

## BEST QUOTES ON ADOLESCENCE

Who would ever think that so much went on in the soul of a young girl?  
—Anne Frank

What do girls do who haven't any mothers to help them through their troubles?  
—Louisa May Alcott

Stop telling girls they can be anything they want when they grow up. I think it's a mistake. Not because they can't, but because it would have never occurred to them they couldn't.

—Sarah Silverman

At 14 you are still in most respects a dependent youth, in some respects a child. At 24 you are an adult. In between, extraordinary turbulences take place.  
--Daniel P. Moynihan

Somewhere slightly before or after the close of our second decade, we reach a momentous milestone—childhood's end. We have left a safe place and can't go home again. We have moved into a world where life isn't fair, where life is rarely what it should be.

--Judith Viorst

Leaving home in a sense involves a kind of second birth in which we give birth to ourselves.

--Robert Neeley Bellah

Millions of our children are doing the right thing every day. They deserve our full support so that they stay the course. Their story goes so unreported in the media that the broader society is losing sight of the fact that our children are an asset, not a liability, to society. We owe it to these youngsters to tell their story, loudly and relentlessly, until their accomplishments are widely acknowledged.

--Hugh Price

Almost everything that is great has been done by youth.

--Benjamin Disraeli

For many adults, adolescence is a forgotten time in our lives—forgotten because we prefer to forget it. At no other time are we confronted with so many dramatic changes, and at no other time are we so poorly equipped with understanding to cope with those changes. Our bodies change, and we feel it, but we don't understand it. Our feelings change and we don't understand why. Our friends change and we feel the peer pressure, but we feel it without understanding it.

--J. Howard Johnston

A normal adolescent isn't a normal adolescent if he acts normal.

--Judith Viorst

I remember adolescence, the years of having the impulse control of a mousetrap, of being as private as a safe-deposit box.

--Anna Quindlen

If Booth Tarkington were to write *Seventeen* today, he would have to call it *Twelve*.

--Arthur Pearl

It confuses the sprouting adolescent to wake up every morning in a new body. It confuses the mother and father to find a new child every day in a familiar body.

--Donald Barr

Cute teen-agers exist only on television, I suspect. I know there are none in my neighborhood.

--Robert MacKenzie

I have no cure, only consolation: someone has passed this way before.

--Stefan Kanfer

Good habits formed at youth make all the difference.

--Aristotle

Adolescence is that period in a kid's life when his or her parents become more difficult.

--Ryan O'Neal

Teenage means perpetual emotion.

--Unknown

Those people who think of adolescence as a happy, carefree time either possess deficient emotions or inadequate memories.

--Louis Bromfield

The young always have the same problem—how to rebel and conform at the same time. They have now solved this by defying their parents and copying one another.

—Quentin Crisp

I would there were no age between sixteen and three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the rest; for there is nothing in the between but getting wenches with child, wronging the ancients, stealing, fighting.

--William Shakespeare

An adolescent is a teenager who acts like a baby when you don't treat him like an adult.

--S. F. Brandt

So much of adolescence is an ill-defined dying,  
An intolerable waiting,  
A longing for another place and time,  
Another condition.

--Theodore Roethke

While we are young the idea of death or failure is intolerable to us; even the possibility of ridicule we cannot bear.

--Isak Dinesen

I never felt that there was anything enviable in youth. I cannot recall that any of us, as youths, admired our condition to excess or had a desire to prolong it.

--Bernard Berenson

In case you're worried about what's going to become of the younger generation, it's going to grow up and start worrying about the younger generation.

--Roger Allen

Everyone believes in his youth that the world really began with him, and that all merely exists for his sake.

--Johann von Goethe

When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years.

--Mark Twain

A boy's will is the wind's will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.

--Henry Wadsworth  
Longfellow

At nineteen, everything is possible and tomorrow looks friendly.

--Jim Bishop

One of the signs of passing youth is the birth of a sense of fellowship with other human beings as we take our place among them.

--Virginia Woolf

It is essential that we enable young people to see themselves as participants in one of the most exciting eras in history, and to have a sense of purpose in relation to it.

--Nelson Rockefeller

Don't laugh at a youth for his affectations; he's only trying on one face after another till he finds his own.

--Logan Pearsall Smith

If one could recover the uncompromising spirit of one's youth, one's greatest indignation would be for what one has become.

--André Gide

The denunciation of the young is a necessary part of the hygiene of older people.

--Logan Pearsall Smith

The real lost souls don't wear their hair long and play guitars. They have crew cuts, trained minds, sign on for research in biological warfare, and don't give their parents a moment's worry.

--J. B. Priestley

Youth has been lonely for centuries. What has 'alienation' got that differentiates it from old-fashioned loneliness?

--Spencer Brown

Between eighteen and twenty, life is like an exchange where one buys stocks, not with money, but with actions. Most men buy nothing.

--Andre Malraux

In no order of things is adolescence the time of the simple life.

--Janet Erskine Stuart

We do not tolerate in our adolescents a firm sense of their own identity, or the impassioned, if transitory commitments through which different identities can be tried and accepted or rejected. We are deathly afraid that they will get a record that will count against them in later life; as, indeed, they will: school counselors compile it continuously and record strong commitment as an aberration.

--Edgar Z. Friedenberg

Fifteen is really medieval and pioneer and nothing is clear and nothing is sure, and nothing is safe and nothing is come and nothing is gone but it all might be.

--Gertrude Stein

A young man of twenty-five is the Lord of life. The very age itself, is for him, the symbol of his mastery....Like an ignorant fighter, for he has never been beaten, he is exultant in the assurance of his knowledge and his power.

--Thomas Wolfe

Now there is an animal in creation of no great general merit; but it has the eye of a hawk for affectation. It is called 'a boy.'

--Charles Reade

It is impossible for the average boy to grow up and use the remarkable capacities that are in every boy, unless the world is for him and makes sense. And a society makes sense when it understands that its chief wealth is these capacities.

--Paul Goodman

Adolescence is a strange time of life when we have matured physically, but our experience and understanding and independence lag behind. Despite increased sexual education and open discussion and television dramas to which young people are constantly exposed today, they still suffer from not knowing how to talk to each other, or how to deal with the violence and dissipation and contradicting moral behavior of their peers and adults.

--Charlotte Zolotow

None of the young, neither the most idealistic nor the most cynical, is untouched by the sense that there are no adults anywhere in the world from whom they can learn what the next steps should be.

--Margaret Mead

## A TEENAGER'S PRAYER

Oh, Supreme Being, and I don't mean me:

Give me the vision to see my parents as human beings because if they aren't, what does that make me?

Give me vocabulary because the more I say you know, the less anyone does.

Give me freedom from television because I'm beginning to suspect its happy endings.

Give me sex education to correct what I first heard from thirteen-year-olds.

Give me homework to keep me from flunking Free Time.

Give me a map of the world so I may see that this town and I are not the center of it.

Give me to know that conformity is the enemy of friendship.

Give me the understanding that nobody ever grows up in a group, so that I may find my own way.

Give me limits so I will know I'm loved.

Give me nothing I haven't earned so that this adolescence will not last forever.

Amen

--Richard Peck

Praise youth and it will prosper.

--Irish Proverb

Of all virtues the virtue of patience is most foreign to youth.

--John Jay Chapman

Every generation revolts against its fathers and makes friends with its grandfathers.

--Lewis Mumford

We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow;  
Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so.

--Alexander Pope

There are few successful adults who were not first successful children.

--Alexander Chase

A man's growth is seen in the successive choirs of his friends.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Child is father of the Man.

--William Wordsworth

How do you know that the fruit is ripe? Simply because it leaves the branch.

--Andre Gide

It is unjust to claim the privileges of age, and retain the playthings of childhood.

--Samuel Johnson

The turning point in the process of growing up is when you discover the core of strength within you that survives all hurt.

--Max Lerner

The excesses of our youth are drafts upon our old age, payable with interest, about thirty years after date.

--Charles Caleb Colton

The youth of a nation are the trustees of posterity.

--Benjamin Disraeli

No young man believes he shall ever die.

--William Hazlitt

Young people are thoughtless as a rule.

--Homer

Youth is perpetual intoxication; it is a fever of the mind.

--La Rochefoucauld

Youth smiles without any reason. It is one of its chiefest charms.

--Oscar Wilde

A young man is so strong, so mad, so certain, and so lost. He has everything and he is able to use nothing.

--Thomas Wolfe

Most men spend the first half of their lives making the second half miserable.

--La Bruyere

Youth is a time when the conventions are rightly misunderstood; they are either blindly obeyed, or blindly challenged.

--Paul Valery

Youth is a time of unending ecstasy; it is reason in a fever.

--La Rochefoucauld

My youth was nought but a shadowy storm, shot here and there by brilliant flashes of sunshine.

--Charles Baudelaire

Jokes and fun are what youth is known by!

--Henrik Ibsen

Some adolescents become bad eggs because they have been set on too long—or not long enough.

--Unknown

Adolescence is the awkward age when a child is too old to say something cute and too young to say something sensible.

--Brussell

All anybody expects of an adolescent is that he act like an adult and be satisfied to be treated like a child.

--Unknown

Adolescence is the period when children are certain they will never be as stupid as their parents.

--Unknown

Snow and adolescence are the only problems that disappear if you ignore them long enough.

—Earl Wilson

Adolescence is when girls experience social pressure to put aside their authentic selves and to display only a small portion of their gifts.

—Mary Pipher

The reason that teenagers know all the answers is that they haven't heard all the questions yet.

--Unknown

It never occurs to a boy of sixteen that someday he will be as dumb as his father is now.

--Unknown

The main problem with teenagers is that they're just like their parents were at their age.

--Unknown

No one could possibly know as much as a teenager thinks he knows, or as little as he thinks his father knows.

--Unknown

A teen-age girl reports that she's been trying to run away from home for several months—but every time she gets to the front door the phone rings.

--Unknown

If youth is the season of hope, it is often so only in the sense that our elders are hopeful about us.

--George Eliot

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

--*I Corinthians 13:11*

Few sons, indeed, are like their fathers. Generally they are worse; but just a few are better.

--Homer

Sons have always a rebellious wish to be disillusioned by that which charmed their fathers.

--Aldous Huxley

There must always be a struggle between a father and son, while one aims at power and the other at independence.

--Samuel Johnson

Greatness of name in the father oftentimes overwhelms the son; they stand too near one another. The shadow kills the growth.

--Ben Jonson

Sons do not need you. They are always out of your reach,  
Walking strange waters.

--Phyllis McGinley

The young think they know everything and are confident in their assertions.

--Aristotle

When one is twenty, ideas of the outside world and the effect one can have on it take precedence over everything else.

--Stendhal

Rashness attends youth, as prudence does old age.

--Cicero

The majority of men employ the first part of life in making the rest miserable.

--La Bruyere

Am I the person who used to wake in the middle of the night and laugh with the joy of living? Who worried about the existence of God, and danced with young ladies till the lark-light? Who sang 'Auld Lang Syne' and howled with sentiment, and more than once gazed at the full moon through a blur of great, romantic tears?

--Logan Pearsall Smith

To me it seems that youth is like spring, an over-praised—if it happen to be a favored one, but in practice very rarely favored and more remarkable, as a general rule, for biting east winds than genial breezes.

--Samuel Butler

Growing is not the easy, plain sailing business that it is commonly supposed to be: it is hard work—harder than any but a growing boy can understand; it requires attention, and you are not strong enough to attend to your bodily growth and to your lessons too.

--Samuel Butler

Young men are as apt to think themselves wise enough, as drunken men are to think themselves sober enough. They look upon spirit to be a much better thing than experience, which they call coldness. They are but half mistaken; for though

spirit without experience is dangerous, experience without spirit is languid and ineffective.

—Lord Chesterfield

Youth is not the age of pleasure; we then expect too much, and we are therefore exposed to daily disappointments and mortifications. When we are a little older, and have brought down our wishes to our experience, then we become calm and begin to enjoy ourselves.

--Lord Liverpool

The destiny of any nation, at any given time, depends on the opinions of its young men under five-and-twenty.

--Goethe

Adolescence is certainly far from a uniformly pleasant period. Early manhood might be the most glorious time of all were it not that the sheer excess of life and vigor gets a fellow into continual scrapes.

--Don Marquis

I am convinced that every boy, in his heart, would rather steal second base than an automobile.

—Campbell Clark

It is deviant behavior for an adolescent to be pleasant.

--Peggy Goldtrap

Youth is a temporary condition from which one usually recovers.

--Unknown

The worst of our youngsters are growing up to become booted, sideburned, duck-tailed, unwashed, leather-jacketed slobs whose favorite sport is ravaging little girls and stomping polio victims to death.

--Gene Marine

The boys of the rising generation are to be the men of the next, and the sole guardian of the principles we deliver over to them.

--Thomas Jefferson

I remember my youth and the feeling that will never come back anymore—the feeling that I could last forever, outlast the sea, the earth, and all men.

--Joseph Conrad

When a child turns 13, parents should put them in a barrel with a hole for feeding and air. When the child reaches 16, plug up the hole.

--Mark Twain

The 'teenager' seems to have replaced the Communist as the appropriate target for public controversy and foreboding.

--Edgar Z. Friedenberg

Trouble is, kids feel they have to shock their elders and each generation grows up into something harder to shock.

--Cal Craig

The youth gets together this material to build a bridge to the moon, or perchance, a palace or temple on earth, and at length, the middle-aged man concludes to build a woodshed with them.

--Henry David Thoreau

The deepest definition of youth is life as yet untouched by tragedy.

--Alfred North Whitehead

In early youth, as we contemplate our coming life, we are like children in a theatre before the curtain is raised, sitting there in high spirits and eagerly waiting for the play to begin.

--Arthur Schopenhauer

We are the people our parents warned us about.

--Graffiti

Sometimes when I get up in the morning, I feel very peculiar. I feel like I've just got to bite a cat! I feel like if I don't bite a cat before sundown, I'll go crazy! But then I just take deep breath and forget about it. That's what is known as real maturity.

--Snoopy

I have called the major crisis of adolescence the identity crisis; it occurs in that period of the life cycle when each youth must forge for himself some central perspective and direction, some working unity, out of the effective remnants of his childhood and the hopes of his anticipated adulthood.

--Erik Erikson

Youth measures in only one direction...from things as they are to an ideal of what things ought to be, while the old measure things as they are against the past the old remember.

--Archibald Cox

There's no such thing as a kid who needs fixing....They're born with everything. And what most people do is squash it and take it away from them.

--Robert Blake

The generation gap is just another way of saying that the younger generation makes overt what is covert in the older generation; the child expresses openly what the parent represses.

--Erik Erikson

Youth is wholly experimental.

--Robert Louis Stevenson

When we are out of sympathy with the young, then I think our work in this world is over.

—George MacDonald

It is not possible for civilization to flow backwards while there is youth in the world.

—Helen Keller

I'm youth, I'm joy, I'm a little bird that has broken out of the egg.

—Matthew Barrie

Through our great good fortune, in our youth our hearts were touched with fire. It was given to us to learn at the outset that life is a profound and passionate thing.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

Young people don't understand why, with so many advantages, they are not happier than they are. They don't form relationships that last. They don't expect anything permanent with one another. But the longing never goes away: everybody dreams of what life would be if one were loved.

--Saul Bellow

### **DON'T BLAME THE CHILDREN!**

We read in the papers and hear on the air  
Of killing and stealing and crime everywhere.  
We sigh and say as we notice the trend,  
'This young generation, where will it end?'  
But can we be sure that it's their fault alone,  
That maybe a part of it, isn't our own?

Are we less guilty, who place in their way  
Too many things that can lead them astray:  
Too much money, too much idle time;  
Too many movies of passion and crime;  
Too many books not fit to be read;  
Too much evil in what they hear said;  
Too many children encouraged to roam,  
By too many parents who just won't stay home.

Kids don't make the movies, they don't write the books,  
That paint the gay pictures of gangsters and crooks;  
They don't make the liquor, they don't run the bars,  
They don't make the laws and they don't sell the cars.  
They don't peddle drugs that addle the brain,  
That's all done by older folks greedy for gain.

Delinquent teenagers; Oh, how we condemn  
The sins of the nation and blame it on them.  
By the laws of the blameless the Savior made known,  
Who is there among us to cast the first stone?  
For in so many cases, (it's sad, but it's true),  
The title, 'DELINQUENT' fits older folks, too.

--Margaret Hogan

There's nothing wrong with teenagers that reasoning with them won't aggravate.

--Ron Howard

There is nothing more poetic in the freshness of its passions than a 16-year-old heart. The morning of life is like the dawn of a day, full of purity, visions, and harmony.

--Chateaubriand

Adolescents tend to be passionate people, and passion is no less real because it is directed toward a hot-rod, a commercialized popular singer, or the leader of a black-jacketed gang.

--Edgar Z. Friedenberg

Young girls like the excess of any quality. Without knowing, they want to suffer, to suffer they must exaggerate; they like to have loud chords struck on them.

--Elizabeth Bowen

It is an illusion that youth is happy, an illusion of those who have lost it.

—W. Somerset Maugham

As a result of all his education, from everything he hears and sees around him, the child absorbs such a lot of lies and foolish nonsense, mixed in with essential truths, that the first duty of the adolescent who wants to be a healthy adult is to disgorge it all.

--Romain Rolland

What is youth except a man or woman before it is ready or fit to be seen?

--Evelyn Waugh

It's all that the young can do for the old, to shock them and keep them up to date.

--George Bernard Shaw

Being young is not having any money; being young is not minding not having any money.

--Katharine Whitehorn

As a teenager you are at the last stage in your life when you will be happy to hear that the phone is for you.

--Fran Lebowitz

Weird clothing is de rigueur for teenagers, but today's generation of teens is finding it difficult to be sufficiently weird. This is because the previous generation of teens, who went through adolescence in the sixties and seventies, used up practically all the available weirdness. After what went on in that twenty-year period, almost nothing looks strange to anyone.

--P. J. O'Rourke

Psychologically I should say that a person becomes an adult at the point when he produces more than he consumes or earns more than he spends. This may be at the age of eighteen, twenty-five, or thirty-five. Some people remain unproductive and dependent children forever and therefore intellectually and emotionally immature.

--Henry C. Link

Always we hear the plaintive cry of the teenagers: What can we do...Where can we go? Let us speak the truth in love. The answer is go home.

Hang the storm windows, paint the woodwork. Rake the leaves. Mow the lawn. Shovel the walk.

Wash the car. Learn to cook. Scrub some floors. Repair the sink. Build a boat. Get a job.

Help the minister, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army. Visit the sick. Assist the poor. Study your lessons.

And then when you are through...and not too tired...read a book.

The world does not owe you a living. You owe the world something. You owe it your time and energy and your talents so that no one will be at war or in poverty or sick...or lonely again.

--Judge Phil Gilliam

Adolescence begins when children stop asking questions—because they know all the answers.

--Evan Esar

Young people...have more compassion and tenderness toward the elderly than most middle-aged adults. Nothing—not avarice, not pride, not scrupulousness, not impulsiveness—so disillusion a youth about her parents as the seemingly inhumane way they treat her grandparents.

--Louise Kaplan

Adolescents sometimes say...‘My friends listen to me, but my parents only hear me talk.’ Often they are right. Familiarity breeds inattention.

--Laurence Steinberg

Adolescence is society’s permission slip for combining physical maturity with psychological irresponsibility.

--Terri Apter

Adolescents are not monsters. They are just people trying to learn how to make it among the adults in the world, who are probably not so sure themselves.

--Virginia Satir

Adolescents are the bearers of cultural renewal, those cycles of generation and regeneration that link your limited individual destinies with the destiny of the species.

--Louise Kaplan

One of the main tasks of adolescence is to achieve an identity—not necessarily a knowledge of who we are, but a clarification of the range of what we might become, a set of self-references by which we can make sense of our responses, and justify our decisions and goals.

--Terri Apter

Adolescents may be, almost simultaneously, overconfident and riddled with fear. They are afraid of their overpowering feelings, of losing control, of helplessness, of failure. Sometimes they act bold, to counteract their imperious yearnings to remain children. They are impulsive, impetuous, moody, disagreeable, overdemanding, underappreciative. If you don't understand them, remember, they don't understand themselves most of the time.

