Agents of Socialization

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- The specific individuals, groups, and institutions that enable socialization to take place

In the United States they include

- The Family
- The Peer Group
- The School
- The Mass Media

The Family

- The principal socializer of young children

- First interaction
  - First learn values, norms, and beliefs of society

- Deliberate and unintended socialization

- Subgroups of family
  - Racial or ethnic group, social class, religion, and geographic region

The Peer Group

Peer Group

Roughly equal age and similar social characteristics

- As children grow older, they begin to relate more to their peer group

- Very influential during pre-teenage and teenage years

- Without peer acceptance, may be labeled as a misfit, loner, etc.

- Willing to adopt new norms and values

- Norms and values focus on subculture

The School

- Major role in socialization due to large amount of time spent in school
- Class activities teach skills
- Extracurricular activities prepare students for life in society
- Transmit cultural values such as patriotism, responsibility, and citizenship
- Large amount of unintended socialization

The Mass Media

Mass Media

Instruments of communication that reach large audiences with no personal contact

Includes: books, films, TV, internet, magazines, podcasts, newspapers, radio etc.

TV (including YouTube/Netflix/etc.) is the most influential for children

- Children watch ~24 hours each week
- Primary after school activity

The Mass Media

- Studies suggest that violence in media leads to
  - Desensitizing
  - Fearful of the world around them
- Life experiences depicted are generally limited to an image of white upper middle-class values
  - Other groups are ignored or portrayed in a negative light

Resocialization

Resocialization

A break with past experiences and learning new values and norms

Voluntary:

- College

Involuntary:

- Prison

Total Institutions

Isolated from the rest of society for a specific period of time and are subject to tight control

Ex: Prison, Military, Monastery