Developmental psychopathologists also include normative age-graded changes, developmental milestones that all children experience, in their explanations of atypical development.

- A teenager and a preschooler may be affected quite differently by a risk factor such as abuse.
  - **The lifespan perspective**
    - The view that change occurs throughout life, is fundamental to developmental psychopathology.
    - A maladaptive change at one point in development may be moderated or even reversed later on.

- **Attention Problems and Externalizing Problems**
  - **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder**
    - A disorder in which a child shows both significant problems in focusing attention and physical hyperactivity.
    - The underlying problem might be a deficit in the child’s ability to inhibit behavior.
  - **Defining The Problem**
    - ADHD/hyperactive/impulsive type—ADHD in which hyperactivity is the main problem.
    - ADHD/inattentive type—ADHD in which inattention is the main problem.
    - ADHD/combined type—ADHD in which hyperactivity and inattention are problems.

- **Culture, Age, Gender, and Ethnicity**
  - Diagnosed more frequently in the US than in other countries with similar cultures.
  - Some developmentalists suggest that this cross-national difference is the result of overuse of the diagnosis in the US, an assertion that has been refuted by research.
  - Other suggest that educators and mental health professionals in other nations have failed to recognize to degree to which ADHD is prevalent in their children.
  - A review of cross-national differences suggested that underlying rates of ADHD-like behavior are highly similar around the world, but variations in the way the disorder is diagnosed lead to differences in ADHD rates across the nation.
  - Age is also related to ADHD prevalence.
    - Rates increase over the elementary school years.
  - Differences in gender
    - Girls are more likely to exhibit inattentive and combined types than the hyperactive type.
    - Girls’ symptoms may be attributed to laziness, moodiness, or lack of interest in school.
    - May also represent an overreaction to boys’ greater general rowdiness.
  - Differences in Ethnicity
    - Rates are far lower among Hispanic children.
    - Could be due to a real difference in children’s behavior across groups, over-diagnosis in non-Hispanic groups, or under-diagnosis in Hispanic Americans.

- **Origins of the Problem**
  - Most clinicians have assumed that this problem has some kind of biological origin.
  - More recent evidence makes clear that ADHD is a neuropsychiatric disorder.
  - Three lines of evidence support this conclusion.
    - Physicians and psychologists have known for some time that a biological treatment is very often effective in reducing or eliminating the deviant behavior.
      - Ritalin works by stimulating the part of the brain that maintains attention.