--Stella Chess

Infancy is the realm conveyed to us in dreams which look backward to the past. Adolescence, more like a work of art, is a prospective symbol of personal synthesis and of the future of humankind. Like a work of art that sets us on the pathway to new discoveries, adolescence promotes new meanings by mobilizing energies that were initially invested in the past.

--Louise Kaplan

At a stage when young people want more than anything to be like everyone else, they find themselves the least alike. Everyone their age is growing and changing, but each at his or her own pace.

--Laurence Steinberg

Some adolescents are troubled and some get into trouble. But the great majority (almost nine out of ten) do not....The bottom line is that good kids don't suddenly go bad in adolescence.

--Laurence Steinberg

An actress reading a part for the first time tries many ways to say the same line before she settles into the one she believes suits the character and situation best. There's an aspect of the rehearsing actress about the girl on the verge of her teens. Playfully, she is starting to try out ways to be a grown up person.

--Stella Chess

Teenage girls are extremists who see the world in black-and-white terms, missing shades of gray. Life is either marvelous or not worth living. School is either pure torment or is going fantastically. Other people are either great or horrible, and they themselves are wonderful or pathetic failures. One day a girl will refer to herself as 'the goddess of social life/ and the next day she'll regret that she's the 'ultimate in nerdosity.'

--Mary Pipher

This is the hope of many adolescent girls—to capture a parent’s heart with love for them as they are, as people. They reject the notion of being loved just because they are the child of the parent. They want the parent to fall in love with them all over again, because being new, they deserve a new love.

--Terri Apter

Most parents of adolescent girls have the goal of keeping their daughters safe while they grow up and explore the world. The parents’ job is to protect, the daughter’s job is to explore.

--Mary Pipher

Some adolescent girls are depressed because they have lost their warm, open relationship with their parents. They have loved and been loved by people whom they now must betray to fit into peer culture. Furthermore, they are discouraged by peers from expressing sadness at the loss of family relationships—even to say they are sad is to admit weakness and dependency.

--Mary Pipher

What eleven- to thirteen-year-old boys fear is passivity of any kind. When they do act passively we can be fairly certain that it is an act of aggression designed to torment a parent or teacher....Mischief at best, violence at worst is the boy’s proclamation of masculinity.

--Louise Kaplan

Adolescence hits boys harder than it does girls. Girls bleed a little and their breasts pop out, big deal, but adolescence lands on a guy with both feet....Your body is engulfed by chemicals of rage and despair, you pound, you shriek, you batter your head against the trees. You come away wounded, feeling that life is unknowable, can never be understood, only endured and sometimes cheated.

--Garrison Keillor

We carry adolescence around in our bodies all our lives. We get through the Car Crash Age alive and cruise through our early twenties as cool dudes, wily, dashing, winsome...shooting baskets, the breeze, the moon, and then we try to become caring men, good husbands, great fathers, good citizens.

--Garrison Keillor

Traditionally parents have wondered what their teens were doing, but now teens are much more likely to be doing things that can get them killed.

--Mary Pipher

As a guy develops and practices his masculinity, he is accompanied by an invisible male chorus of all the other guys, who hiss or cheer as he attempts to approximate the masculine ideal, who push him to sacrifice more of his humanity for the sake of his masculinity, and who ridicule him when he holds back. The chorus is made up of all the guy's comrades and rivals, his buddies and bosses, his male ancestors and his male cultural heroes—and above all, his father, who may have been a real person in his life, or may have existed only as the myth of the man who got away.

--Frank Pittman

At the heart of male bonding is this experience of boys in early puberty: they know they must break free from their mothers and the civilized world of women, but they are not ready yet for the world of men, so they are only at home with other boys, equally outcast, equally frightened, and equally involved in posturing what they believe to be manhood.

--Frank Pittman

Early on, girls begin to menstruate, which is dramatic but not obvious to their playmates. They grow taller and rounder, but underneath their makeup they are still recognizably themselves. For boys it is far more disorienting. Puberty comes later, sometimes much later, and its delay is humiliating. While the tall round girls are getting themselves up like grown women, the prepubertal boys, with their featureless, hairless bodies, are just dirty little kids who could pass for the children of the hypermature girls.

--Frank Pittman

We long for our father. We wear his clothes, and actually try to fill his shoes....We hang on to him, begging him to teach us how to do whatever is masculine, to throw balls or be in the woods or go see where he works....We want our fathers to protect us from coming too completely under the control of our mothers....We want to be seen with Dad, hanging out with men and doing men things.

--Frank Pittman

Unfortunately there is still a cultural stereotype that it's all right for girls to be affectionate but that once boys reach six or seven, they no longer need so much hugging and kissing. What this does is dissuade boys from expressing their natural feelings of tenderness and affection. It is important that we act affectionately with our sons as well as our daughters.

--Stephanie Marston

Youth is about the only thing worth having, and that is about the only thing youth has.

--Ed Howe

What causes adolescents to rebel is not the assertion of authority but the arbitrary use of power, with little explanation of the rules and no involvement in decision-making....Involving the adolescent in decisions doesn't mean that you are giving up our authority. It means acknowledging that the teenager is growing up and has the right to participate in decisions that affect his or her life.

--Laurence Steinberg

The conflict between the need to belong to a group and the need to be seen as unique and individual is the dominant struggle of adolescence.

--Jeanne Elium and Don  
Elium

All those tough guys who want to scare the world into seeing them as men...who don't know how to be a man with a woman, only a brute or a boy, who fill up the divorce courts; all those corporate raiders and rain-forest burners and war starters who want more in hopes that will make them feel better;...are suffering from Father Hunger. They go through their puberty rituals day after day for a lifetime, waiting for a father to anoint them and say 'Attaboy,' to treat them as good enough to be considered a man.

--Frank Pittman

The long discussions and painful arguments of adolescence and the fierce loyalties to teachers, heroes, and gurus during the teenage years are simply our children's struggles to ensure that the lifestyles and values they adopt are worthy of their allegiance.

--Neil Kurshan

As boys without bonds to their fathers grow older and more desperate about their masculinity, they are in danger of forming gangs in which they strut their masculinity for one another, often overdo it, and sometimes turn to displays of fierce, macho bravado and even violence.

--Frank Pittman

Teenagers always show their desire to be different by dressing alike.

--Unknown

Like its politicians and its wars, society has the teenagers it deserves.

--J. B. Priestley

Tell me what are the prevailing sentiments that occupy the minds of your young men, and I will tell you what is to be the character of the next generation.

--Edmund Burke

Into my heart an air that kills  
From yon far country blows:  
What are those blue remembered hills,  
What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content,  
I see it shining plain,  
The happy highways where I went  
And cannot come again.

--A. E. Housman

They feel like men and women, look like men and women and have the knowledge that makes them feel powerful. But when you realize that they are not socially and emotionally mature, you discover that they are too powerful for their own good—too powerful for society's good.

--Elizabeth Hall

If you reside in a state where you attain your legal majority while still in your teens, pretend that you don't. There isn't an adult alive who would want to be contractually bound by a decision he came to at the age of 19.

--Fran Lebowitz

Everywhere I go, kids walk around not with books under their arms, but with radios up against their heads. Children can't read or write, but they can memorize whole albums.

--Rev. Jesse Jackson

I have something to say but I don't know what it is.

--Paris Graffito

To assume that the young will inevitably be both wiser and better than their elders is a forlorn hope, hardly justified by historic experience.

--Harold Blake Walker

Adolescence: A shrewd observer has significantly characterized the period as the time when the boy wishes he were dead, and everybody else wishes so too.

--Harriet Beecher Stowe

Adolescence: Mope—hope—grope.

--Maxine Davis

Friends aren't any more important than breath or blood to a high school senior.

--Betty Ford

Growing up is like taking down the sides of your house and letting strangers walk in.

--Maureen Daly

The invention of the teenager was a mistake. Once you identify a period of life in which people have few restrictions and, at the same time, few responsibilities—they get to stay out late but don't have to pay taxes—naturally, nobody wants to live any other way.

--Judith Martin

I am not young enough to know everything.

--Oscar Wilde

One of the advantages of being young is that you don't let common sense get in the way of doing things everybody else knows are impossible.

--Unknown

Why do you have to be a nonconformist like everybody else?

--James Thurber

The best substitute for experience is being sixteen.

--Raymond Duncan

Youth is a wonderful thing. What a crime it is to waste it on children!

--George Bernard Shaw

And the day came when the risk to remain tight in the bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.

--Anaïs Nin

If youth is the season of hope, it is often so only in the sense that our elders are hopeful about us.

--George Eliot

The follies which a man regrets most, in his life, are those which he didn't commit when he had the opportunity.

--Helen Rowland

It seems like we're always searching for something to satisfy us, and never finding it.

--S. E. Hinton

Nobody understands anyone 18, including those who are 18.

--Jim Bishop

The old believe everything, the middle-aged suspect everything, the young know everything.

--Oscar Wilde

Today's kids inhabit a world where the cultural hype they have been fed at home and at school about how wonderful they are is about to meet a rude comedown. The anthem they will hear after the champagne corks pop at graduation is not so much American the beautiful as American the beaten. Bowed down by a decade's worth of college debt, these kids are going to have to be pretty special—and very lucky—to live anywhere near as well as their parents did. And nothing about their upbringing prepared them for this.

--Tina Brown

It is the malady of our age that the young are so busy teaching us that they have no time left to learn.

--Eric Hoffer

Parentification: a term family therapists use for sons and daughters who are parents to their own parents and sacrifice their own needs...to accommodate and care for the emotional needs and pursuits of parents or another family member.

--Jane J. Carroll &  
Bryan E. Robinson

A lot of 18-year-olds are like old men. They think they've seen everything.

—Ben Folds

The difficult child is the child who is unhappy. He is at war with himself; and in consequence, he is at war with the world.

—S. Neill, *Summerhill*

Somewhere between the ages of 10 and 13 (depending on how hormone-enhanced their beef is), children enter adolescence, a.k.a. 'the de-cutening.' Our bodies grow taller and hormonal changes introduce secondary sex characteristics. It is a period marked by turbulent emotions, excruciating self-consciousness and a level of masturbation so furiously excessive it tests the human body's resistance to friction-induced combustion.

--*Earth (The Book) A  
Visitor's Guide to  
the Human Race*

Teenage boys, goaded by their surging hormones run in packs like the primal horde. They have only a brief season of exhilarating liberty between control by their mothers and control by their wives.

--Camille Paglia

True love is not rare at the age of a teen, but recognizing it as true love is.

--Brad Bell

Adolescence as the time when an individual 'recapitulates' the savage stage of the race's past.

—Granville Stanley Hall

American youth attributes much more importance to arriving at driver's license age than at voting age.

—Marshall McLuhan

Youth doesn't need friends—it only needs crowds.

—Zelda Fitzgerald

Teenagers dominated the mid-20th century (the term was invented only in the 1930s), and no one gave them more visibility than Elvis Presley, who began his own career at 18. He embodied the teen desire for liberation from their parents' culture and mirrored their more open sexuality, as he gave youth everywhere in the world music to call their own.

—Paula Fass

What laughter is to childhood, sex is to adolescence.

—Martha Beck

Anyone who's been through middle school might agree that 'reputational aggression'—aka vicious gossip, or even verbal abuse—seems to play a role in the status struggles of teenagers. Using data from North Carolina high schools, Robert Faris uncovered a pattern showing that, contrary to the stereotype of high-status kids victimizing low-status ones, most aggression is local: kids tend to target kids close to them on the social ladder. And the higher one rises on that ladder, the more frequent the acts of aggression—until, near the very top, aggression ceases almost completely. Why? Kids with nowhere left to climb, Faris posits, have no more use for it. Indeed, the star athlete who demeaned the mild mathlete might come off as insecure. 'In some ways,' Faris muses, 'these people have the luxury of being kind. Their social positions are not in jeopardy.'

—Jerry Useem

Unless a tree has borne blossoms in spring, you will vainly look for fruit on it in autumn.

—Walter Scott

The American ideal is youth -- handsome, empty youth.

—Henry Miller

The amount of stress on a student is ridiculous. Students feel the constant need at our school of having to keep up with all the achievements. We'll do just fine, even though we got a B-minus on that chem test. And no, I won't join the debate team for you. We love our moms and we love our dads, but calm down.

—Martha Cabot, High School Sophomore

The kids in affluent communities...felt their parents to be no more available to them, either emotionally or physically, than the kids in severe poverty did.

—Hanna Rosin

Research has shown that a feeling of closeness to parents was inversely linked to household income, meaning that the most-affluent kids felt the most alienated.

—Hanna Rosin

Some Asian kids did face intense pressure from their parents, on top of a cultural stigma against seeking help for mental-health issues.

—Hanna Rosin

The kids who need the most love will ask for it in the most unloving of ways.

—[facebook.com/joyofmom](https://www.facebook.com/joyofmom)

Never be defined by your past. It was a lesson, not a life sentence.

—[facebook.com/Lifebooks](https://www.facebook.com/Lifebooks)

I am not your friend.

I am your parent.

I will stalk you.

Flip out on you.

Lecture.

Drive you insane.

Be your worst nightmare and

Hunt you down when needed.

Because I love you.

—Dr. Laura

The turning point in the process of growing up is when you discover the core of strength within you that survives all hurt.

—Max Lerner

The hardest part about being a teenager is dealing with other teenagers—the criticism and the ridicule, the gossip and rumors.

—Beverley Mitchell

Love your parents. We are so busy growing up that we often forget that they too are growing old.

—David Wolfe

Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state.

—William James

The pressure to succeed in high school is all too familiar to me. I distinctly remember being a freshman in high school, overwhelmed by the belief that my GPA over the next four years would make or break my life. My daily thought process was that every homework assignment, every project, every test could be the difference. The difference between a great college and a mediocre college. The difference between success and failure. The difference between happiness and misery...I felt the pressure coming from all around me—my parents, my peers, and worst of all, myself. I felt that I had one shot at high school and that my GPA, SAT score, and college applications were the only barometers of my success.

—Jeremy Lin

Quit blaming your parents for everything wrong in your life. Be grateful they saw you through your teenage years and didn't kill you.

—*snarkEcards*

I've got two daughters. 9 years old and 6 years old. I am going to teach them first of all about values and morals. But if they make a mistake, I don't want them punished with a baby.

—Barack Obama

Nothing so dates a man as to decry the younger generation.

—Adlai Stevenson

Idleness and lack of occupation tend - nay are dragged - towards evil.

—Hippocrates

Nothing good ever happens after 2 am. Just go to sleep.

—*The Chive*

The summer between high school and college—It's the last gasp of really being a teen.

—Sarah Dessen

Popularity is a trap. The research is overwhelming. For instance, a study tracking nearly 200 13-year-olds over the course of a decade found that those who acted old for their age by sneaking into movies, forming early romantic relationships, shoplifting, and basing friendships on appearance were considered by their peers to be the popular kids. The 'cool kids,' the same study found, had a 45 percent greater rate of problems due to substance abuse by age 22, and a 22 percent greater rate of criminal behavior, compared with the average teen in the study. Such behavior made the popular group far less socially acceptable as young adults than they were at 13, which suggests that while the cool kids achieved temporary social status, they never developed the skills needed for deep, durable friendships.

—Ron Fournier

A youth with his first cigar makes himself sick; a youth with his first girl makes other people sick.

—Mary Wilson Little

As you get older you will understand more and more that it's not about what you look like or what you own. It's all about the person you've become.

—Unknown

Calming down a noisy, rebellious group of adolescents is a lot like defusing a bomb. Careful, premeditated, calm responses are crucial to success.

--James Nehring

Few things in life are as satisfying as seeing your own children have teenagers.

—Doug Larson

Let me grow as I be. And try to understand why I want to grow like me;  
Not like my mom wants to be  
Nor like my dad hopes I'll be  
Or my teacher thinks I should be  
Please try to understand and help me grow  
Just like me!

--Gladys Andrews  
Fleming

People get happier as they get older. The least happy are probably teenagers and people in their 20s. We get happier at midlife, but the peak is, depending on the study, around 65 or 70.

—Sonja Lyubomirsky

Psychologically, the senior-high-school pupil has emerged from the crisis of adolescence either as victor or as vanquished. In the crisis, he has either lost or gained a great deal of confidence in himself and others. He may have given up his creative attempts to may have gained new vigor and new vision. In either instance, however, he is a new creature. He is almost an adult, who must be treated as such and from whom much should be expected with due consideration for his personality, which is by now fairly well-established.

--Italo de  
Francesco

13ers ['Generation Xers'] have been bombarded with study after story after column about how bad they supposedly are. Americans in their teens and twenties, we are told, are consumed with violence, selfishness, greed, bad work habits, and civic apathy. Turn on the TV, and it's hard to see a bad-news-for-America story-from crime to welfare to consumerism-in which young bodies and faces don't show up prominently in the footage.

—Neil Howe and Bill  
Strauss

We have the most prolonged adolescence in the history of mankind. There is no other society that requires so many years to pass before people are grown up ... Adolescence is nurtured and prolonged by educational processes and by industry that has found a bonanza in embracing the adolescent population and fortifying 'adolescent values.' This prolongation of adolescence robs the country of the population group having the most risk takers, and the highest ideals.

—Ralph Nader

The attack on youth is a national pathology, unwarranted by fact, smokescreen for the failure of adulthood and its leadership to confront larger predicaments. No rescue by the monied, governing, institutional, or otherwise privileged is in sight. It's up to the energy and inventiveness of the younger generation to pull the gated minds of millennium America toward acceptance of diversity, community, and fairness, and I hope they have as much fun as I did in my adolescence achieving what we Sixties kids only imagined.

—Mike Males

Don't let anyone think little of you because you are young.

—1 Timothy 4:12

If 16-year-olds are old enough to drink the water polluted by the industries that you regulate, if 16-year-olds are old enough to breathe the air ruined by garbage burners that government built, if 16-year-olds are old enough to walk on the streets made unsafe by terrible drugs and crime policies, if 16-year-olds are old enough to live in poverty in the richest country in the world, if 16-year-olds are old enough to get sick in a country with the worst public health-care programs in the world, and if 16-year-olds are old enough to attend school districts that you underfund, than 16-year-olds are old enough to play a part in making them better.

—Rebecca Tilsen, 14, of  
Minneapolis given  
as testimony to the  
Minnesota House  
subcommittee in  
1991 regarding  
lowering the voting  
age.

Come mothers and fathers throughout the land,  
And don't criticize what you can't understand,  
Your sons and your daughters are beyond your command,  
Your old road is rapidly aging,  
Please get out of the new one if you can't lend your hand,  
Oh, the times they are a changing.

—Bob Dylan

To an adolescent, there is nothing in the world more embarrassing than a parent.

—Dave Barry

I was a teenager in the 1970s. It was a different time. We did not drink—or do drugs or have sex—in captivity. We did those things in the wild, away from our parents, in the danger and thrill of the dark, sacred night. Our parents understood that it was the beginning of the end: We were leaving them. Some of us had curfews, others did not—but either way, you could get a lot done by midnight.

—Caitlin Flanagan

[As] a teenager in the 1970s....at night, we were free. And we did many dangerous things. Mothers were not yet against drunk driving; cheerful ladies did not give you condoms at school. It wasn't an arcadia, and many times things went terribly wrong. But most of us survived.

—Caitlin Flanagan

Kids don't rebel against their parents anymore; why would they? Would you rebel against the concierge at the Hyatt?

—Caitlin Flanagan

The young do not know enough to be prudent, and therefore they attempt the impossible, and achieve it, generation after generation.

—Pearl S. Buck

It is clear from all these data that the interests of teenagers are not focused around studies, and that scholastic achievement is at most of minor importance in giving status or prestige to an adolescent in the eyes of other adolescents.

--James S. Coleman

Luxury! more perilous to youth than storms or quicksand, poverty or chains.

—Hannah More

The rich middle-and high-school kids...show higher rates of alcohol and drug abuse on average than poor kids, and much higher rates than the national norm. They report clinically significant depression or anxiety or delinquent behaviors at a rate two to three times the national average. Starting in the seventh grade, the rich cohort includes just as many kids who display troubling levels of delinquency as the poor cohort, although the rule-breaking takes different forms. The poor kids, for example, fight and carry weapons more frequently....The rich kids, meanwhile, report higher levels of lying, cheating, and theft.

