

## IS IT EASY TO BE YOUNG?

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Is it easy to be young? Youth is wonderful period of life. For a lot of young people, their youth is a time when they do not have any responsibilities and can do things which they like. They can make lots of new friends and have a good social life without thinking about future. If they are lucky, they can travel and feel free that they will not be able later in life. They can make mistakes, too, but it does not matter too much. They can try things and find out what they like and what they do not like. And they can simply enjoy themselves while having an opportunity.

Of course, most young people want to have as much fun as possible while they are young. May be every teenager wants to become an adult as soon as possible, but they are wrong, to my mind. This period of life is the most carefree, but, unfortunately, it ends very quickly. It is the time when we don't have any problems with business, with work, we have so much free time. Many teenagers think that school spoils our childhood and takes a lot of time. But they make a very big mistake. In future people understand that the school time was the best in their life, but it can't return.

But youth is not so carefree, as seems at first glance. Youth is the time when young people are trying to find their place in the world. And during this search they come across different problems which are as important as those of the adults.

Problem number one of most young people is the problem of fathers and sons. In the 19th century Ivan Turgenev in his novel "Fathers and Sons" perfectly illustrated this eternal problem of fathers and children's misunderstanding. All young people want to be independent, they want their parents to listen to their opinion, not interfere with their private life. For example, we can compare attitude of different nations to young people living independently in Russia, USA, France.

Few young people in our country have their own apartments. In the main, they share the apartments with their parents even after getting married. It depends mostly on economic reasons because it is not easy for a young person without work experience to get a well paid job. With many young Americans it is different. They prefer to live on their own. They like living in apartment blocks or residential areas where everyone is more or less of the same age. And start working very early. They believe they can make themselves as being a millionaire is a national American dream. Young people often move away from home when they leave school (if they can afford it) into shared apartments or small, one-room "studio" apartments. They do their own cooking and cleaning, thus getting experience in independent living, and go to their family home perhaps for the weekend. In the contrary, in France students prefer living with parents till 30-40 years old, in spite of their having job and own private live. Why? Because the life in France is very expensive, and they simply cannot afford living independently.

Another misunderstanding between parents and their children is different models of life. Some parents can't find a common language with them and complain that the young are not what they were in their youth. These words are repeated from generation to generation. In fact, today the young are better educated. At present the young do not blindly accept the ideals of their parents. For them everything that the adults bear in mind is past history. And this is inevitable, because different generations take different directions. The adult always teach the young how to live. They apply old standards to the new way of life. The past is hanging over them preventing them from appreciating the things around them anew.

The young think that the adults have lost touch with everything that is important in life. They are right, because what is important to the adults is the past. The young know what they want. They prefer to make their own mistakes rather than to listen to the warnings of the adults. The past exists to help the young to avoid unnecessary blurs. But they do want to have them. The young want to live their own life. They want to overcome their own difficulties without turning back. Unfortunately the life of the young is frequently determined by the adults. The young and adults have different points of view concerning everything. And it can be the reason for the conflict of generations.

I think that the only way to solve this insoluble problem is for both the young and adults to be tolerant and patient. For example, despite the generation differences there are no clashes of values in our family and my parents are my best friends. They always help me, console me, and try to help me to solve my problems. Also, I think that parents are the closest people in the world and they never advise you bad things. In spite of conflicts between parents and children you should love and respect them.

Another problem for young people is how to spend their free time, what to do after school, choosing a profession, how to deal with girl and boy-friends. On the one hand, there are a lot of young people who study well, as they understand the importance of good education, who are interested in sports and arts, have different hobbies and occupations. In this respect American students are lucky. Schools give them more than just education. Students learn about the world, participating in various school activities. More than 80 per cent of all students participate in activities such as sports, publishing the school newspaper, drama circle, discussion groups, choirs and orchestras. What are the favourite sports for American youth? They are American football, basketball, baseball, wrestling, tennis, football, boxing, ice hockey, athletics and golf. But in Russia not every one can afford going sport, because many sports are very expensive and our authorities didn't support it.

On the other hand, there are so called "problem teenagers", who don't know how to use their energy, how to spend their leisure time. They often break rules of behavior. I think that the most difficult and serious problem of modern teenagers is drug-habit. Some young men use drugs, because they think that will be cool guys. But they don't understand that it's wrong. There are also many other problems: alcoholism, smoking and so on. To my mind this problem is solvable and parents should be a little more attentive to their children and correct their behavior where possible and provide a model of good behavior by themselves.

Other young people are more organized. They join organizations, which unite young people on different principles, skinheads, hippies, punks and so on are some informal organizations, for example. Members of every organization have their own world outlooks. Each of them has their own moral qualities. Some of teenagers spend their free time in different night clubs. Other young people spend their free time in the streets. As for me, I spent my free time at home. I read the books, do homework, walk with my friends and play tennis.

Another main aspect of teenagers' life is to find their place in the future life. Hard work is a part of the American Dream. To be a success is important in America. Society frowns upon those who don't achieve it, that is why all young Americans want to work hard and be a success. The first step to it is a high school diploma. Without it, it is almost impossible to be successful. In order to get it, it is necessary to compete, as rivalry is the spur to achievement. Winning is an American passion. In this case it is very important to be conscious of the society around and never do dirty tricks.

Of course, I pointed out not all problems which young people face nowadays. There are such problems as lack of money, pay full job, subcultures, violence, different illnesses like AIDS, overweight. They are permanent and we should solve them. We are young people and we are the future of our country. Teenagers play an important role in the modern society.