site Includes national, state, and county level data, as well as international data and baby boomer statistics.

National Institute on Aging

<http://www.nia.nih.gov>

Produced by the National Institute of Health, NIA’s site provides links to publications, clinical trials, organizations and government sites related to health and aging. Included are links to research on the biology of aging, as well as links to reports from conferences and meetings.

Duke University Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development

<http://www.geri.duke.edu/aging/aging.html>

This site provides an extensive list of links to medical resources, including professional societies, medical journals, and related medical subjects. Also included are links to aging centers under the auspices of educational, governmental, nonprofit, and commercial agencies.

MIDMAC – The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Successful Midlife Development

<http://midmac.med.harvard.edu>

This interdisciplinary research group empirically studies the years between 30 and 70, identifying major factors that influence health, psychological well-being and social responsibility. The site provides a bibliography related to midlife development and links to research studies conducted by the group.

• **Print resources**

Brim, O., Ryff, C., and Kessler, R., Eds. (2004) *How healthy are we? : a national study of well-being at midlife*. Chicago: BF724.6 .H69

This work contains the most important findings from the MacArthur Foundation's landmark study "Midlife in the US". Integrating much that is known across disciplines in the behavioral and social sciences, the book discusses physical health, quality of life, and psychological well-being.

Lang, F. and Fingerman, K., Eds. (2004). *Growing together: personal relationships across the lifespan*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press. HM1106 .G76

Crossing many fields, this resource discusses issues of coping, adaptation, and physical health as they relate to personal relationships. Useful for an interdisciplinary approach to the study of human development.

International Journal of Aging and Human Development is a peer-reviewed journal concerned with psychological and social studies of aging and the aged. The journal also publishes research that demonstrates the human side of gerontology, or uses gerontology to discuss problems in other fields. (HQ1060 ..A33)

Psychology and Aging. This journal publishes original articles on applied, biobehavioral, clinical, educational, experimental, methodological, or psychosocial research in the field of adult development and aging. Clinical case studies with theoretical significance are also included. (BF724.55 .A35 P79)

Journal of Marriage and the Family. Published by the National Council on Family Relations, the journal presents “original theory, research interpretation, and critical discussion of materials related to marriage and the family.” (HQ1 .J86), JSTOR.

- **Other resources**

Journal of Adult Development is a cross-disciplinary forum for the publication of peer-reviewed original papers on biological, psychological, and/or sociocultural development in young, middle or late adulthood. The journal publishes theoretical and empirical articles, book reviews, and letters. Published in collaboration with the Society for Research in Adult Development. (In Academic Search Premier database).

Growing Old in a New Age (1993). Annenberg/CPB Project. VIDEO (SO1037). Thirteen part series on various aspects of aging in the United States in the late 20th century. Older people and professionals share views on various subjects, including how the body ages, love and intimacy, learning and memory, family, work and retirement, illness and disability, and dying and bereavement.

- **Organizations**

Division 20, American Psychological Association, Psychology of Adult Development and Aging.

<http://apadiv20.php.ufl.edu>

This website from the American Psychological Association includes many links to current research and information on the psychology of adult development and aging.

Society for Research in Adult Development.

<http://home.comcast.net/%7Emiller.patrice/SRAD/about.html>

The Society for Research in Adult Development includes members from all disciplines who are interested in “positive adult development”, development starting in late adolescence and continuing through life. The Society focuses on improving the quality of life. The website offers a bibliography of books on positive adult development.

Alliance for Aging Research

<http://www.agingresearch.org>

This site provides useful information for consumers and health professionals with links to Alliance publications, health topics, and many resources on advocacy, policy, aging organizations, and health sites.