—Hanna Rosin citing a  
Yale Psychiatry  
Department Study  
by Suniya Luthar

Luthar constructed a profile of elite American adolescents whose self-worth is tied to their achievements and who see themselves as catastrophically flawed if they don't meet the highest standards of success. Because a certain kind of success seems well within reach, they feel they have to attain it at all costs—a phenomenon she refers to as 'I can, therefore I must.' Middle-class kids, she told me, generally do not live with the expectation that they should go to Stanford or earn \$200,000 a year. 'If I've never been to the moon,' she said of middle-class families, 'why would I expect my kids to go there?' The yardstick for the children of the meritocratic elite is different, and it can intimidate as much as it can empower.

—Hanna Rosin citing a  
Yale Psychiatry  
Department Study  
by Suniya Luthar

Elite education manufactures students who are smart and talented and driven, yes, but also anxious, timid, and lost, with little intellectual curiosity and a stunted sense of purpose.

—William Deresiewicz

College dean Julie Lythcott-Haims interacted with student who relied on their parents ‘in ways that felt, simply, off’ and who seemed ‘existentially impotent.’ She detailed the growing mental-health crisis at colleges, and described the brilliant, accomplished students who ‘would sit on my couch holding their fragile, brittle parts together, resigned to the fact that this outwardly successful situation was their miserable life.’

—Hanna Rosin

A student, teacher, or counselor would look around to make sure no one was listening and then whisper a story about an Asian kid being punished or even kicked out of the house for a night after getting a B or failing to get into Stanford. I’d heard how new East Asian immigrant parents mistakenly transposed the reality of education in, say, China or Korea, which is that how you do on a single test can determine your entire future.

—Hanna Rosin

A piece of you cringes when you hear that your friend has been preparing for the SAT with classes since last summer, and that they’re already scoring a 2000. (And what about...the girl taking a summer immersion program to skip ahead and get into AP French her sophomore year? And that internship your best friend has with a Stanford professor?) You can’t help but slip into the system of competitive insanity...We are not teenagers. We are lifeless bodies in a system that breeds competition, hatred, and discourages teamwork and genuine learning. We lack sincere passion. We are sick...Why is that not getting through to this community? Why does this insanity that is our school district continue?

—Carolyn Walworth,  
High School Junior

Telling a teenager the facts of life is like giving a fish a bath.

—Arnold H. Glasow

Arguing with a teenager is like wrestling in the mud with a pig. Sooner or later you figure out that they’re enjoying it.

—Unknown

Teenagers who are never required to vacuum are living in one.

—Fred G. Gosman

Raising teenagers is like nailing Jell-o to a tree.

—Unknown

Teenagers are free verse walking around on two legs.

—Dorothy Allison

How strange that the young should always think the world is against them when in fact that is the only time it is for them.

—Mignon McLaughlin

Small children disturb your sleep, big children your life.

—Yiddish Proverb

Teenagers only have to focus on themselves - its not until we get older that we realize that other people exist.

—Jennifer Lawrence

Teenagers complain there's nothing to do, then stay out all night doing it.

—Bob Phillips

If you liked being a teenager, there's something really wrong with you.

—Stephen King

We should not make light of the troubles of children. They are worse than ours, because we can see the end of our trouble and they can never see any end.

--William Middleton

The wildest colts make the best horses.

—Plutarch

The childhood shows the man,  
As morning shows the day.

--John Milton

**TO ALL THE KIDS WHO SURVIVED THE 1930's, 40's, 50's, 60's and 70's!!**

First, we survived being born to mothers who smoked and/or drank while they were pregnant.

They took aspirin, ate blue cheese dressing, tuna from a can and didn't get tested for diabetes.

Then after that trauma, we were put to sleep on our tummies in baby cribs covered with bright colored lead-base paints.

We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, locks on doors or cabinets and when we rode our bikes, we had baseball caps not helmets on our heads.

As infants & children, we would ride in cars with no car seats, no booster seats, no seat belts, no air bags, bald tires and sometimes no brakes. Riding in the back of a pick- up truck on a warm day was always a special treat.

We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle.

We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle and no one actually died from this.

We ate cupcakes, white bread, real butter and bacon. We drank Kool-Aid made with real white sugar. And, we weren't overweight. WHY?

Because we were always outside playing...that's why!

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on.

No one was able to reach us all day. And, we were O.K.

We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then ride them down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem.

We did not have Playstations, Nintendo's and X-boxes. There were no video games, no 150 channels on cable, no video movies or DVDs, no surround-sound or CDs, no cell phones, no personal computers, no Internet and no chat rooms.

**WE HAD FRIENDS** and we went outside and found them!

We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no lawsuits from these accidents.

We ate worms and mud pies made from dirt, and the worms did not live in us forever.

We were given BB guns for our 10th birthdays, made up games with sticks and tennis balls and, although we were told it would happen, we did not put out very many eyes.

We rode bikes or walked to a friend's house and knocked on the door or rang the bell, or just walked in and talked to them.

Little League had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment.

Imagine that!!

The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law!

These generations have produced some of the best risk-takers, problem solvers and inventors ever.

The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas.

We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned how to deal with it all.

If YOU are one of them? CONGRATULATIONS!

—*www.corsinet.com*

The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up dainties at the table, cross their legs, and tyrannize their teachers.

—Socrates

You don't have to suffer to be a poet. Adolescence is enough suffering for anyone.

—John Ciardi

For too many parents and their children, acceptance by an elite institution isn't just another challenge, just another goal. A yes or no from Amherst or the University of Virginia or the University of Chicago is seen as the conclusive measure of a young person's worth, an incontestable harbinger of the accomplishments or disappointments to come. Winner or loser: This is when judgement is made.

—Frank Bruni

There is a tide which begins to rise in the veins of youth at the age of eleven or twelve. It is called by the name of adolescence. If that tide can be taken at the flood, and a new voyage begun in the strength and along the flow of the current, we think that it will move on to fortune.

—*The Hadow Report*,  
1926

## ADVICE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Expect rejection, but expect even more strongly to overcome it. There will be many ‘failures’ sprinkled among the successes you enjoy. A failure becomes just one bad time at bat if you refuse to let it defeat you.

Whatever life’s work you decide upon, avoid choosing it primarily for reasons of security or because of the money involved.

So long as you are not being merely impetuous, do not be reluctant to follow your heart.

—Marvin Levy

According to popular wisdom, young adolescents are inherently id-driven, irrational, and argumentative. In mortal combat with adult authority, they have withdrawn into a peer culture which rejects adult values. They are interested primarily in social concerns, not intellectual activities. Therefore, the best thing schools can do is to place them in a highly structured environment, address their social needs, and hope that they will eventually outgrow the ‘disease’ known as early adolescence.

—John Arnold

My experience has left me with immutable optimism about the potential of young adolescent children. Given learning opportunities that truly challenge, the responsibility to exercise meaningful choices, and respect for their ideas and dignity, youngsters are capable of tremendous commitment and dazzling originality. Underneath the confounding, frustrating, and often exhausting surface, there lies an indomitable human spirit, capable of the exceptional.

—Chris Stevenson

The secret message communicated to most young people today by the society around them is that they are not needed, that the society will run itself quite nicely until they - at some distant point in the future - will take over the reigns. Yet the fact is that the society is not running itself nicely... because the rest of us need all the energy, brains, imagination and talent that young people can bring to bear down on our difficulties. For society to attempt to solve its desperate problems without the full participation of even very young people is imbecile.

— Alvin Toffler

At sixteen, the adolescent knows about suffering because he himself has suffered, but he barely knows that other beings also suffer.

—Jean-Jacques Rousseau

The interior of a teenager's mind is an endless war between Stupid and Clever.

—William Landay

To Whom It May concern:

Cara is tardy this morning as a result of a condition known as teenage-ism. Adolescents across our great nation are afflicted, and there is no know cure. Symptoms are multitudinous, but this particular morning she suffered from an inability to remove herself from her bed, and also felt the need to talk back to her birth-giver. She seems to be recovering her senses after watching her cell phone fly out the cat window. Please call me if there is another flare-up.

Thank you.  
Nicole Poppic

As for boys and girls, it is one of the sorriest of mistakes to talk down to them: almost always your lad of fifteen thinks more simply, more fundamentally than you do; and what he accepts as good coin is not facts or precepts, but feelings and convictions.

--David Grayson

Adolescents have the right to be themselves. The fact that you were the belle of the ball, the captain of the lacrosse team, the president of your senior class, Phi Beta Kappa, or a political activist doesn't mean that your teenager will be or should be the same....Likewise, the fact that you were a wallflower, uncoordinated, and a C student shouldn't mean that you push your child to be everything you were not....Let your child be the teenager he or she want to be, not the adolescent you were or wish you had been.

--Laurence Steinberg

Even as kids reach adolescence, they need more than ever for us to watch over them....Adolescence is not about letting go. It's about hanging on during a very bumpy ride.

--Ron Taffel

If you expect complete honesty, you'll be disappointed. And don't expect gratitude for your parenting efforts. Do expect that you'll feel like you're on a yo-yo—intimate with your child one day, distant the next. As long as she's safe, don't invade her world. Remember: most teens end up being closer to their parents after adolescence than they were before.

--Ron Taffel

Children...after a certain age do not welcome parental advice. Occasionally, they may listen to another adult, which is why perhaps people should switch children with their neighbors and friends for a while in the teen years.

--Marian Wright  
Edelman

It isn't easy to see the formerly loving child who once curled up in our laps turn into a surly stranger who cannot spare us a kind word. One mother...was taken aback when she called, as her daughter was going out the door, 'Have a good time,' and her daughter angrily replied, 'Stop telling me what to do!'

--Nancy Samalin

Negotiating the adolescent stage is neither quick nor easy....I have often said to parents, 'If it isn't illegal, immoral, or fattening, give it your blessing.' We do much better...if we find and support all the places we can appropriately say yes, and say only the no's that really matter.

--Virginia Satir

No man knows his true character until he has run out of gas, purchased something on the installment plan, and raised an adolescent.

--Marcelene Cox

Bringing up teenagers is like sweeping back ocean waves with a frazzled broom—the inundation of outside influences never stops. Whatever the lure—cars, easy money, cigarettes, drugs, booze, sex, crime—much that glitters along the shore has a thousand times the appeal of a parent's lecture.

--Mary Ellen Snodgrass

A teen-ager out of sight is like a kite in the clouds; even though you can't see it you feel the tug on the string.

--Marcelene Cox

Having a teenage daughter is like being stuck in a hurricane. All you can do is board up your windows and look out in four years to see what the damage is.

--Buzz Nutley

My friends complain that their teenagers sleep all day. Not me. Can you imagine if they were awake all day? Teenagers, like espresso, are meant to be taken in small doses.

--Buzz Nutley

## ON PARENTS

I bring home my test  
    proud of my B  
'You could do better'  
    is what they say to me  
I jump and run  
    let out a screech  
They say 'act your age'  
    along with a speech  
After my game  
    I sit down and rest  
All they could say was  
    'you didn't try your best'  
They expect of me  
    what I cannot give  
And are constantly telling me  
    how to live  
I'm only thirteen  
    I'm supposed to act wild  
But dad says 'he wasn't  
    when he was a child'  
Now living with them  
    is kind of tough  
Especially when nothing  
    is ever good enough.

*--Love Me When I'm  
Most Unlovable,  
Robert Ricken*

The most stressful situation that I have had is when my parents were divorced while I was in the 6th grade. As soon as they were divorced my mother's friend and her two kids moved in with my mom & my brother Steve. It was really hard on me and Steve because we wanted our dad to come back to live with us. And I just think, and then I start to cry. I try not to, but it gets me mad because I think my life is worth nothing.

—Anonymous Child

## **MY FRIENDS**

There are days when I think to myself, where did I meet my friends at. Most of my friends that I hang around with is involved in smoking pot, taking speeders and some other kinds of drugs.

I'm the only one out of my friends who has never did any kind of drug before in my life. The only thing I have ever tried is drinking, but I only drink once in a great while. I don't drink beer and all the hard stuff, I drink California Coolers.

Most of the time they try to get me to get high or drunk with them. I really don't hang around with them too much anymore because I am always working, so I guess I use for an excuse.

My best friend Tammie, who has a brain tumor always want to go out and party. She gets high and drunk all the time. I don't know why she does it, maybe so everybody will think she's cool, but drinking and getting high is not cool, it is plain stupid.

I thought maybe that by Tammie mixing drugs and alcohol, it may have an effect in on the tumor which is lodged in her brain.

While I'm around her & some other friends while they are high, it seems we can communicate a lot better, but while they are straight, all they are concerned about is getting more drugs in the body. I have a problem with being with them while they are high because they want to get into trouble. I mean I have fun with them, but then they get to the point where they want more excitement, so it's hard on me. I usually just tell them I have to go home or go to work. Usually my excuses work. All my friends, well most of them anyway always ask me why I haven't ever tried drugs. I would just tell them that I can have a great time, just like any other person who is on drugs. The only thing is, is that I am not and never will be for the rest of my life. Peer pressure is very stressful to a teenager. It has many effects on us, but in many different ways. Your peers may say 'If you don't do this or that' it will be the end of a very good relationship between you and your friends. It's hard on me because they think I am a total square because I don't do drugs or alcohol. I don't skip school and I get pretty good marks in school They don't understand what it is like for me. All they are concerned about is getting involved in drugs. They don't even try to understand, and I just wish they would.

Anonymous Teen

## **MY FATHER**

Me and my father were never really close or nor was he close to my brother, Steve. We would never really talk or do anything when he was sober, but when he was drunk, it seemed like we were the perfect family.

My father was an alcoholic, a bad one too. He would drink until he woke up until he had to go to work. He woke up at around 11:00 am and he would leave for work at

2:00 pm. Then he would drink after he got out of work. He did this 6 days a week, and on Sunday we would just drink all day.

My father was an alcoholic for about three years, then he quit for about five years, until his dad died on my brother's birthday. Then he started drinking again. His drinking had been getting worse. Finally one day I was outside with my cousin Kris playing ball. My parents were in the house talking. My mother called me in the house and told Kris to go home. When I came into the house I saw my dad getting ready for work, when he left, he didn't give my mom a kiss good-bye like he used to. My mom told me to sit down because she had to talk to me. When I sat down I asked her what was wrong. She said how would you feel about me and your father getting a divorce. I told her that I would be mad and I didn't want my dad to leave. I guess she never took in what I felt about them getting a divorce. While they were still separated, my mom's friend moved in with her 2 kids. A boy and a girl.

While they were separated my dad had moved in with his mother. The divorce finally came through. They had been divorced for 7 or 8 years. When my dad moved out his drinking had been getting worse,

When my mom's friend moved in, me and my older brother never knew why until a couple of months later. They had been living with us for about 10 years. When I was older, because of the situation at my house I wanted to go and live with my father, but I wasn't sure if I wanted to live with an alcoholic. I never moved in with him, but I was scared to. So I never did.

When my brother was old enough to move out he signed up for the Navy. When I think about him joining the Navy, 'I say to myself' He was the smart one.

I would always go over to see my dad on the weekends. I only saw him once a week. I wanted to see more of him, but I couldn't because I got out of school at 3:00 pm and he would leave for work at 2:00 pm.

When I did visit him, all he did was drink. All day, beer after beer. I remember one weekend I spent the night. Of course, he was drinking. It got to be so bad, that he opened a beer, drank half and he struggled to go to the refrigerator to get another. So he had 2 beers. I got up poured both cans down the drain. I was so upset I left his house around 1:00 am and went back home. After that incident I went back over there the day after. When I arrived he was still sleeping. When he woke up, he never knew that I had left.

His drinking became so bad, my mom, and her friend took my dad into the hospital because of his drinking and he had a bad back. When we took him in the hospital he was drunk. Every time I went to the Hospital, he would be asleep. When he was better, we took him out of St. Lukes and transferred him to community Hospital, hoping that if he was in an alcoholism center he would stop drinking. He was in community for a month. I would go and visit him every day. He would show me around & we would just talk. That was the first we ever had a conversation. When he got to leave the hospital, I finally got up the nerve to tell him how proud I was for him to stop drinking. When I told him, he said that drinking is very dangerous. It can kill you & it almost killed me.

Ever since he got out of the Hospital, he hasn't touched a drop of alcohol. It has been about a year since he drank. Now all he drinks is pop & coffee. I am so happy that he quit. Now his life is back together & even though he doesn't have my mom, but he does have a son and daughter who loves him very much.

—Anonymous Child

I spent half my childhood trying to be like my dad. True for most boys, I think. It turns with adolescence. The last thing I wanted was to be like my dad. It took becoming a man to realize how lucky I'd been. It took a few hard knocks in life to make me realize the only thing my dad had ever wanted or worked for was to give me a chance at being better than him.

—Tucker Elliot

We inculcate in our children the sensibilities of raccoons, a fascination with shiny objects and an appetite for garbage, and then carp about 'the texting generation' as if thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds who couldn't boil an egg are capable of creating a culture. They grow on what we feed them. It has never been otherwise. The only thing that changes is the food.

—Garret Keizer

'Why aren't you in school? I see you every day wandering around.'  
'Oh, they don't miss me,' she said. 'I'm antisocial, they say. I don't mix. It's so strange. I'm very social indeed. It all depends on what you mean by social, doesn't it? Social to me means talking to you about things like this.' She rattled some chestnuts that had fallen off the tree in the front yard. 'Or talking about how strange the world is. Being with people is nice. But I don't think it's social to get a bunch of people together and then not let them talk, do you? An hour of TV class, an hour of basketball or baseball or running, another hour of transcription history or painting pictures, and more sports, but do you know, we never ask questions, or at least most don't; they just run the answers at you, bing, bing, bing, and us sitting there for four more hours of film-teacher. That's not social to me at all. It's a lot of funnels and lot of water poured down the spout and out the bottom, and them telling us it's wine when it's not. They run us so ragged by the end of the day we can't do anything but go to bed or head for a Fun Park to bully people around, break windowpanes in the Window Smasher place or wreck cars in the Car Wrecker place with the big steel ball. Or go out in the cars and race on the streets, trying to see how close you can get to lampposts, playing 'chicken' and 'knock hubcaps.' I guess I'm everything they say I am, all right. I haven't any friends. That's supposed to prove I'm abnormal. But everyone I know is either shouting or dancing around like wild or beating up one another. Do you notice how people hurt each other nowadays?'

— Ray Bradbury

Through most of human history, our ancestors had children shortly after puberty, just as the members of all nonhuman species do to this day. Whether we like the idea or not, our young ancestors must have been capable of providing for their offspring, defending their families from predators, cooperating with others, and in most other respects functioning fully as adults. If they couldn't function as adults, their young could not have survived, which would have meant the swift demise of the human race. The fact that we're still here suggests that most young people are probably far more capable than we think they are. Somewhere along the line, we lost sight of—and buried—the potential of our teens.

—Robert Epstein

For in today's generation of teenagers finding acceptance is hard, especially for those who dare to be different-then it's impossible.

—Rebecah McManus

As a society, our understanding of teenagers has not caught up to the science. In the past 15 years, neuroscientists have discovered that a teenager's brain is different in important ways from an adult's brain. It is more receptive to rewards than to punishment, and the parts that control impulses and judgement are still under construction. Which means that back talk and fake burps are predictable teenage acts—to be corrected, not prosecuted.

—Amanda Ripley

High school students are the largest oppressed minority in America.

--Jerry Rubin

Teenagers read millions of books every year. They read for entertainment and for education. They read because of school assignments and pop culture fads. And there are millions of teens who read because they are sad and lonely and enraged. They read because they live in an often-terrible world. They read because they believe despite the callow protestations of certain adults that books-especially the dark and dangerous ones-will save them.

—Sherman Alexie

Perhaps it is only in childhood that books have any deep influence on our lives...in childhood all books are books of divination, telling us about the future, and like the fortune-teller who sees a long journey in the cards or death by water, they influence the future. I suppose that is why books excited us so much. What do we ever get nowadays from reading to equal the excitement and the revelation of those first fourteen years?

--Graham Greene

You never love a book the way you do when you are 10.

--Daniel Handler

There is nothing like a banned book to turn a teenager into a devoted reader.

--Malcolm Jones

Half of today's teenagers don't read books—except when they're made to.

--Niall Ferguson, 2011

Of all the unexpected things in contemporary literature, this is among the oddest: that kids have an inordinate appetite for very long, very tricky, very strange books about places that don't exist.

