

## **Reasons Teen Disrespect Is On The Rise**

**Though cultures have many differences, there have been a few traits that have united them across the spans of time and geographical area. Many of these traits have even been included in religious doctrine or social and moral laws. In western philosophy and religions the concept of respect has held a high place, allowing a clear distinction between those who have experience and answers to those who are young and naive. Religions such as Christianity and Mormonism stress greatly that the young should respect the elderly, while the Judaic religion provides a strict consequence, should this command be broken. By Old Testament law, the disrespectful child was to be taken to the town council, and then promptly stoned to avoid the spread of the sin and to keep the God's Chosen pure.**

**In recent times the respect that teenagers have shown for the elderly has decreased significantly, this trend has become extremely apparent in the 1980's and 90's. Though modern social guidelines do not dictate the killing of a disrespectful youth, it is still considered something that must be stopped. High school students have always been notorious for their lack of respect for authority. Many have wondered how these changes occur, most children are respectful at a young age but seem to "change overnight" into a youthful teenager who is often disrespectful to those around them. Studies done in recent years have shown that society, media, and the physical changes that a teenager undergoes may all be responsible for this metamorphosis. Severe changes the teenagers endure are often seen as one of the key reasons for their disrespect. Adolescents undergo startling changes both physically and psychologically throughout the process known as puberty.**

**Hormones, the biological chemical responsible for several of the body's functions, have been found to increase drastically during puberty. Because of this increase, teenagers tend to have clouded judgment and a feeling of invincibility. This often leads to them perceiving themselves as the equal of their parents, grandparents, and teachers. The problem of disrespect begins with this perceived equality for it is difficult to respect someone who is an equal, or just a perceived equal. Teenagers also seem to learn who to respect, and who not to respect, based on the culture they are placed in. As the child grows in a society the norms and values of that culture are taught to the child. Things such as saying thank you when given a gift, chewing food with a closed mouth, and even what people deserve respect are all controlled by cultural values.**

**One institution society uses to teach these values to the teenagers are schools, allowing a large group of teenagers to interact semi-independently, in a relatively controlled environment. In recent years however, the moral role of the schools has declined, depriving the teenagers of the guidance they require. This lack of guidance leaves the students to build off values that they are taught elsewhere. Teenagers also learn what to respect from other sources, such as movies. The Movie Industry has become a substantial part of a teenager's life.**

**With hundreds of movies each year fighting for a large audience each movie seeks to appeal to the teenagers by showing them something they desire, or can relate to. Frequently this means casting teenagers in what otherwise would be adult roles; movies now depict teenagers as independent, self-serving characters that can save the world, take lives, engage in sexual acts, or as characters that can beat the odds in death defying situations. With several millions of teenagers influenced by these movies the old adage "Monkey See; Monkey do" shows just how great of an impact the movies have on the teenage audience. Society, movies, or natural growth, all play a vital role in living the stereotype of a teenager. These three factors are not the only thing that control a teenager's development, in addition to those discussed there are several lesser variables help explain the trend teenagers have developed concerning their respect for the various institutions of society.**