—Adam Gopnik

Poetry has the potential to bridge the gap between learning and life. One advantage is its length. Because most poems are fairly short, they are not as intimidating to the average reader as a typical middle school novel. Another advantage is that poetry is powerful. Within the lines of a well-constructed poem is a world of meaning and metaphor that connects print to life. It is precisely this connection that holds appeal for the adolescent learner who is on a perpetual journey of self-exploration.

—Janet A. Finke &  
Karen D. Wood

I used to take out seven books at a time from the library and sit in the kitchen, with my feet in the oven, eating cookies and reading trash. I think trash is a very important part of youth reading. It acts like mulch and helps fertilize the brain and allows creative ideas to germinate and grow.

--S. J. Perelman

Boys will be boys; girls will read books....from an early age, boys are discouraged by society to read; when they do pick up a novel, they prefer its subject be 'disgusting,' humorous, and short. Furthermore, boys tend to read books with a male protagonist, while girls will read a broader sampling of viewpoints.

--Francine Prose

The writers who have the deepest influence on one are those one reads in one's more impressionable, early life, and often it is the more youthful works of those writers that leave the deepest imprint.

—J. M. Coetzee

The worst book imaginable has a redeeming quality if it gets a young person to read.

—Tiffini Johnson

For centuries, no one was concerned that books weren't girl-friendly, because no one really cared if girls read; but even so, we persisted for long enough that literature has slowly come to accommodate us. Modern boys, by contrast, are not trying to read in a culture of opposition. Nobody is telling them reading doesn't matter, that boys don't need to read and that actually, no prospective wife looks for literacy in a husband. Quite the opposite! Male literary culture thrives, both teachers and parents are throwing books at their sons, and the fact that the books aren't sticking isn't, as the nature of the complaint makes clear, because boys don't like reading – no. The accusation is that boys don't like reading about girls, which is a totally different matter.

Because constantly, consistently, our supposedly equal society penalises boys who express an interest in anything feminine. The only time boys are discouraged from books all together is in contexts where, for whatever reason, they've been given the message that reading itself is girly – which is a wider extrapolation of the same problem.

—Foz Meadows

Poetry is adolescence fermented and thus preserved.

--Jose Ortega Y Gasset

Girls aren't mean to guys in high school. They are mean to each other.

—Jonathan Bennett

The average 16-year-old has clocked more time watching television than he has spent in school. TV Guide outsells every other magazine on the nation's newsstands. That's more serious than venereal disease.

--John Leonard

The entertainment industry sees youth as a prime market—a distinct, ever-renewing demographic group posed of ample leisure and money to make sales soar. Further, adolescents have shown themselves, because of their particular state of life, to be especially susceptible to the marketing wiles of the entertainment industry. This industry is adept at perpetually recycling timeless adolescent anxieties and hopes into easily adaptable formulaic fads and fashions.

—Q. J. Schultze

It was 1976.

It was one of the darkest days of my life when that nurse, Mrs. Shimmer, pulled out a maxi pad that measured the width and depth of a mattress and showed us how to use it. It had a belt with it that looked like a slingshot that possessed the jaw-dropping potential to pop a man's head like a gourd. As she stretched the belt between

the fingers of her two hands, Mrs. Shimmer told us becoming a woman was a magical and beautiful experience.

I remember thinking to myself, You're damn right it had better be magic, because that's what it's going to take to get me to wear something like that, Tinkerbell! It looked like a saddle. Weighed as much as one, too. Some girls even cried.

I didn't.

I raised my hand.

'Mrs. Shimmer,' I asked cautiously, 'so what kind of security napkins do boys wear when their flower pollinates? Does it have a belt, too?'

The room got quiet except for a bubbling round of giggles.

'You haven't been paying attention, have you?' Mrs. Shimmer accused sharply.

'Boys have stamens, and stamens do not require sanitary napkins. They require self control, but you'll learn that soon enough.'

I was certainly hoping my naughty bits (what Mrs. Shimmer explained to us was like the pistil of a flower) didn't get out of control, because I had no idea what to do if they did.

—Laurie Notaro

In the slums of our great cities today boys and girls who could easily be brought to the full use of their powers are left stunted, inarticulate and angry.

--John W. Gardner

Always I have felt sorry for boys and girls who haven't spent the first 16 years of their lives in a small American town. There one finds a nice balance of leisure and society which makes for richness in living.

--Edna Ferber

Poverty in youth, when it succeeds, is so far magnificent that it turns the whole will towards effort, and the whole soul towards aspiration. Poverty strips the material life entirely bare, and makes it hideous; thence arise inexpressible yearnings towards the ideal life.

--Victor Hugo

Ambivalence reaches the level of schizophrenia in our treatment of violence among the young. Parents do not encourage violence, but neither do they take up arms against the industries which encourage it. Parents hide their eyes from the books and comics, slasher films, videos and lyrics which form the texture of an adolescent culture. While all successful societies have inhibited instinct, ours encourages it. Or at least we profess ourselves powerless to interfere with it.

--C. John Sommerville

## **AFTER SCHOOL SPECIAL**

Dear Mr. Schneider,  
I attended your elementary  
School almost thirty years ago  
And I'm very sure that  
You will remember  
Me.

My name is Suzy.  
I'm that hyperactive girl  
From the Egyptian family  
Who used to always play dead  
On the playground during  
Recess.

You used to keep me  
After school a lot,  
And then my father would  
Force me to make the long  
Walk home in the cold or rain.  
Sometimes I would arrive  
After dark.

I'm writing to tell you  
That I was bored as a kid.  
I was bored by your curriculum  
And the way I was always taught a  
Bunch of useless  
Junk.

I did not like being locked up  
In a prison of scheduled time  
Learning about irrelevant material,  
And watching belittling cartoons and  
Shows approved by academia that  
Made me even more  
Bored.

As a kid  
Who was constantly  
Growing, evolving, and  
Being shaped by all around me,

I wanted to travel,  
See other kids  
In the world like me,  
To understand what was going  
On amongst us and around us,  
To know what we were here for  
And what was our real purpose  
For existence.

I have some questions  
I would like to ask you, Mr. Schneider,  
Now that I know that you are no  
Longer a school principal,  
But the new superintendent  
Of the entire school  
District.

I want to know  
Why racism today  
Was not clearly explained to me  
Even though we covered events  
That happened long ago.  
I want to know why you  
Never shared with us  
Why other countries  
Never liked us,  
Why we are taught to compete,  
To be divided in teams,  
And why conformity is associated  
With popularity, while  
Eccentricity is considered  
Undesirable?

I want to know  
Why my cafeteria lunches  
Were slammed packed  
With bottom-tier  
Processed junk food  
Only suitable  
For pigs?  
And why is it  
That whenever a bully  
Slammed a kid into a locker for

His lunch money,  
Nobody explained to us  
That egotism, selfishness and greed  
Were the seeds of  
War?

I want to know  
Why we were never taught  
To stick up for each other,  
To love one another, and that  
Segregation sorted by the  
Occupations of our fathers,  
The neighborhoods we lived in, our houses,  
Choices of sport, wealth, clothing,  
Color of our skin  
And the texture of our hair  
Should never, ever  
Divide us?

And lastly,  
I want to know why  
Is it that whenever I pledged  
Allegiance to the flag,  
I was never told that I was  
Actually hailing to the  
Chief?

You used to say that  
I was a troubled child,  
A misfit, and that I needed  
Obedience training,  
But you never acknowledged that  
I was the fastest runner in the district  
And that I took the school  
To State and Nationals to compete  
In the Spelling Bee among kids  
Grades higher than me.  
And that it was me,  
Who won that big trophy  
That sat in your office when you  
Used to detain me for hours  
And tell me I was no  
Good.

Mr. Schneider,  
If we are not taught truths as kids,  
Then how do you expect us to  
Grow up to be truthful citizens?  
If we are only being taught the written way,  
And it has not shown positive effects  
In societies of yesterday or today,  
Then how can we progress as a  
United and compassionate  
Nation?  
What good is it,  
To memorize the histories  
Of our forefathers,  
Without learning what could be  
Gained from their lessons and mistakes  
To improve our future  
Tomorrows?

And finally,  
I want to thank you;  
For I know you have a tough job  
Dealing with rebellious children like me.  
Your job of mass processing and boxing  
The young minds of America has not been an easy one,  
And I congratulate you  
On your recent promotion.  
But I sincerely want to thank you,  
Thank you,  
And thank you,  
For always pointing out  
That I was  
Different.

—Suzy Kassem

High school is closer to the core of the American experience than anything else I can think of.

--Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

Almost all who enter on a course of crime do so between the ages of eight and sixteen.

--Anthony Ashley Cooper  
Shaftesbury

The numbers are stark: One in four U.S. students will witness or experience a traumatic event before the age of 4, and more than two-thirds by age 16. These children do not—they cannot—simply close their eyes to what they've seen or experienced. With each forced eviction, each arrest of an adult in their home, each abuse to their own bodies, an instinctive trigger to 'fight or flee' is pulled over and again. Over time, a child's developing brain is changed by these repeated traumatic experiences. Areas that govern the retention of memory, the regulation of emotion, and the development of language skills are affected. The result is a brain that has structurally adapted for survival under the most stressful circumstances,—but not for success in school.

—Mary Ellen Flannery

There are between two thousand and three thousand languages spoken throughout the world, not including that spoken by teenagers.

—Unknown

The energy which makes a child hard to manage is the energy which afterward makes him a manager of life.

--James Baldwin

A decline in supervision is not the entire story. Even in the fifties there were under-supervised children...who nevertheless did not become pregnant at thirteen...and who did not smoke anything stronger than an occasional Camel or Lucky Strike....It took a combination of unsupervised children and a permissive, highly charged sexual atmosphere and an influx of easily acquired drugs and the wherewithal to buy them to bring about precocious experimentation by young and younger children. This occurred in the mid-seventies.

--Marie Winn

The widespread fear among today's parents that their manageable children will turn overnight into dope fiends, school dropouts, or voracious sexual voluptuaries reflects a certain anger and animosity towards the young, a fear and loathing that helps turn the myth into a self-fulfilling prophecy. After all, there were 'bad' children and uncontrolled teenagers in the past; nevertheless, parents expected their own children to be good, to grow up well....The fact that today's parents are amazed if their children do not turn into black sheep makes it clear that a less than optimistic, indeed a deeply distrustful and negative, attitude towards children exists today.

--Marie Winn

The situation of our youth is not mysterious. Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them. They must, they have no other models.

--James Baldwin

Those children who are beaten will in turn give beatings, those who are intimidated will be intimidating, those who are humiliated will impose humiliation, and those whose souls are murdered will murder.

--Alice Miller

Men who have been raised violently have every reason to believe it is appropriate for them to control others through violence; they feel no compunction over being violent to women, children, and one another.

--Frank Pittman

When children and adolescents misbehave, we usually assume that they're doing so because they have considered the consequences of their actions and calculated that the benefits of misbehavior outweigh the costs. So our natural response is to increase the cost of misbehavior, by ratcheting up punishment. One of the chief insights that recent neurobiological research has provided, however is that young people, especially those who have experienced significant adversity, are often guided by emotional and psychological and hormonal forces that are far from rational. This doesn't mean that teachers should excuse or ignore bad behavior. But it does explain why harsh punishments so often prove ineffective in motivating troubled young people to succeed.

—Paul Tough

When a boy is eleven years old you had better find something to engage his interest. I offer it as a theorem that a boy that age is either doing something or breaking something.

--Jerrold R. Zacharias

The flight to safety also happened at school. Dangerous play structures were removed from playgrounds; peanut butter was banned from student lunches. After the 1999 Columbine massacre in Colorado, many schools cracked down on bullying, implementing 'zero tolerance' policies. In a variety of ways, children born after 1980—the Millennials—got a consistent message from adults: life is dangerous, but adults will do everything in their power to protect you from harm, not just from strangers but from one another as well.

—Greg Lukianoff and  
Jonathan Haidt

## MEMO FROM YOUR CHILD

1. Don't spoil me. I know quite well that I ought not have all that I ask for, I'm only testing you.
2. Don't be afraid to be firm with me, I prefer it. It makes me feel more secure.
3. Don't let me form bad habits, I have to rely on you to detect them in the early stages.
4. Don't make me feel smaller than I am, It only makes me behave stupidly big.
5. Don't correct me in front of people if you can help it.
6. Don't make me feel that my mistakes are sins, it upsets my set of values.
7. Don't be upset when I say 'I hate you,' it's not you I hate, but your power to hinder.
8. Don't protect me from consequences, I need to learn the painful way sometimes.
9. Don't nag, if you do I will need to protect myself by appearing deaf.
10. Don't make rash promises, remember I feel badly let down when promises are broken.
11. Don't tax my honesty too much, I am easily frightened into telling lies.
12. Don't be inconsistent, that completely confuses me and makes me lose faith in you.
13. Don't tell me my fears are silly, they are terribly real to me and you can do much to reassure me if you try to understand.
14. Don't ever suggest that you are perfect or infallible. It gives me too great a shock when I discover that you are neither.
15. Don't forget that I can't thrive without lots of love and understanding, but I don't need to tell you that, do I?

—Unknown

Defiance is a typical part of adolescence, so putting teenagers in jail for swearing or refusing to follow an order is akin to arresting a 2-year-old for having a meltdown at the grocery store. It essentially outlaws the human condition.

—Amanda Ripley

I've had a great deal of experience with adolescents over the centuries, and I've discovered that as a group these awkward half children take themselves far too seriously. Moreover, appearance is everything for the adolescent. I suppose it's a form of play-acting. The adolescent knows that the child is lurking under the surface, but he'd sooner die than let it out, and I was no different. I was so intent on being grown-up that I simply couldn't relax and enjoy life.

Most people go through this stage and outgrow it. Many, however, do not. The pose becomes more important than reality, and these poor creatures become hollow people, forever striving to fit themselves into an impossible mold.

—David & Leigh Eddings

'America generally loves crime and punishment—this idea that punishment somehow corrects behavior, that it teaches kids a lesson,' says Jenny Egan, the Maryland public defender. In reality, the more involvement kids have with the legal system, the worse their behavior gets. Kids who get arrested and appear in court are nearly four times as likely to drop out of high school, Gary Sweeten found. But most people in the chain of decision making—from state lawmaker to the teacher to the principal to the school police officer to the prosecutor—do not realize how much damage their actions can do. Egan says: 'I don't think a majority of people in the system understand what it does to a child to put him in handcuffs and take him to court—at the very moment when he is trying to figure out who he is in the world.'

—Amanda Ripley

We criminalize juvenile behavior that is considered normal by psychologists. We are creating criminals. I really believe that.

—Aleksandra Chauhan

Teachers dread nothing so much as unusual characteristics in precocious boys during the initial stages of their adolescence. A certain streak of genius makes an ominous impression on them, for there exists a deep gulf between genius and the teaching profession. Anyone with a touch of genius seems to his teachers a freak from the very first. As far as teachers are concerned, they define young geniuses as those who are bad, disrespectful, smoke at fourteen, fall in love at fifteen, can be found at sixteen hanging out in bars, read forbidden books, write scandalous essays, occasionally stare down a teacher in class, are marked in the attendance book as rebels, and are budding candidates for room-arrest. A schoolmaster will prefer to have a couple of dumbheads in his class than a single genius, and if you regard it objectively, he is of course right. His task is not to produce extravagant intellects but good

Latinists, arithmeticians and sober decent folk. The question of who suffers more acutely at the other's hands—the teacher at the boy's, or vice versa—who is more of a tyrant, more of a tormentor, and who profanes parts of the other's soul, student or teacher, is something you cannot examine without remembering your own youth in anger and shame. Yet that's not what concerns us here. We have the consolation that among true geniuses the wounds almost always heal. As their personalities develop, they create their art in spite of school. Once dead, and enveloped by the comfortable nimbus of remoteness, they are paraded by the schoolmasters before other generations of students as showpieces and noble examples. Thus the struggle between rule and spirit repeats itself year after year from school to school. The authorities go to infinite pains to nip the few profound or more valuable intellects in the bud. And time and again the ones who are detested by their teachers are frequently punished, the runaways and those expelled, are the ones who afterwards add to society's treasure. But some—and who knows how many?,—waste away in quiet obstinacy and finally go under.

—Hermann Hesse

Black girls make up 16 percent of girls in U.S. public schools, but 42 percent of girls' expulsions and more than a third of girls' school-based arrests.

—Mary Ellen Flannery

A 'snapshot' feature in USA Today listed the five greatest concerns parents and teachers had about children in the '50s: talking out of turn, chewing gum in class, doing homework, stepping out of line, cleaning their rooms. Then it listed the five top concerns of parents today: drug addiction, teenage pregnancy, suicide and homicide, gang violence, anorexia and bulimia. We can also add AIDS, poverty, and homelessness....Between my own childhood and the advent of my motherhood—one short generation—the culture had gone completely mad.

--Mary Kay Blakely

Violence among young people is an aspect of their desire to create. They don't know how to use their energy creatively so they do the opposite and destroy.

--Anthony Burgess

'Fitting in' and 'feeling older' are two of the main reasons that early adolescents give for beginning to drink.

--Judith E. Funkhouser

Every day in the United States 3,009 young people begin to smoke—that's more than a million new smokers each year.

--Dr. Randolph D.  
Smoak, Jr.

Liquor is such a nice substitute for facing adult life.

--Dorothy B. Hughes

### **A CIGARETTE SPEAKS TO A PRETTY GIRL**

I'm just a friendly cigarette  
Don't be afraid of me:  
Why all the advertisers say  
I'm Harmless as can be.  
They tell you I'm your 'Best Friend' (I like that cunning lie)  
And you say you'll walk a mile for me.  
Because I'll satisfy.  
So come on girly, be a sport.  
Why longer hesitate?  
With me between your pretty lips  
You'll be quite up to date.  
You may not like me right at first  
But very soon I'll bet--  
You'll find you just can't get along,  
Without a cigarette.  
You've smoked one package  
So, I know I've nothing to fear.  
When once I get a grip on girls,  
They're mine for life my dear!  
Your freedom you begin to lose.  
The very day I meet,  
When I convinced you it was harmless  
To smoke a cigarette.

The colors fading from your cheeks.  
Your fingertips are stained,  
And now you'd like to give me up,  
But sister, 'You're chained.'  
You even took a drink last night,  
I thought you would ere long,  
For those whom I enslave, soon lose  
Their sense of right and wrong.  
You're pale and thin and have a cough  
The doctor says T.B.  
He says you can't expect to live  
Much longer, thanks to me.  
But, it's too late to worry now;  
When you become my slave,

You should have known the chances  
Were you'd fill an early grave.  
And now that I have done my part  
And I have done it well,  
I'll leave you with my partner,  
DEATH,  
He'll come for you farewell...

--Written by a 14-Year-  
Old Girl in *Better  
Homes and  
Gardens*

During my research in the Los Angeles area, I interviewed a couple of gang members. They said that the schools are doing some really neat things, but that the problem they have in terms of prevention and intervention is they target mainly kids in the sixth grade. That's too late.

—Carlos Jimenez

Drink per drink, alcohol is more dangerous to young women than it is to young men, even after adjusting for differences in height and weight. Alcohol abuse appears to damage girls' brains differently and more severely than the same degree of alcohol abuse affects same-age boys.

--Leonard Sax

To keep their children close, to keep them safe, and to ensure that they do not escape into the wild freedom of an adolescence unfettered by constant monitoring, drinking in captivity has become a popular alternative. Drinking isn't like doing drugs—it's not something parents recoil from in horror. It's something they can make an accommodation for, and so they practice 'social hosting,' as the law refers to the custom: allowing teens to get hammered in the comfort and safety of the rec room.

—Caitlin Flanagan

Good Parents think that alcohol is dangerous for young people and that riotous drunkenness and its various consequences have nothing to recommend them. These parents enforce the law and create a family culture that supports their beliefs....Get-Real Parents think that high school kids have been drinking since Jesus left Chicago, and that it's folly to pretend the new generation won't as well. The horror stories (awful accidents, alcohol poisoning, lawsuits) tend to involve parents who didn't do it right—who neglected to provide some level of adult supervision, or who forgot to forbid anyone to get in a car after drinking.

—Caitlin Flanagan

Get-Real Parents understand that learning to drink takes a while and often starts with a baptism of fire. Better for Charlotte to barf her guts out on the new sectional than in the shadowy basement of a distant fraternity house.

—Caitlin Flanagan

Go to a parent meeting on some topic like ‘Teens and Drinking’ and you’re likely to get an earful about how to keep your teen drinker safe. Teach her to recognize signs of alcohol poisoning in her friends; tell her it’s always okay to call 911; advise her to check in on conked-out partygoers every 15 minutes or so to make sure they’re just sleeping it off and not unconscious. The message doesn’t involve any moral or emotional imperatives; it has to do only with not ending up dead or in jail.

—Caitlin Flanagan

The Good Parent who naively assumes that preventing a teenager from drinking will help him or her in the college-admissions stakes is dead wrong. A teenager growing up in one of the success factories—the exceptional public high school in the fancy zip code, the prestigious private school—will oftentimes be a person whose life is composed of extremes: extreme studying, extreme athletics, extreme extracurricular pursuits, and extreme drinking. Binge drinking slots in neatly with the other, more obviously enhancing endeavors.

—Caitlin Flanagan

College drinking, including extreme heavy drinking, has been a tradition since the 19th century. Because of this, it can be hard to convince middle-aged people that something has changed. But the consistent—at times urgent, at times resigned—report from college officials is that something has gone terribly awry and that huge numbers of students regularly transform the American campus into a college-themed spin-off of *The Walking Dead*. They vomit endlessly, destroy property, become the victims or perpetrators of sexual events ranging from the unpleasant to the criminal, get rushed off in ambulances, and join the ever-growing waiting lists for counseling. Depression and anxiety go hand in hand with heavy drinking, and both are at epidemic proportions on campus.

—Caitlin Flanagan

What are these kids really vomiting up every weekend at their fancy colleges? Is it really just 12 shots of apple-flavored vodka? Or is it a set of values, an attitude toward the self and toward others, that has become increasingly hard for them to stomach?

—Caitlin Flanagan

Research says that youthful binge drinking can have lasting consequences. They are called ‘children.’

--Jim Barach

Fraternalities are part of an industry that has tremendous risk and a tremendous history of rape, serious injury, and death, and the vast majority share common risk-management policies that are fundamentally flawed. Most of them are awash in alcohol. And most if not all of them are bereft of any meaningful adult supervision..... The fraternity system is the largest industry in this country directly involved in the provision of alcohol to underage people.

--Douglas Fierberg

In 2011, at least a third of middle school and high school students who smoked cigars used flavored little cigars. Six states—Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Wisconsin—already have youth cigar smoking rates that are the same or higher than youth cigarette smoking.

—Tom Frieden

Most of the time, all that separates a class president and a gang leader is numbers: a zip code, a paycheck, or a drug dealer's phone number.

—Thomm Quackenbush

A New Zealand study found lower IQs among adults who reported smoking a lot of dope when young. There's also some evidence that young pot smokers are more likely to develop schizophrenia and psychosis later in life.

—Joe Kita

Binge drinking when younger has been linked to a host of problems when you are older, including an increased risk of heart disease and cancer. Even more sobering, the hippocampus and frontal brain structures don't mature until about age 25, so if you drank a lot before then, you may have inhibited your brain's functional development.

—Joe Kita

Know your worth so you know when to say, 'Yes', and when to say, 'Thank you but no thank you.'

—Sam Owen

A 2009 survey...found that 51 percent of teens age 17 or younger believed that cheating was necessary for success while only 10 percent of people older than 50 thought the same.

--Julie Beck

The 'good' child may be frightened, and insecure, wanting only to please his parents by submitting to their will, while the 'bad' child may have a will of his own and genuine interests but ones which do not please the parents.

--Erich Fromm

Much is made of the accelerating brutality of young people's crimes, but rarely does our concern for dangerous children translate into concern for children in danger. We fail to make the connection between the use of force on children themselves, and violent antisocial behavior, or the connection between watching father batter mother and the child deducing a link between violence and masculinity.

--Letty Cottin Pogrebin

While it is widely assumed that bullies focus on socially isolated children, a recent study offers evidence that popular children get bullied, too. Researchers at the University of California and Pennsylvania State University found that students' chances of being bullied rise 25% if they move from a group with average popularity to the 95th percentile. Those with higher social status also experienced greater psychological stress when bullied, because they felt they had more to lose.

--Quentin Fottrell

Some of the most evil human beings in the world are psychiatrists. Not all psychiatrists. Some psychiatrists are selfless, caring people who really want to help. But the sad truth is that in today's society, mental health isn't a science. It's an industry. Ritalin, Zoloft, Prozac, Lexapro, Risperidone, happy pills that are supposed to 'normalize' the behavior of our families, our colleagues, our friends - tell me that doesn't sound the least bit creepy! Mental health is subjective. To us, a little girl talking to her pretend friends instead of other children might just be harmless playing around. To a psychiatrist, it's a financial opportunity. Automatically, the kid could be swept up in a sea of labels. 'not talking to other kids? Okay, she's asocial!' or 'imaginary friends? Bingo, she has schizophrenia!' I'm not saying in any way that schizophrenia and social disorders aren't real. But the alarming number of people, especially children, who seem to have these 'illnesses' and need to be medicated or locked up... it's horrifying. The psychiatrists get their prestigious reputation and their money to burn. The drug companies get fast cash and a chance to claim that they've discovered a wonder-drug, capable of 'curing' anyone who might be a burden on society... that's what it's all about. It's not about really talking to these troubled people and finding out what they need. It's about giving them a pill that fits a pattern, a weapon to normalize people who might make society uncomfortable. The psychiatrists get their weapon. Today's generations get cheated out of their childhoods. The mental health industry takes the world's most vulnerable people and messes with their heads, giving them controlled substances just because they don't fit the normal puzzle. And sadly, it's more or less going to get worse in this rapidly advancing century.

—Rebecca McNutt

If you spend time with crazy and dangerous people, remember – their personalities are socially transmitted diseases; like water poured into a container, most of us eventually turn into – or remain – whoever we surround ourselves with. We can choose our tribe, but we cannot change that our tribe is our destiny.

—Stefan Molyneux

When you're a kid, you don't think about big stuff that could change your life. You think about small things that might terrify you –like a bad report card or missing a goal in front of all your friends or your friends no longer wanting to play with you. Because that's the biggest stuff you know. The biggest disappointments are all tied to this small little universe of yours, because bigger things cannot fit into a small universe. If you wanted bigger things in there you needed to have more room –or make more room. Perhaps you thought about your parents or your pets dying, which was rare. But all you knew was you would be terribly sad and lonely. And on those occasions when people or pets actually died, someone usually came along and distracted you from feeling too much of your actual feelings. Grownups did that – they never left you alone to feel alone or think alone too much. They tended to think you are too small to know how to think and feel in big heaps, so they took parts of your heap onto themselves. To help – but in the long run –it doesn't help at all. Because if you do not see, or feel or think, or taste the bitter things in life, you don't know they exist. You have not seen enough of the world to know how terrible it could be.

—Adelheid Manefeldt

The desperate need to belong is perhaps never as great as during adolescence. Advertisers seek to communicate with teenagers by frequently using that powerful appeal.

—Gad Saad

Take two kids in competition for their parents' love and attention. Add to that the envy that one child feels for the accomplishments of the other; the resentment that each child feels for the privileges of the other; the personal frustrations that they don't dare let out on anyone else but a brother or sister, and it's not hard to understand why in families across the land, the sibling relationship contains enough emotional dynamite to set off rounds of daily explosions.

--Adele Faber

The high IQ has become the American equivalent of the Legion of Honor, positive proof of a child's intellectual aristocracy...It has become more important to be a smart kid than a good kid or even a healthy kid.

—Sam Levenson

We have not passed that subtle line between childhood and adulthood until we move from the passive voice to the active voice—that is, until we have stopped saying ‘It got lost,’ and say, ‘I lost it.’

—Sydney Harris

In America, the young are always ready to give to those who are older the benefits of their inexperience.

--Oscar Wilde

‘To be or not to be’ is the question pondered not only by Hamlet, but also by an increasing number of adolescents. The incidence of adolescent suicide under any definition is alarming and has been rising steadily during the past 20-25 years. The need for the clinical understanding of this self-destructive act is greater than ever. Psychiatric intervention is frequently the only hope for preventing a person from becoming another suicide statistic. Each psychiatrist or clinician who deals with adolescents needs to be prepared to deal with a potential suicide victim. Suicide is one of the most dramatic acts in a dramatic phase of a human development—adolescence. Neither a child nor an adult, the adolescent is in a phase characterized by the acceleration of physiological, psychological, social and interpersonal demands. These demands influence not only overt behavior but also conscious and unconscious experiences. Adolescent suicide is a subject of fascination and controversy. It involves two human experiences of which we know the least: adolescence and death.

—Yosef Hakimi, M.D.

Adolescence is characterized by contradictions: need of autonomy and search for a model; dependence and independence; activity and passivity; exhibition and inhibition; a wish for omnipotence and fear of losing control; an intense ambivalence between a conscious wish to grow up and the unconscious desire to remain a child. The adolescent may have a physical appearance of an adult, yet shrink from adult responsibility and react as a child in the area of intellectual and emotional comprehension.

The adolescent often does not want to accept or recognize his past but cannot live without a past. He may feel abandoned by his childhood and adults. He struggles with his identity and is preoccupied with the meaning and purpose of his existence. He asks himself, ‘Who am I?’ ‘What am I?’ ‘Where am I going?’ To reassure himself that he is capable of independent actions, he may rebel against society’s accepted standards, affectionate and previously acceptable parental relationships and attempt to tear down parental ritual and value systems. He responds to parental suggestions with irritation and rapidly rejects their ideas. Praise, extended to the adolescence, may be interpreted as ‘being treated as a baby.’

—Yosef Hakimi, M.D.

In the United States 12 to 18 year-olds are regarded as a population with increasing risk for both attempted and completed suicides. The suicidal rate for this age group is greater in the United States than in most other countries. It is more frequent among boys than girls, higher among non-white males, urban dwellers, college students, professional groups and American Indians. Marriage increases the risk (1.6 times more) of completed suicides in adolescents. Most of the married suicide victims, however, are childless.

—Yosef Hakimi, M.D.

Suicide is a response to internal confusion and self-disintegration. The increased tension of modern life, a combination of pressures and expectations beyond the individuals capacity to cope, provoke feelings of frustration, anger, guilt, depression and self-destruction. Early experiences of loss, deprivation or other traumatic experience (usually in the parent-child relationship) are strong predisposing factors in suicide.

Suicide is always a sign of deep psychopathology. In a study of 40 highly selected adolescents, who had made suicide attempts, [Frank E.] Crumley reported that each patient was psychiatrically ill before the suicide attempt. The most common diagnosis was depressive disorders, drug abuse or borderline personality. Each of these patients had reacted severely to a loss and poorly controlled his rage and impulsiveness. This resulted in the suicide attempt. The assessment of the internal forces that lead the adolescent to suicide is most difficult because adolescence is so much the time of impulsivity and unpredictability.

—Yosef Hakimi, M.D.

In the author's experience, poor early parent-child relationships, the mother's conscious, unconscious, verbal and non-verbal rejection of the child have been strong predisposing factors in the suicide. The adolescent interprets these messages as an indication that his parents want him to die. This usually occurs when the adolescent's ego is shaky and in the stage of turmoil.

Psychoanalytic theory relates suicide to a detachment of the libidinal tie from an object and ambivalent identification with the lost love object. Adolescence is a time of detachment and transition of the libidinal tie from parents to non-incestuous objects.

—Yosef Hakimi, M.D.

President John F. Kennedy often invoked Lord Gladstone's quote, 'Victory has a thousand fathers, but defeat is an orphan.' If we apply this to our secondary schools, we see this rings true. Those who are successful in academics, athletics, or activities have no trouble finding adult advocates. In fact, many of them have several adults to give them guidance or complete recommendations supporting their applications for more challenging coursework, organizations, or institutions of higher learning. Many high schools even formally celebrate the signing of grants-in-aid by their ath-

letic stars. Unfortunately, it is the lower-achieving students, who compose the bulk of a secondary school's students, that often lack the adult guidance they need.

—John M. Jenkins

Fears and anxieties vary with the age of the child. Here are some typical examples: Ages 1-6. Young children have simple fears. What scares them are immediate, personal things like being in the dark, large or loud animals, bees and bugs, and loud or scary noises. Many of them demonstrate what psychologists call separation anxiety, crying, throwing temper tantrums, and clinging to parents or caretakers. They may also be afraid of 'bad people' and accidents like falling off a playground slide.

Ages 6-12. Children of these ages start to worry about threatening situations like being hit by a bully or an adult. They also worry that they will fail or do poorly in school, that a parent may die, that their family will become poor, or even that they will be kidnapped. They become anxious about being accepted by their peers, their physical appearance, school performance, and parents' expectations.

Teenagers. Most teens begin to lose their childhood fears. They don't think anything will ever happen to them and may take unnecessary risks with their health and lives. Their fears and anxieties are more realistic, like gang violence, social rejection, and terrorist attacks. Teenage girls tend to show more general anxiety than boys, usually centered around social acceptance and popularity.

—*National Association of  
Elementary School  
Principals*

It is against the natural order of life to bury our children. As parents and educators, we can, in time, reconcile ourselves to the loss of a child through accident or illness. But the choice of a child to end his or her own life is a different matter. We who are dedicated to nurturing human potential are appalled. Suddenly, part of the future is gone forever.

Tomorrow in the United States approximately 1,000 adolescents will attempt suicide. Eighteen will succeed. During the same period, twice as many young adults between the ages of 20 and 24 will end their lives.

—Maxine Seibel and  
Joseph N. Muray

## **SIX YOUNG MEN**

David was an honor student, star quarterback on his high school football team, and a perfectionist who 'gave 100 percent' to everything he did. When he earned an athletic scholarship to a prestigious Midwest college, the community shared his family's pride. But by the beginning of his sophomore year, things were not going well. After he was cut from the college football team, friends began to notice his despondency and strange behavior. They urged him to sign himself into the hospital.

Hours later, David slipped out of the psychiatric ward and made his last run. Dashing down the corridor, he plunged through a plate glass window to his death three floors below.

Eddie's elementary teachers described him as 'immature,' 'impulsive,' and 'capable of doing more.' Despite the help he received in the learning disabilities program, Eddie never managed to graduate from high school. Late in his senior year, he got into trouble with the law. Unable to wait for the outcome of an indictment hearing, he hung himself from the back of his truck. Meanwhile, his attorney was trying to contact him to give him the good news that his case had been dismissed.

Paul, a sensitive, artistic 17-year-old, lived with his stepmother and his father, a successful advertising executive. His natural mother had been hospitalized on several occasions for emotional problems. During high school, Paul drifted into the 'punk' crowd and spent much of his time absorbed in 'heavy metal' rock. One night he was cited for driving under the influence, instead of going to school the next day, he shot himself.

Fifteen-year-old Eric was a loner in his 8th grade class. As a youngster, he had been diagnosed as 'hyperactive' and took Ritalin to control his disruptive behavior in class. Teachers described him as unhappy in school. Later they would note that he always tried very hard to please. In junior high school Eric was a tense, anxious youngster who was obsessed with militarism and teased by his schoolmates. He spent much of his time playing 'Dungeons and Dragons.' One summer afternoon he hung himself. There was no apparent reason.

Joe had a history of poor school attendance. His measured intelligence ranged from 103 to 85. He suffered from migraine headaches and got into minor disciplinary scrapes. A notation on his school records simply said 'difficult home situation.' Joe failed 7th grade but was placed in 8th grade; subsequently, he failed 8th grade and was placed in 9th grade. He failed 9th grade the following year. Now a 17-year-old freshman, he did not return to school. In the years that followed he began to drink heavily and was unable to hold a job. After his girlfriend ended their relationship, Joe was convicted on the last of several DWIs (driving while intoxicated). He ended his life.

'Dearest Family' wrote Fred in his last note. 'I just couldn't seem to get it together; then booze and pot got hold of me. I just want you to know that I love you more than I could ever say. ...' Fred was the youngest in a family that placed great value on education. Both his brother and sister already had master's degrees. But from the first day of kindergarten, Fred had hated school. He had difficulty concentrating and could not cope with frustration. After high school graduation, he made three attempts at attending college. Dropping out for the last time, he was unable to find

steady work in a depressed Midwest economy. When he was turned down by the military because of a pre-diabetic condition, he became severely depressed. Shortly after, he was picked up on his second DWI charge. Facing a long jail term, he chose to end his life.

—Maxine Seibel and  
Joseph N. Muray

THE INCIDENCE of anxiety disorders among teenagers has been increasing dramatically. Over the past decade I have worked closely with many high school principals, and I do not know of a single one who has not frequently had to coordinate intensive support efforts on behalf of depressed or suicidal youngsters.

Their experience is confirmed by national statistics. During the last two decades, teenage suicides have increased by 300%. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, virtually all parts of the northeastern U.S. have suffered waves of adolescent suicide. Moreover, the problem cuts across all socioeconomic lines; inner-city, blue-collar, and white-collar communities have been afflicted. Suicide is now the second-leading cause of teenage deaths (topped only by vehicle fatalities). For every completed suicide among high school students, there are some 350 suicide attempts, and one study places the proportion of high school students who will attempt suicide in any given month at 3%.

—Maxine Seibel and  
Joseph N. Muray

## **THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE**

Divorce has become a reality that affects more than two million adults and more than one million children each year. Yes—all children will be affected by divorce. Does it need to be negative? No! Absolutely Not! Divorce does have short-term and long-term negative effects on some children's adjustment. The main difficulties associated with divorce are:

1. conflict between parents
2. parent depression
3. lack of social support and
4. financial stress

In preschoolers, divorce may trigger regression, fretfulness, bewilderment, aggression and need.

In school age children, there is sadness, grieving, fear, anger, feelings of deprivation, fantasies of reconciliation, body complaints and loyalty conflicts.

In adolescents, there are many painful feelings: how will their own future marriages work out, worry over financial matters, loyalty conflicts, individualization from parents and the awareness of parents as sexual beings.

Healthy adjustment occurs when children are made to feel that they are in no way responsible for the divorce and that the divorce is final. Skills in coping and conflict resolution need to be well-developed for a child to adjust. Eventually, they won't blame anyone, but will instead work on problem solving and staying involved in a social support system.

Children have a positive adjustment to divorce when the custodial parent has low stress and is psychologically healthy. The custodial parent needs to be firm and consistent in parenting; and the child needs to feel that his relationship with the custodial parent is positive.

Involvement of the non-custodial parent has a direct effect on the children's adjustment when the involvement directly affects the well-being of the custodial parent rather than the child.

Emotional and financial support by the non-custodial parent can reduce the strain experienced by the custodial parent and increase their parenting competence. This increased competence directly affects a child's adjustment.

Children will do well when the parents are mentally healthy and have a support system to help them cope with the difficult times. Nobody needs to do it alone. Divorce can be a growth-producing experience. Some of the divorced parent's dreams may have died, but the parent has not.

—Dr. Phil Martin R. Textor

1. Young people who have attempted suicide in the past or who talk about suicide are at greater risk for future attempts. Listen for hints like 'I'd be better off dead' or 'I won't be a problem for you much longer' or 'Nothing matters; it's no use.'
2. Adolescents who consider suicide generally feel alone, hopeless, and rejected. They are more vulnerable to having these feelings if they have been abused, feel they have been recently humiliated in front of family or friends, have parents with alcohol or drug problems, or have a family life with parental discord, disruptions, separation or divorce. However, a teenager may be depressed and/or suicidal without any of these.
3. Many teens who abuse alcohol or drugs are likely to consider, attempt or succeed at suicide. The Fifth Special Report to the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health...found that as many as 80 percent of people who attempt suicide have been drinking at the time. And alcohol is a depressant.
4. Teenagers who are planning to commit suicide might 'clean house' by giving away favorite possessions, cleaning their rooms, or throwing things away. They may also become suddenly cheerful after a period of depression, because they think they have 'found the solution' by deciding to end their lives.
5. One of the most dangerous times of a teen's life is when he or she has

suffered a loss or humiliation of some kind: loss of self-esteem by doing poorly on a test, the breakup with a boyfriend or girlfriend, or the trauma of parents' divorce.

—*American Psychiatric Association*

## **HOW TO FIGHT TEENAGE SUICIDE: GUIDE TO THE DANGER SIGNALS**

Suicidal behavior among teenagers can be spotted in time, according to physicians at the University of Michigan Medical Center. They have developed and successfully tested a profile to help parents and professionals identify potential teenage suicide victims. Dr. Norman Alessi, who is assistant professor of psychiatry at the U-M Medical Center and director of the Child and Adolescent Affective Disorders Program at the U-M Medical Center, and Dr. Douglas R. Robbins, former assistant professor of psychiatry at the U-M Medical Center, developed their suicide profile from a study of 27 males and 37 female teens who were hospitalized at the U-M Medical Center's Children's Psychiatric Hospital.

Examples of important clues to watch for are depressed mood, anhedonia (lack of a sense of pleasure), social withdrawal, decreased performance in school, and a noticeable increase in substance use.

The researchers found that the combination of a depressed mood with drug or alcohol abuse is the deadliest combination,

In his research, Alessi found two general types of suicidal teens. One is the teen who seems to be doing well with friends, in school, and in the other areas of his life, then undergoes a marked change. School performance falls, personal hygiene decreases, he or she withdraws socially, has problems sleeping, and begins losing weight.

'Many of these teens have a biological disposition favoring suicide,' Alessi said. 'A chemical imbalance develops in the brain. Usually there is a history of depression, alcoholism, and suicide in their families. Some of these people are being treated now with drugs to help restore the chemical imbalance, but much more research is needed to effectively help these people, who are considered biological time bombs.'

The second type of suicidal teen is one who has not done well in school. This teen is found on the fringe of social activities and may have a learning disability. 'People around them usually see this teen as a loser, not as an accepted person,' Alessi said, 'This teen feels tremendous despair because he begins defining himself according to how others see him. This teen also seems to have a higher potential for suicide.'

—University of Michigan  
Medical Center,  
Health News  
Service

- MYTH Adolescents who talk about killing themselves rarely commit suicide.  
 FACT Many adolescents who commit suicide have declared or hinted at their intent, so suicidal threats and attempts should always be treated seriously.
- MYTH The tendency toward suicide is inherited and passed from generation to generation.  
 FACT Suicide is a behavior and, as such, is not inherited. However, research indicates that emotional disorders, such as depression, may be inherited. Therefore, children in some families may carry a higher likelihood of self-destruction than those in others.
- MYTH The suicidal person wants to die and feels that there is no turning back.  
 FACT Suicidal people often are ambivalent about dying and frequently will call for help immediately following an attempted suicide.
- MYTH Suicidal people are mentally ill.  
 FACT Although many suicidal adolescents are depressed and distraught, most of them cannot be diagnosed as seriously mentally ill.
- MYTH If someone attempts suicide, he will always entertain thoughts of suicide.  
 FACT Most adolescents who are suicidal are that way for only a brief period in their lives. If a young person who attempts suicide receives the proper assistance and support, he may never be suicidal again.
- MYTH If you ask an adolescent about her suicidal intentions, you will encourage the young person to kill herself.  
 FACT Actually, the opposite is true. Asking someone directly about a suspected suicidal intent often will lower her anxiety level by encouraging her to vent pent-up emotions, thus deterring the act of self-destruction.
- MYTH Suicide is more prevalent among lower socioeconomic groups.  
 FACT Suicide crosses all socioeconomic groups and no one class is more susceptible to it than another.
- MYTH When a depression lifts, there is no longer any danger of suicide.  
 FACT The greatest danger of suicide exists during the first three months after an adolescent recovers from a deep depression.
- MYTH Suicide is a spontaneous activity that occurs without warning.  
 FACT While some youth suicides may be spontaneous, most suicidal adolescents plan their self-destruction in advance.

—Dr. Thomas C. Barrett

Emotional abuse is the most insidious and prevalent kind of abuse. Over a long period of time, it can make a child feel so inadequate that he wants to commit suicide.

—Nancy Peterson

What leads an adolescent to self-destructive behavior? Here are some of the more common motives for suicide, which also can be reasons for other forms of self harm. **Revenge.** When revenge is the motive, the driving force behind suicide is anger—anger which cannot be directed at the intended target and is therefore directed at oneself, according to E. S. Shneidman, a psychologist and founder of the American Association of Suicidology. For many teenagers who consider suicide, the target of their anger is their parents, the partner in a failed romance, or another important person whom the victim perceives as having rejected her. Death is in retaliation for abandonment or the threat of abandonment.

**Manipulation.** Some teenagers use the threat of suicide to try to gain love from others. They attempt to control relationships in their lives by making others responsible. These youngsters are often considered to have disordered personalities.

**Stabilizing Relationships.** Some teenagers threaten suicide in an attempt to stabilize relationships. An attempted suicide may be a tool to divert attention away from family or marital conflicts, for instance.

**Atonement for One's Sins.** Some youths attempt suicide because they feel they have been 'bad.' For example, a young person who believes that his 'bad' behavior caused his parents divorce may feel guilty. In extreme cases, the guilt might stem from feeling responsible for the death of a parent.

**A Cry for Help.** Suicidal behavior contains a very definite message for those who recognize it. It is a distress signal indicating that a young person is engulfed by feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. The behavior is a method of communicating to others, 'I no longer can cope and I need help to stay alive.'

**Death of a Parent.** Some teens commit suicide when they can't come to terms with the death of a parent. The nature of the relationship with the deceased parent prior to his or her death, and that with the remaining parent, are critical.

**The Only Way Out.** Some youths believe suicide is the only way to escape intolerable situations such as physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. Suicide may appear to be the only way out of cult membership also.

**Reaction to Stress.** Some youths take their lives when they experience a number of stressful situations at the same time. They view their problems to be collectively unmanageable, and they feel they are failures at life. This can happen to youths who adults perceive as successful and well-adjusted.

—Dr. Thomas C. Barrett

## **BASIC INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

Although those who are not trained as mental health professionals should be cautious in dealing with a young person who might be suicidal, what they do between the time they recognize this fact and the time the potential victim gets professional help could save her life. Because suicidal adolescents feel disconnected and alone, the most effective thing to do is to help them feel 'connected.'

Here are some ways to both make that correction and, possibly, stave off a potential suicide.

1. Be willing to listen. Reflect back to the young person the thoughts and feelings being expressed. This will help her feel that you truly are trying to understand her
2. Show interest and support for the young person's feelings as well as for the information that she is giving you.
3. Don't judge the young person's problems using adult standards. For example, the grief a teenager experiences over the loss of a love relationship is real. To discount these feelings may lead a young person to doubt that you are someone who can help her.
4. Trust your intuition. If a young person is not expressing suicidal thoughts, but you suspect they exist, ask. For example, say, 'You seem to be in a great deal of emotional pain and I am concerned about your safety. Have you been thinking of hurting yourself or even killing yourself as a way of making all of this go away?'
5. Don't panic if me answer is 'yes.' The young person's feelings are finally out in the open. This alone can provide tremendous relief to him.
6. Avoid countering or saying, 'No, you can't,' Some young people feel that the only control they have in their lives is the choice to live or die, and it might be a mistake to challenge this one last shred of control. The goal is to delay the impulse for suicide until other possibilities can be explored. One way to do this is to tell the young person: 'No one can really prevent you from harming yourself if that is what you really want to do. But then again, no one can stop you a week from now or a month from now either. So, I suggest you postpone it until other solutions can be explored.'
7. Don't be judgmental. Accept as truth what the young person is telling you. Don't discount his feelings by giving advice.
8. Don't allow yourself to be sworn to secrecy.
9. Get help from a mental health professional or agency in the community. Don't take on the role of a mental health therapist. Stick to the role of friend, confidant, and helper.

—Dr. Thomas C. Barrett

## **WHAT GRIEVING CHILDREN NEED TO DO**

Grief thoughts and feelings are continuous and ever changing, inundating bereaved children's lives like waves on the ocean. These thoughts and feelings may arrive without warning, and children feel unprepared for their enormity in a school setting. How can teachers help? By recognizing that these children often need to do the following:

1. They need to acknowledge a parent or sibling who died by using his or her name or by sharing a memory.
2. They need to use tools such as drawing, writing, role-playing, and re-enactment to safely project feelings and thoughts, about their loss.
3. They need to be allowed to go to a safe place outside the classroom when overwhelming feelings arise, without explaining why in front of classmates.
4. They need to call their surviving parent during the school day or visit the school nurse for reassurance that they and their family are okay. Such reality checks counteract children's preoccupation with their own health and the health of their loved ones.
5. They need physical ways (like memory books) to re-experience and share memories in a safe way.

—Linda Goldman

### **TEENAGE SUICIDE: 13 DEADLY MYTHS**

1. Nothing could have stopped her once she decided to kill herself.
2. The person who fails at suicide the first time will eventually succeed.
3. People who talk about killing themselves never do.
4. When he talks about killing himself, he's just looking for attention. Ignoring him is the best thing to do.
5. Talking about suicide to a troubled person may give him morbid ideas.
6. People under a psychiatrist's care rarely commit suicide,
7. Suicides often occur out of the blue.
8. People who kill themselves are insane.
9. Once a person tries to kill himself and fails, the excruciating pain and shame will keep him from trying again.
10. Once the depression seems to be lifting, would-be suicides are out of danger.
11. Only a certain type of youngster commits suicide, and my child just isn't the type.
12. Suicides are mainly old people with only a few years left to live.
13. Suicides run in families, so you can't do much to prevent it.

—Dr. Mary Griffin and  
Carol Felsenthal

Adolescent suicide is a topic that has for too long been shrouded in silence. Our western Judeo-Christian ethic has caused us to view suicide as cowardly, shameful, and sinful and for this reason it has become a topic that makes us feel uncomfortable, unsure, and threatened. We are confused about suicide because we have difficulty comprehending the magnitude of despair that would cause a human being to take his or her life.

Because we are so uncomfortable with the topic, it is important that we discuss the subject, forcing ourselves to struggle with the implied problem of values that are in-

volved with suicide. We must find solutions that will keep youth from viewing suicide as the only alternative.

The very morning the author began to write this monograph, the daily newspaper headlined: 'Teen Shoots Self in Class' and 'Teen Suicide's Body Found.' We are all familiar with these kinds of reports in local papers throughout the country. Sensationalism? Hardly. As you read this...there will be one adolescent suicide attempted each minute somewhere in the country. Today 18 youths will succeed in their attempt. This year 6,500 young people will commit suicide. Even more astounding is that these numbers may be low, for many suicides go unreported, are masked, or fall under the category of one-car auto accidents. Researchers tend to agree that the 'real' numbers of adolescent suicides could be as many as four times the number reported. Not 18 suicides today but perhaps 72! Not 6,500 suicides this year, but perhaps more than 25,000!

These are frightening statistics; in fact, the subject is frightening. However, it is imperative that we cast aside the taboos associated with suicide, that we reject the conspiracy of silence that has surrounded the word, and that we set ourselves to the task of developing and initiating meaningful programs that will virtually eliminate suicide as an alternative in the minds of youth.

—Richard A. Dempsey

There are four developmental tasks that adolescents must master:

1. To sever ties with the family and establish them outside the family;
2. To assume standards of right and wrong;
3. To identify with the sex role for which they were biologically determined; and,
4. To select vocational or educational choices.

—Luleen Anderson

## **ON EDUCATION**

He always wanted to explain things.

But no one cared.

So he drew.

Sometimes he would draw and it wasn't anything.

He wanted to carve it in stone or write it in the sky.

He would lie out on the grass and look up in the sky.

And it would be only him and the sky and the things inside him that needed saying.

And it was after that he drew the picture.

It was a beautiful picture.

He kept it under his pillow and would let no one see it.

And he would look at it every night and think about it.

And when it was dark, and his eyes were closed, he could still see it.

And it was all of him. And he loved it.  
When he started school he brought it with him.  
Not to show anyone but just to have with him like a friend.  
It was funny about school.  
He sat in a square, brown desk  
Like all the other square, brown desks  
And he thought it should be red. And his room was a square, brown room,  
Like all the other rooms,  
And it was tight and close.  
And stiff.  
He hated to hold the pencil and chalk,  
With his arm stiff and his feet flat on the  
floor;  
Stiff,  
With the teacher watching and watching.  
The teacher came and spoke to him.  
She told him to wear a tie like all the other  
boys.  
He said he didn't like them.  
And she said it didn't matter!  
After that they drew.  
And he drew all yellow and it was the way he  
felt about morning.  
And it was beautiful.  
The teacher came and smiled at him.  
'What's this?' she said. 'Why don't you draw  
something like Ken's drawing?  
Isn't that beautiful?'  
After that his mother bought him a tie.  
And he always drew airplanes and rocketships  
like everyone else.  
And he threw the old picture away  
And when he lay alone looking at the sky,  
It was big and blue and all of everything,  
But he wasn't anymore.  
He was square inside  
And brown.  
And his hands were stiff.  
And he was like everyone else.  
And the things inside him that needed saying  
didn't need it anymore,  
It had stopped pushing,  
It was crushed.

Stiff

Like everything else.

(Written by a high school senior, two weeks before he committed suicide.)

—Arthur Daigon and  
Richard A.  
Dempsey

## WARNING SIGNS

Against the background of the myths and potential causes for adolescent suicide are certain warning signs which the perceptive observer should know. Some of these clues may be very observable in one potential suicidal person and less obvious in another. Regardless, it is important to be aware that the warning signs for suicide generally fall into three categories: verbal clues, behavioral clues, and situational clues.

### Verbal Clues

What appear to be empty verbal comments can provide clues to some deeper thinking on the part of the potentially suicidal person. Comments such as ‘Life is always such a downer,’ ‘I wonder if there really is life after death’ or ‘How do you leave your body to science?’ can be clues that a person is really asking for help. More direct statements such as ‘I wish I were dead’ and ‘You will all be sorry when I’m gone’ may reflect the accurate feelings of the speaker.

Neither direct nor indirect statements such as these should go unacknowledged by those associated with the young person, for they may very well signal suicide intent. Awareness of the problem and listening to youth—especially statements related to loneliness, hopelessness, helplessness, and death—can often be the greatest preventive measure a person can take.

### Behavioral Clues

Certain behavioral signs that adults should be aware of can signal suicide contemplation. These may include giving away valued possessions—...items that belong solely to the adolescent. The primary reason for this behavior is merely to get one’s affairs in order.

Other signs are abrupt changes in mood such as extreme melancholy or despondence, often accompanied by a desire to seek isolation and withdrawal. Still other signs include inordinate irritability lack of ability to concentrate or make decisions, showing excessive guilt feelings, and excessive complaining about trivial annoyances.

### Situational Clues

Situational clues can range from what adults may see as an inconsequential setback to a major disaster in an adolescent’s life. But because the youth’s experiential

background is usually shallow, these situations can be seen as equally overwhelming. Adults may view a youth's not getting the summer job, not getting into his or her first choice of college, the loss of a friend who moves away or wrecking the family car as not being catastrophic. The adolescent, on the other hand, often views these differently. To the teenager, these may be seen as equally climactic as a prolonged illness or the loss of a close loved one. For this reason, adults must become attuned to the values of the adolescent and be more aware of what is 'really important' to young people.

### Prevention Techniques

In the prevention of suicide, teachers, counselors, and administrators must be aware of the reasons for adolescent suicide as well as the clues people who may be contemplating it give. When school personnel become aware of the messages a student is sending, the most important thing they can do is listen calmly. It should be assumed that the implied threat is, in actuality, a real threat. The casual comment cannot be put off until after school. It requires the immediate attention of a caring, trusting person who can draw out the student.

Ten critical questions that can create insight into the adolescent's problems are:

How will you do it? Depending on the vagueness or specificity of the plan, the adult should be able to determine a low (no plan) risk factor to a high (use of a quick method, such as a gun or jumping) risk factor.

How much do you want to die? Cognitive therapists ask their patients to place their wish to die on a three-point continuum, with 1. representing little desire to die, 2. a moderate desire, and 3. a great desire.

How much do you want to live? This question forces the student to think about living. The student can at least begin to focus on reasons for living. Again, a three-point scale is used, with 1. representing little desire to live, 2. a moderate desire, and 3. a great desire to live. Cognitive therapists have said that when depression is present, the person's thinking is distorted. These cognitive distortions include the all-or-nothing thoughts about death that prompt suicidal actions.

How often do you have these thoughts? The adult counselor should know whether the student rarely thinks of suicide (low risk) or is constantly thinking about it (high risk).

When you are thinking of suicide, how long do the thoughts stay with you? The adult counselor must know whether the thoughts are under control. Reports that the thoughts are almost out of control (running away) are indications of high risk. Further questioning includes inquiries to determine whether the student can turn

off the thoughts, perhaps switching to others less threatening, or can counter with thoughts of reasons for living. Evidence of loss of control of the impulse to commit suicide demands a referral for psychiatric evaluation.

Is there anyone or anything to stop you? This looks for the student's support system or lifeline. When a support system is lacking, it is necessary for the counselor to become the lifeline temporarily until resource persons are identified or the life crisis that is prompting suicidal thoughts gets resolved. Efforts should be made to involve a person who has a significant relationship with the student in monitoring the student's behavior during the time of crisis. If the student is uncooperative and, in the judgment of the counselor, there is a serious threat of a suicide attempt, the counselor is ethically permitted to notify the family. The student should be advised if this step is taken.

Have you ever attempted suicide? Another myth about suicide is that once an attempt has been made, the person will not try again. A history of suicidal thinking, gestures, or attempts represents high risk, and referral to mental health resources is needed. The student with a history of suicidal behavior requires ongoing therapy.

Do you have a plan? If the student has made final plans, such as choosing a specific time, giving personal possessions to friends, writing notes, or saying 'good-bye,' the risk is very high and referral action is required. Few plans, vague plans, or no plans lower the risk factor.

On a scale from 1 to 10, what is the probability that you will kill yourself? The student's answer to this question will offer a clear signal to take referral action or not. Again, the explanation of the cognitive therapist is that this type of question confronts the all-or-nothing thinking that suicidal persons are experiencing.

What has happened that makes life not worth living? This question begins the investigation of the events that have precipitated so much stress in the student's life, that the feelings of depression, helplessness, and hopelessness are overwhelming. Counselors probe for loss in the student's life and identify the sources of stress. This question is a bridge between the evaluation of the risk of suicide and continuation of counseling. When the decision is to refer the student, there is no need to use this question.

—Richard A. Dempsey

Sudden adolescent death is very traumatic to all concerned, and its impact on the school can be enormous. Generally speaking, principals have no experiential base or formal training upon which to draw in responding to the circumstances. Yet the students, the faculty and the community all look to principals for guidance and direction. They expect some sort of undefined leadership where a sudden void has been created.

What does one do? What should be done first? How does one provide the leadership and stability in a school community that is acutely distressed?

These are heavy questions that must be addressed by principals. Suffice it to say that there are no single answers to a problem so loaded with emotion. In every instance the situation and conditions are different. The impact on the student body of the death of one youth may be quite different from that of another youth. The external support system needed by one family may differ significantly from the needs of another family.

It is important, therefore, that principals understand the great emotional upheaval that suicide creates and that they take deliberate steps to reduce the painful remorse among the living.

....During the course of events that surround the incident, principals are expected to display composed, steady leadership. While others may vent their emotions openly, principals are expected to remain calm or even stoic and in so doing bottle up their personal emotions. It is imperative that principals understand this, find ways of taking stock of their emotions, and not harbor them too long. The impact of an adolescent suicide can haunt a person for a long time, and for this reason steps may need to be taken to talk out one's feelings with a professional counselor.

Principals should not hesitate to do this. As professional leaders of their schools, as the parent figure of the school family their emotional balance during and after the shock of a student suicide is vital to the success of the school's efforts to deal with this consequence-laden tragedy.

—Richard A. Dempsey

Children who grieve over the death of a parent, grandparent, brother or sister, or friend often are 'the forgotten mourners,' says Susan Smith, author of a book by that name. Smith and other researchers on childhood and adolescent bereavement say most adults mistakenly assume that kids bounce back after a short mourning period. And they incorrectly believe that kids' grief steadily diminishes until it ends for good.

But grief often submerges and re-emerges, in varying intensity, for months and years. How children and teens understand death—and how they grieve— depends on factors such as age and developmental stage; ethnic culture and beliefs; and whether the death was caused by disease, accident, or suicide.

Many children experience 'complicated grief' that involves serious and long-lasting physical and emotional reactions, says Columbia University's Grace Christ, who explains how children's developmental stages affect their understanding of death and the form their mourning takes:

3-to 5-year-olds do not understand the permanence of death; ask repeatedly when the deceased person is coming back; are frightened by adults' grieving; demand a replacement for the deceased. Complicated grief includes anxiety and regressive behaviors longer than six months after the death.

6- to 8-year-olds understand that death is universal and permanent; assume blame and guilt for the death; mourn through stories, pictures, and remembrances. Complicated grief includes school refusal, physical symptoms, suicidal thoughts, and regressive emotions and behavior.

9- to 11-year-olds demand detailed information about the death; avoid sadness and other strong emotions; increasingly express anger; feel a sense of the deceased's presence. Complicated grief includes shunning friends and increased moodiness and misbehavior three to six months after the death.

12- to 14-year-olds act callous, indifferent, and egocentric; strongly sense the deceased person's presence; ...take comfort in the deceased's clothing and possessions. Complicated grief includes refusing to attend school, persistent depression, drug or alcohol use, associating with delinquents, and precocious sexual behavior.

15- to 17-year-olds express thoughtfulness and empathy; resist excessive demands at home; feel overwhelmed by survivors' emotional dependence and grief; grieve in adultlike ways with sadness and painful memories, but grief is of shorter duration; worry about their own vulnerability and death; have private conversations with the deceased. Complicated grief includes mood swings, withdrawal from friends and group activities, poor school performance, and high-risk behaviors such as drug use.

—Susan Black

## **RECOGNIZING CHILDREN'S GRIEF**

How will adults know when a grieving child needs extra help?

The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry advises parents and teachers to consider referring a child for therapeutic counseling if these grief related symptoms persist for an extended period:

1. Severe depression that results in little interest in daily activities
2. Inability to eat and sleep normally
3. Fear of being alone
4. Imitation of the deceased
5. Repeatedly wishing to join the deceased
6. Loss of interest in play and friends
7. Refusal to attend school
8. Steady drop in school achievement.

—*American Academy of  
Child and  
Adolescent  
Psychiatry*

For a diagnosis of clinical depression to be made in teenagers, depression must last at least two weeks and include at least five of the following symptoms:

1. A change in school performance
2. Inability to concentrate
3. Irritability or anger
4. Persistent unhappiness
5. Change in eating and sleeping habits
6. Withdrawal from people and activities
7. Excessive guilt or anxiety
8. Physical complaints
9. Aggressive, impulsive, or risk-taking behavior
10. Thoughts or talk of death or suicide.

*—Diagnostic &  
Statistical Manual  
of Mental  
Disorders  
(DSM-IV)*

Caring is crucial to the development of young adolescents into healthy adults. All youth of this developmental period need guidance as they move through this critical period replete with a variety of biological, psychological, and social changes. There is a crucial need for middle level schools to help young adolescents acquire (a) durable self-esteem, (b) flexible and inquiring habits of mind, (c) reliable and relatively close human relationships, (d) a sense of belonging in a valued group, and (e) a sense of usefulness in some way beyond the self.

Many counselors have recognized the typical school for what it is too often—an affective desert—and have retreated to their offices where they have attempted to create an ‘affective oasis,’ one place in the school where students can come for affective revitalization.

—Gary W. Mauk and  
Matthew J. Taylor

## **ADOLESCENCE: NOT TO BE FORGOTTEN**

For many adults, adolescence is a forgotten time in our lives—forgotten because we prefer to forget it. At no other time are we confronted with so many dramatic changes, and at no other time are we so poorly equipped with understanding to cope with those changes. Our bodies change, and we feel it, but we don’t understand it. Our feelings change and we don’t understand why. Our friends change and we feel the peer pressure, but we feel it without understanding it.

Middle level schools are where understanding happens. It is where young adolescents come to understand what is happening to them, what is happening in their

world, and what is going to happen in their future. Middle level schools are full of people who care about helping these youngsters develop the understanding that leads to a healthy, productive adulthood. As a nation, we can be grateful for the support of schools to which we have entrusted the care of our young adolescent children.

—J. Howard Johnston

Next to accidents, suicide ranks as the second leading cause of death among teenagers and young adults. Moreover, for every completed suicide, estimates suggest there are 50 to 200 attempts.

—Marcia L. McEvoy and  
Alan W. McEvoy

In early adolescence girls' IQ scores drop and their math and science scores plummet.....girls lose their resiliency and optimism, become less curious, and are less inclined to take risks in early adolescence. They become more differential, self-critical, and depressed....the great unhappiness many girls feel about their bodies, noting that women have been increasingly sexualized and objectified, their bodies 'marketed to sell tractors and toothpaste.'...the pressures girls have always faced are intensified....There is more divorce, chemical addiction, casual sex, and violence against women....girls can be themselves and grow into healthy adults....Girls can be saved by a good school, a good teacher, or a meaningful activity.

—Mary Pipher

## **WHEN TO BECOME INVOLVED**

What are the warning signs that a young person is 'at risk'—a potential suicide victim? Educators should become involved if two or more characteristics are evident in a young person:

1. Is a victim of domestic violence, child abuse, rape, or other assault
2. Has previously attempted suicide or has known a family member, relative, or friend who committed suicide
3. Is an extreme perfectionist
4. Is more withdrawn, uncommunicative, and isolated than usual
5. Has developed a phobia about school
6. Is unable to develop significant and empathetic relationships
7. Demonstrates any change in behavior or attitude
8. Exhibits daredevil or self-abuse behaviors
9. Drops out of school or changes classes
10. Expresses a desire to die
11. Leaves poems, diaries, drawings, or letters to be easily found.

—Steven Bruno

Young people, however, tend to ignore the customs of their elders. Adolescent rebellion has been responsible for all manner of absurd costumes. The more ridiculous a certain fashion is, the more adolescents will cling to it.

—David Eddings

We have few contemporary heroes, but we have plenty of trash-talking, high-fiving, stuff-strutting celebrities who seem transfixed by their own images. Is it any wonder that youngsters disrespect authority? They've learned well from their 'heroes' who only watch out for number one.

--Richard G. Capen, Jr.

'Never change' is the thing that probably high school students have written in each other's yearbooks for time immemorial. They think that command is possible!

—Jane Hamilton

Flabbiness of character, more than flabbiness of muscle, lies at the root of most of the problems facing American youth.

--David O. McKay

It is not your environment, it is you—the quality of your minds, the integrity of your souls and the determination of your will that will decide your future and shape your lives.

--Benjamin E. Mays

It is while we are young that the habit of industry is formed. If not then, it never is afterwards.

--Thomas Jefferson

Nutrition is an inexact science: It cannot explain how teenagers manage to thrive on hamburgers and Coke.

—Unknown

Virtue is harder to be got than knowledge of the world; and, if lost in a young man, is seldom recovered.

--John Locke

The future of the world belongs to the youth of the world, and it is from the youth and not from the old that the fire of life will warm and enlighten the world.

—Tom Mann

It is an illusion that youth is happy, an illusion of those who have lost it but the young know they are wretched for they are full of the truthless ideal which have been instilled into them, and each time they come in contact with the real, they are bruised and wounded.

—W. Somerset Maugham

An adolescent becomes an adult when he thinks it is more important to pass an exam than to pass the car ahead.

—Unknown

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 14-18 year olds in the U.S. In fact, almost half of the teen drivers involved in a crash die. Yet, a recent survey show that only 25% of parents have had a serious talk with their kids about the key components of driving. You are the parent, they are your children, and they still have a lot to learn. You can teach them and you may just help save their lives.

—*National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration*

According to the NHTSA, more than 6,000 teens die each year from injuries resulting from car collisions, making it the number one killer of teens in the United States. Typical reasons include a lack of driving experience, poor vehicle control, risk-taking, and failure to wear seat belts.

—*driversed.com*

Adolescence is a period of rapid changes. Between the ages of 12 and 17, for example, a parent ages as much as 20 years.

—Unknown

Love at eighteen is largely an attempt to find out who we are by listening to our echoes in the words of another.

--Gail Sheehy

Of all the intangible emotions and states of mind experienced by man, love is by far the easiest to explain. Love is simply liking another person very very very very very very much. That's it. But you would not believe how much time and effort poets, painters, philosophers, songwriters and (most unfortunately) teenagers expend trying to express this unbelievably basic feeling.

--*Earth (The Book) A  
Visitor's Guide to  
the Human Race*

It's not clear that all young women really want to embrace the carefree lifestyle promoted in *Girls* or *Sex and the City*. Some of them want boyfriends, now an apparently endangered species. Most want, eventually, to marry. And not all enjoy the hookup culture of casual, often even anonymous, sex. Yet these are the peer pressures that surround them. Just go to pretty much any Internet dating site or campus blog. Women are supposed to be actively sexual, skilled in the range of activities that their partners are watching online. They are supposed to look like models, drink like fish, and not care a whit if their one-night fling never texts them again. And then they're somehow supposed to find the right guy at the right time, don an oddly virginal wedding gown, and snuggle in to a life of cozy monogamy ever after. It's tough. Women of earlier generations were almost certainly frustrated by the long list of romantic options—affairs, divorces, same-sex partners—that remained forever out of reach. But women today face an upside-down problem: the expectation that in love, as in so many areas, they are somehow expected to have, and do, it all.

--Debra Spar

I don't have time to worry about who doesn't like me...I'm too busy loving the people who love me.

—Ged Backland

I remember being young in the 1960s... we had a great sense of the future, a great big hope. This is what is missing in the youth today. This being able to dream and to change the world.

—Bernardo Bertolucci

The whole gangster mentality, it's killing our youth. Black males, we're really just choking ourselves with this whole macho shit, where you can't show any tenderness, no vulnerability, no nothing. You have to be granite, 100 percent. And that's just not natural. And another thing: you have a hundred thousand black kids across this country failing class's on purpose because of peer pressure. And if you speak proper English, and you get straight A's in school, then you're considered a white boy or a white girl. But if you're hanging on the corner, scratching your nuts, drinking, then you're down. So, you know, the whole value system is fucked up; ignorance is being championed over intelligence.

--Spike Lee

There is something systemic, however, between the environments in which young black males are reared and incarceration rates.

--Ronald V. Mincy

A vast number of black and Latino youths in the inner cities are trying desperately to make some sense of their lives. But they are caught in a crossfire between a

small group of the sociopaths in their midst and the larger society that ignores their potential and has written them out of the future.

Every time a delivery man is murdered, a drama teacher shot off his bike in the park, public opinion hardens against taking steps to remedy the desperate condition of urban youth including those who carry dreams instead of guns...

Trapped between the shooters in their neighborhood and a society that fears and quarantines them, a generation of city teen-agers is turning inward, away from counsel from the old heads in their community and communication with the larger society.

--Greg Donaldson

You can't expect white kids to be the same after they get to be 12 and 13.

--A Black Mother  
preparing her  
daughter for the  
reality of racism in  
America

As blacks, we need not be afraid that encouraging moral development, a conscience and guilt will prevent social action. Black children without the ability to feel a normal amount of guilt will victimize their parents, relatives and community first. They are unlikely to be involved in social action to improve the black community. Their self-centered personalities will cause them to look out for themselves without concern for others, black or white.

--James P. Comer

Overly harsh discipline and suspension marginalizes, stigmatizes, and criminalizes these boys. When an African-American male in eighth grade has defiant behavior in the classroom, it's like seeing a burn on their body; we need to treat their behavior as evidence of a problem to be solved rather than a kid to lock up.

--Robert Ross

Children growing up poor and black in the city are more likely to witness gun violence and street drug sales than their middle-class peers are. Once teens, they are more likely to attract the suspicion of the police, to be arrested if they break the law, to spend their lives behind bars, and to die young. If they make a mistake—fall in with the wrong crowd, antagonize the wrong adults, drop out of school—they are less likely to get a second chance. One study found, for instance, that marijuana use among whites is slightly higher than among blacks, yet blacks are arrested for it nearly four times as often.

—Sarah Carr

For black boys, there seemed to be only two roads—college or jail.

--Ta-Nehisi Coates

Black girls are 20 percent of preschool girls, but 54 percent of the girls facing out-of-school suspension in preschool. That number, and also the disparities around corporal punishment, are two points that show how schools are assessing threats among really young children. Those of us who have seen a 6-year-old throw a tantrum know they can throw a mean tantrum—but there are ways we can respond without pushing them out of school. What this says to me is that Black girls, from a very young age, are treated as disposable. What is also says is that we need to find ways to support them.

—Mary Ellen Flannery

Prison is no longer a rare or extreme event among our nation’s most marginalized groups. Rather it has now become a normal and anticipated marker in the transition to adulthood.

—Devah Pager

Youth is the first victim of war; the first fruit of peace. It takes twenty years or more of peace to make a man; it takes only twenty seconds of war to destroy him.

--Baudouin I of Belgium

Then there were long, lazy summer afternoons when there was nothing to do but read. And dream. And watch the town go by to supper. I think that is why our great men and women so often have sprung from small towns, or villages. They have had time to dream in their adolescence. No cars to catch, no matinees, no city streets, none of the teeming, empty, energy-consuming occupations of the city child. Little that is competitive, much that is unconsciously absorbed at the most impressionable period, long evenings for reading, long afternoons in the fields or woods.

— Edna Ferber

To me, summer has always been about potential. This was especially true when I was in high school. Those 3 or so months between 1 school year and the next always meant change. People got taller or wider or smaller. They broke up or came together, lost friends or gained them, had life experiences that you could tell had transformed them even if you didn’t know what they were. In the summer, the days were long, stretching into each other. Out of school, everything was on pause and yet happening at the same time, this collection of weeks when anything was possible. As a teenager, I was always hoping to change, to become someone other than who I was. Each summer, I felt I had the chance to do that. All I had to do was wait and see what happened.

— Sarah Dessen

There are two times in a person's life when there is the possibility of pure happiness: in youth and in summer.

— Brielle A. Marino

Recent studies show that kids spend at least four hours a day on social and recreational media, distracted and disengaged from the world and each other.

--Lee Siegel

It's a beautiful day, and we walk past boutiques, restaurants, and packed sidewalk cafés....The pair of high-school-age girls walking down Boylston Street, silent, typing. The table of brunchers ignoring their mimosas (and one another) in favor of their screens. The kid in the stroller playing with an iPad. The sea of humans who...on this sparkling Saturday...seem to be, indeed, alone together.

--Megan Garber

Teasing is universal. Anthropologists have found the same fundamental patterns of teasing among New Zealand aborigine children and inner-city kids on the playgrounds of Philadelphia.

--Lawrence Kutner

You may talk all you please of the misfortune of being 'old and alone,' but I tell you that approaches not one degree the misfortune of being young and alone.

--Thomas Wolfe

You just can't predict the course of friendship among girls at this age (9-12). There's a need—varying in intensity according to the individual—for Gibraltar-like attachments in this betwixt-and-between period. Impressive sophistication and maturity exist side by side with fearsome anxiety about the changing body, the person-to-be. The 'best friends' are anchors against these tides of confusion....Girls need the support and backing of a group to relieve their anxieties about who they are and who they're going to be.

--Stella Chess

Peer pressure is not a monolithic force that presses adolescents into the same mold....Adolescents generally choose friends whose values, attitudes, tastes, and families are similar to their own. In short, good kids rarely go bad because of their friends.

--Laurence Steinberg

Friendships in childhood are usually a matter of chance, whereas in adolescence they are most often a matter of choice.

--David Elkind

It is through friendships that teenagers learn to take responsibility, provide support, and give their loyalty to non-family members. It is also in teenage friendships that young people find confidants with whom to share thoughts and feelings that they are not comfortable sharing with their parents. Such sharing becomes one of the elements of true intimacy, which will be established later.

--David Elkind

What makes friendships different for young people today: the nefarious Fear of Missing Out. It's because of FOMO that 20-somethings are so focused on their smartphone screens, so preoccupied with potential friends that they forget to be with the friends they already have. The FOMO mentality is leading millennials to become smartphone-addled cyber-sluts, constantly texting and emailing, always on the prowl for the next better thing.

--Robin Marantz Henig

With divorce, adolescents feel abandoned, and they are outraged at that abandonment. They are angry at both parents for letting them down. Often they feel that their parents broke the rules and so now they can too.

--Mary Pipher

Why one man rather than another? It was odd. You find yourself involved with a fellow for life just because he was the one that you met when you were nineteen.

--Simone de Beauvoir

Essentially my parents choose. I have known this for all my life, but I still feel a bit caged because I do not get the freedom to choose my own love life. At the same time, I also trust my parents. In my culture, my parents enforce some rules on me and I understand the reasoning behind it. But I feel as if I cannot live my teenage years to the fullest. Being around all these kids my age and experiencing such fun things makes me feel as if I am missing out on this whole other world. Although I appreciate my culture, I feel special being Indian, but living in America is a totally different experience with restrictions. It affects my familial because if I do not follow through with the arranged marriage, I would be shunned....If I could put the whole process in my words, it would be like this: when I'm 24, my friends and family would recruit possible guys. My parents and theirs meet and settle out all the options. Next, the guys are matched with horoscope and priest predictions, and finally I choose one guy to date, and then later comes the engagement. The wedding lasts six days and meeting my husband takes about six months to a year. I could never have a natural love life. However, I feel safe because I know I'm in good hands and that my life is set.

—Puja Lad

One girl under the age of 15 gets married every seven seconds....According to UNICEF data, more than 700 million girls today were married before their 18th birthday—and one in three of them was married before she turned 15. They are often forced into these marriages, almost invariably to older men. The bulk of them live in relatively poor, rural communities in South Asia and parts of Africa. In many instances, these unions take place in contravention of local laws....girls who are subject to such marriage often are more vulnerable to abuse and trafficking, as well as the risk of maternal mortality. ‘Child marriage starts a cycle of disadvantage that denies girls the most basic right to learn, develop and be children,’ Helle Thorning-Schmidt, the chief executive of Save the Children, said in a statement. ‘Girls who marry too early often can’t attend school, and are more likely face domestic violence, abuse and rape.’

—Ishaan Tharoor

High school is a lot more about growing up and developing an adult identity and sense of responsibility than it is about classroom learning. If you have not had a healthy socialization to the opposite sex during high school, you can look forward to immature posturing, fear-driven antipathy, and bad sexual judgment in college: a time when you may lack the support systems of friends and family, and when learning should be the primary focus of your activities.

--*The New Republic*

If you will only date someone who looks like Brad Pitt, earns a gazillion dollars, and makes your knees go weak every time you’re together, then you’re probably either 20 or stupid.

--Lori Gottlieb

Elementary school: 30 friends. Middle school: 20 friends. High school: 10 friends. College: 3 real friends.

—*peanutbutterquotes.com*

In 1950s America, a high-school student would ‘pin’ his ‘steady.’ In exchange, she would hand-hold his brains out.

--*Earth (The Book) A  
Visitor’s Guide to  
the Human Race*

Those most likely to be raped or sexually assaulted are young women between the ages of 16 and 24, women with their whole lives ahead of them. This one act of violence will alter their lives forever.

—Rosa DeLauro

I've reached the point in life when all my friends are having babies...It's like high school all over again.

—Mark Leathers

Children shouldn't raise children.

—Slogan

It's easier to floss with barbed wire than admit you like someone in middle school.

—Laurie Halse Anderson

I was only twelve. But I knew how much I loved her. It was that love that comes before all significance of body and morals. It was that love that was no more bad than wind and sea and sand lying side by side forever. It was made of all the warm long days together at the beach, and the humming quiet days of droning education at the school. All the long Autumn days of the years past when I carried her books home from school.

—Ray Bradbury

Dating is remarkably difficult to characterize. The term has outlasted more than a century's worth of evolving courtship rituals, and we still don't know what it means. Sixth-graders claim to be dating when, after extensive negotiations conducted by third parties, two of them go out for ice cream. Many collegiate students and 20-somethings don't start dating until after they've had sex. Dating can be used to describe exclusive and nonexclusive relationships, both short-term and long-term. And now, thanks to mobile apps, dating can involve a succession of rendezvous over drinks to check out a dizzying parade of 'matches' made with the swipe of a finger.

—Judith Shulevitz

When I was twelve, my sixth-grade English class went on a field trip to see Franco Zeffirelli's film adaptation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. From that moment forward I dreamed that someday I'd meet my own Juliet. I'd marry her and I would love her with the same passion and intensity as Romeo. The fact that their marriage lasted fewer than three days before they both were dead didn't seem to affect my fantasy. Even if they had lived, I don't think their relationship could have survived. Let's face it, being that emotionally aflame, sexually charged, and transcendently eloquent every single second can really start to grate on a person's nerves. However, if I could find someone to love just a fraction of the way that Montague loved his Capulet, then marrying her would be worth it.

—Annabelle Gurwitch

The hardest part about being a teenager is dealing with other teenagers —the criticism and the ridicule, the gossip and rumors.

—Beverley Mitchell

Teenagers are free verse walking around on two legs.

—Dorothy Allison

For me, blue jeans are wildly important and iconic. They went from being a very humble and practical clothing item for farmers and cowboys to the ultimate symbol of youth and rebellion, freedom and sexiness. Jeans completely changed how an entire generation of young people were able to express themselves through what they wore.

--Clavin Klein

Consider the following statistics from the National Eating Disorders Association's website:

Forty-two percent of first-to-third-grade girls want to be thinner.

Eighty-one percent of 10-year-olds are afraid of being fat.

Even among clearly non-over-weight girls, over one-third report dieting.

Of American elementary school girls who read magazines, 69 percent said that the pictures influence their concept of the ideal body shape.

Forty-seven percent of these girls say the pictures make them want to lose weight.

—Connie Schultz

There is an epidemic right now of girls dumbing themselves down... in middle school because they think it makes them attractive.

—Danica Mckellar

Nature makes boys and girls lovely to look upon so they can be tolerated until they acquire some sense.

--William Lyon Phelps

When I was twelve years old I caught my first strong glimpse of one of the fundamental forces of existence, whose votary I was destined to be for life—namely, Beauty.

—Georg Brandes

Fact: I don't know of a single girl who doesn't wish the show-it-all boxer-shorts phenomenon would go away as well. Guys, we just don't want to see your underwear. Truthfully, we believe that there is a direct correlation between how much underwear you show and how much you've got upstairs, if you know what I mean.

—Lisa Samson

There is nothing in a caterpillar that tells you it's going to be a butterfly.

—R. Buckminster Fuller

When girls feel bad about their looks, 60 percent avoid normal daily activities like raising their hand in class or even going to the doctor. That means that girls do not show up for life when they don't feel good enough or pretty enough. A role model can help girls see beauty as a source of confidence, not anxiety.

—Mandy Moore

Smart girls like to hear they're pretty. Pretty girls like to hear they're smart.

—Unknown

Death is just a distant rumor to the young.

--Andy Rooney

The person that attempts suicide has an abnormal conception of his own body. He perceives his body as a possession of some outside person or force. He was raised by parents whose actions made him feel early in life that he only partially owned his body. Parents can cause this by such strategies as rarely permitting the child to have privacy, being demanding and over-controlling, making the child do what they expect. Being limited to this sort of body perception, it takes the adolescent only a few traumatic experiences later in life to convince him that his body did not belong to him, but rather was an alien pain-producing-partner of some other entity.

—Yosef Hakimi, M.D.

NEW FINDINGS: Every day, psychiatric research is finding new clues to the causes of depression and suicide. Among them:

1. Depression and the risk for suicide might have biological as well as psychological causes. Studies have found that some people who are depressed have altered levels of certain brain chemicals. Other studies have shown that aggressive and impulsive people who make violent suicide attempts have reduced amounts of serotonin, a key brain chemical.
2. Family history of suicide is a significant risk factor in a young person. The family link might be because young people often identify with those closest to them and are likely to repeat their actions. However, there may be a genetic link as well, because biological relatives of a suicidal person are six times more likely to attempt or succeed in suicide than are adoptive relatives.

—*American Psychiatric Association*

## WHAT CAN YOU DO:

Most people who are depressed or who are thinking about suicide don't or won't talk about how they are feeling. They feel worthless. They have no hope. They deny their emotions or think that talking about their emotions will be a 'burden' on others because no one cares. Or they are afraid others will make fun of them.

That's understandable, because when someone mentions suicide, others may treat it as a joke or deny it. Those reactions only make the problem worse. So, if a friend or relative brings up the subject, take it seriously and take some time to talk about it.

1. Reassure that person that he or she does have someone to turn to. Parents, friends, school counselors, physicians, teachers, or a brother or sister are probably all too willing to listen. It's just hard to let them know we want to talk about something as serious as our emotions.
2. Don't lecture or point out all the reasons a person has to live. Instead, listen and reassure the individual that depression and suicidal tendencies can be treated. Depressive disorders respond readily to treatments such as psychotherapy or appropriate medication. Antidepressants can act within two to three weeks and often are used in addition to psychotherapy. Nearly 90 percent of all people suffering depression respond to these treatments.
3. You can find help by contacting your local chapter of the American Psychiatric Association, which can suggest a psychiatrist who can help you. Psychiatrists are physicians who have special training in emotional and mental health. Other sources include your local mental health association, your family physician, a county medical society, a local hospital's department of psychiatry, a mood disorders program that is affiliated with a university or medical school, or a family service/social agency.

—*American Psychiatric Association*

## MYTHS ABOUT SUICIDE

Numerous myths have developed over the years about suicide and the suicidal person. We should explore some of these myths in hopes of setting the record straight and getting an accurate focus on the subject.

**MYTH 1.** Those who openly talk about suicide never commit it

There has long been a tragic belief that those who threaten suicide never follow through with the act. Research indicates that as many as 60 percent of those who commit suicide have made statements about their intentions to someone. Verbal threats or even reference to suicide should be construed as a cry for help. Adolescents who openly discuss the alternative of suicide may be asking for intervention. If the cry for help is not heard, or, if heard is not treated seriously the outcome may be tragic.

**MYTH 2.** There are suicidal-type people.

Suicide knows no racial, sexual, economic, social, mental, physical, or biological restrictions. The death of a parent by suicide can increase the potential for self-destruction by an adolescent. If that parent is viewed as a positive role model by the youth, the adult's solution can then become the adolescent's solution. Generally speaking, however, death by suicide cannot be 'type-cast.'

**MYTH 3.** Suicidal people are completely intent on dying.

Most people who attempt or commit suicide are undecided about whether or not to continue to live. They tend to gamble with death, trusting and hoping that others will help them. Nearly no one commits suicide who has not told others in some fashion how he or she is feeling.

**MYTH 4.** Once a person becomes suicidal, he or she is suicidal forever.

Research tells us that people who consider self-destruction are in that state for only limited periods of time. This does not mean that this state cannot periodically recur when the individual's perceptions of life become clouded. But if the person receives help when it is needed, there is good reason to believe that suicide as a solution can be removed from the person's alternatives.

**MYTH 5.** Improvement after a suicidal crisis or attempt means the risk is over.

The turmoil of an attempted suicide can be devastating to an individual, usually creating emotional exhaustion. Research indicates that most suicides occur within about three months after the signs of recovery from an attempted suicide have been observed. It is at this point that the individual usually has sufficient energy to put suicidal thoughts back into action.

**MYTH 6.** Suicide victims are always mentally ill or psychotic.

Studies of hundreds of genuine suicide notes indicate that suicidal people are extremely unhappy and not necessarily mentally ill. They are suffering from a complex set of forces that manifests itself in seemingly hopeless dependency—a feeling that joy and optimism are not obtainable and that life is not worth the continued hassle.

**MYTH 7.** Suicide happens without warning.

In most cases, many clues are given that might alert friends and family to the possibility of an impulsive act. It is extremely important that we are attuned to these clues. One of the most obvious indicators of potential basis for suicidal behavior is a rapid change or drastic alteration in one's moods, ambition, interests, involvements, and, in general, a change in lifestyle.

**MYTH 8.** Inquiring about suicide plans will increase the likelihood of a suicide. Asking about suicidal thoughts in depressed persons does not increase the risk of suicide. It is important to determine the person's intent. To discuss these plans openly and honestly can do much to put the problems into focus.

—Richard A. Dempsey

Women and adolescent girls harbor a built-in kind of crazy. It's only the nature and degree that vary.

—Men

Women are evolutionarily predestined not to collaborate with women they are not related to. Women and girls are less willing than men and boys to cooperate with lower-status individuals of the same gender; more likely to dissolve same gender friendships; and more willing to socially exclude one another.

—Joyce Benenson,  
Psychologist

She told me she'd spent most of the summer hanging out alone in her room with her phone. That's just the way her generation is, she said. 'We didn't have a choice to know any life without iPads or iPhones. I think we like our phones more than we like actual people.'

—Jean M. Twenge

...a generation shaped by the smartphone and by the concomitant rise of social media. I call them iGen. Born between 1995 in 2012, members of this generation are growing up with smart phones, have an Instagram account before they start high school, and do not remember a time before the Internet. The Millennials grew up with the web as well, but it wasn't ever-present in their lives, at hand at all times, day and night. iGen's oldest members were early adolescents when the iPhone was introduced, in 2007, and high school students when the iPad entered the scene, in 2010. A 2017 survey of more than 5,000 American teens found that three out of four owned an iPhone.

—Jean M. Twenge

The arrival of the smartphone has radically changed every aspect of teenagers' lives, from the nature of their social interactions to their mental health. These changes have affected young people in every corner of the nation and in every type of household. The trends appear among teens poor and rich; of every ethnic background; in cities, suburbs, and small towns. Where there our cell towers, there are teens living their lives on their smartphone.

—Jean M. Twenge

More comfortable in their bedrooms than in a car or at a party, today's teens are physically safer than teens have ever been. They're markedly less likely to get into a car accident and, having less of a taste for alcohol than their predecessors, less susceptible to drinking's attendant ills.

Psychologically, however, they are more vulnerable than Millennials were; rates of teen depression and suicide have skyrocketed since 2011. It's not an exaggeration to describe iGen as being on the brink of the worst mental health crisis in decades. Much of this deterioration can be traced to their phones.

—Jean M. Twenge

Nearly all Boomer high-school students have their driver's license by the spring of their senior year; more than one in four teens today still lack one at the end of high school. For some, Mom and Dad are such good chauffeurs that there's no urgent need to drive. 'My parents drove me everywhere and never complained, so I always had rides,' a 21-year-old student in San Diego told me. I didn't get my license until my mom told me I had to because she could not keep driving me to school. She finally got her license six months after her 18th birthday. In conversation after conversation, teens described getting their license as something to be nagged into by their parents — a notion that would have been unthinkable in previous generations.

—Jean M. Twenge

Today's teens are...less likely to date. The initial stage of courtship, which Gen Xers called 'liking' (as in 'Ooh, he likes you!'), kids and now call 'talking'—an ironic choice for a generation that prefers texting to actual conversation. After two teens have talked for a while, they might start dating. But only about 56% of high school seniors in 2015 went out on dates; for boomers and Gen Xers, the number was about 85%.

—Jean M. Twenge

Across a range of behaviors— drinking, dating, spending time unsupervised— 18-year-olds now act more like 15-year-olds used to, and 15-year-olds more like 13-year-olds. Childhood now stretches well into high school.

Are today's teens waiting longer to take on both the responsibilities and the pleasures of adulthood? Shifts in the economy, in parenting, certainly play a role. In an information economy that rewards higher education more than early work history, parents may be inclined to encourage their kids to stay home and study rather than to get a part-time job. Teens, in turn, seem to be content with this homebody arrangement—not because they're so studious, but because their social life is lived on their phone. They don't need to leave home to spend time with their friends.

—Jean M. Twenge

One of the ironies of the iGen life is that despite spending far more time under the same roof as their parents, today's teens can hardly be said to be closer to their mothers and fathers than their predecessors were. 'I've seen my friends with their families— they don't talk to them,' Athena told me. 'They just say 'Okay, okay whatever' while they're on their phones. They don't pay attention to their family.' Like her peers, Athena is an expert at tuning out her parents so she can focus on her phone. She spent much of her summer keeping up with friends, but nearly all of that was over text or Snapchat. 'I've been on my phone more than I've been with actual people,' she said. 'My bed has, like, an imprint of my body.'

—Jean M. Twenge

The number of teens who get together with their friends nearly every day dropped by more than 40 percent from 2000 to 2015; the decline has been especially steep recently. It's not only a matter of fewer kids partying; fewer kids are spending time simply hanging out. That's something most teens used to do; nerds and jocks, poor kids and rich kids, C students and A students. The roller rink, the basketball court, the town pool, the local necking spot—they've all been replaced by virtual spaces accessed through apps and the web.

—Jean M. Twenge

Teens who spend more time than average on screen activities are more likely to be unhappy, and those who spend more time than average on non-screen activities are more likely to be happy.

There's not a single exception. All screen activities are linked to less happiness, and all non-screen activities are linked to more happiness. Eighth-graders who spend 10 or more hours a week on social media are 56 percent more likely to say they're unhappy than those who devote less time to social media. Admittedly, 10 hours a week is a lot. But those who spend 6 to 9 hours a week on social media are still 47 percent more likely to say they are unhappy than those who use social media even less. The opposite is true of in-person interactions. Those who spend an above-average amount of time with their friends in person are 20 percent less likely to say they're unhappy than those who hang out for a below-average amount of time.

If you were going to give advice for a happy adolescence...it would be straightforward; put down the phone, turn off the laptop, and do something — anything— that does not involve the screen.

—Jean M. Twenge

The more time teens spend looking at screens, the more likely they are to report symptoms of depression. Eighth-graders who are heavy users of social media increase the risk of depression by 27 percent, while those who play sports, go to religious services, or even do homework more than the average teen cut their risk significantly.

—Jean M. Twenge

Social networking sites like Facebook promise to connect us to friends. But the portrait of iGen teens emerging from the data is one of a lonely, dislocated generation. Teens who visit social networking sites every day but see their friends in person less frequently are the most likely to agree with the statements ‘A lot of the time I feel lonely,’ ‘I often feel left out of things,’ and ‘I often wish I had more good friends.’ Teens’ feelings of loneliness spiked in 2013 and have remained high since.

—Jean M. Twenge

Teens who spend three hours a day or more on electronic devices are 35 percent more likely to have a risk factor for suicide, such as making a suicide plan. (That’s much more than the risk related to, say, watching TV.) One piece of data that indirectly but stunningly captures kids’ growing isolation, for good and for bad: since 2007, the homicide rate among teens has declined, but the suicide rate has increased. As teens have started spending less time together, they have become less likely to kill one another, and more likely to kill themselves. In 2011, for the first time in 24 years, the teen suicide rate was higher than the teen homicide rate.

—Jean M. Twenge

For all of their power to link kids day and night, social media also exacerbate the age-old teen concern about being left out. Today’s teens may go to fewer parties and spend less time together in person, but when they do congregate, they document their hangouts relentlessly—on Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook. Those not invited to come along are keenly aware of it. Accordingly, the number of teens who feel left out has reached all-time highs across age groups. Like the increase in loneliness, the upswing in feeling left out has been swift and significant.

—Jean M. Twenge

Girls have borne the brunt of the rise in depressive symptoms among today’s teens. Boys’ depressive symptoms increased by 21 percent from 2012 to 2015, while the girls’ increased by 50 percent — more than twice as much. The rise in suicide, too, is more pronounced among girls. Although the rate increased for both sexes, three times as many 12-to-14 year old girls killed themselves in 2015 as in 2007, compared with twice as many boys. The suicide rate is still higher for boys, in part because they use more-lethal methods, but girls are beginning to close the gap.

—Jean M. Twenge

Boys tend to bully one another physically, while girls are more likely to do so by undermining a victim’s social status or relationships. Social media give middle-and high-school girls a platform on which to carry out the style of aggression they favor, ostracizing and excluding other girls around the clock.

—Jean M. Twenge

The smart phone is cutting into teens' sleep: Many now sleep less than seven hours most nights. Sleep experts say that teens should get about nine hours of sleep at night; a teen who is getting less than seven hours a night is significantly sleep deprived. Fifty-seven percent more teens were sleep deprived in 2015 than in 1991. In just the four years from 2012 to 2015, 22 percent more teens failed to get seven hours of sleep....Teens who spend three or more hours a day on electronic devices are 28 percent more likely to get less than seven hours of sleep than those who spend fewer than three hours, and teens who visit social-media sites every day are 19 percent more likely to be sleep deprived. A meta-analysis of studies on electronic device used among children found similar results: Children who use a media device right before bed are more likely to sleep less than they should, more likely to sleep poorly, and more than twice as likely to be sleepy during the day....Sleep deprivation is linked to myriad issues, including compromised thinking and reasoning, susceptibility to illness, weight gain, and high blood pressure. It also affects mood: People who don't sleep enough are prone to depression and anxiety

—Jean M. Twenge

Prying the phone out of our kids' hands will be difficult, even more so than the quixotic efforts of my parents' generation to get their kids to turn off MTV and get some fresh air. But more seems to be at stake in urging teens to use their phones responsibly, and there are benefits to be gained even if all we instill in our children is the importance of moderation. Significant effects on both mental health and sleep time appear after two or more hours a day on electronic devices. The average teen spends about two and a half hours a day on electronic devices. Some mild boundary setting could be keep kids from falling into harmful habits.

—Jean M. Twenge

Athena told me that when she does spend time with her friends in person, they are often looking at their device instead of at her. 'I'm trying to talk to them about something, and they don't actually look at my face,' she said. 'They're looking at their phone, or they're looking at their Apple Watch.' 'What does it feel like, when you're trying to talk to somebody face-to-face and they're not looking at you?' I asked. 'It kind of hurts,' she said. 'It hurts. I know my parents' generation didn't do that. I could be talking about something super important to me, and they wouldn't even be listening.'

Once, she told me, she was hanging out with a friend who was texting her boyfriend. 'I was trying to talk to her about my family, and what was going on, and she was like, 'Uh-huh, yeah, whatever.' So I took her phone out of her hands and threw it at my wall.'

—Jean M. Twenge

The belief that youth is the happiest time of life is founded on a fallacy. The happiest person is the person who thinks the most interesting thoughts, and we grow happier as we grow older.

--William Lyon Phelps

In all our efforts to provide 'advantages' we have actually produced the busiest, most competitive, highly pressured, and over-organized generation of youngsters in our history—and possibly the unhappiest.

--Eda J. LeShan

The future of the world belongs to the youth of the world, and it is from the youth and not from the old that the fire of life will warm and enlighten the world. It is your privilege to breathe the breath of life into the dry bones of many around you.

—Tom Mann

Never teach false morality. How exquisitely absurd to teach a girl that beauty is of no value, dress of no use! Beauty is of value—her whole prospects and happiness in life may often depend upon a new gown or a becoming bonnet; if she has five grains of common sense, she will find this out. The great thing is to teach her their just value, and that there must be something better under the bonnet than a pretty face, for real happiness. But never sacrifice truth.

--Sydney Smith

Home is the girl's prison and the woman's workhouse.

--George Bernard Shaw

A daughter can metaphorically punch her mother in the face a million times, and mom won't leave. If a daughter does this to her friends, they will leave. Teens act out at home, in part, because they are so comfortable with the love and security of home.

--Lauren Kessler

The Dalai Lama is the spiritual head of your younger sister for six months when she's a senior in high school and wants to piss your parents off.

—*TL;DR Wikipedia*

Fathers are still considered the most important 'doers' in our culture, and in most families they are that. Girls see them as the family authorities on careers, and so fathers' encouragement and counsel is important to them. When fathers don't take their daughters' achievements and plans seriously, girls sometimes have trouble taking themselves seriously.

—Stella Chess

A kid in an abusive home has far fewer rights than any POW. There is no Geneva Convention for kids.

—Andrew Vachss

The term ‘nature-deficit disorder’ has recently entered the popular vocabulary....It was coined by the author Richard Louv to explain a wide range of behavior problems in children who spend less time outdoors but now is invoked as the root cause of an even wider range of both physical and emotional ailments in people of all ages who are disconnected from nature.

--Dr. Andrew Weil

Like their mothers and grandmothers, flappers tended to go to high school and even college, and they devoured new books featuring confident, fun-loving adolescent heroines who hiked and camped and solved mysteries. Flappers biked, played golf and tennis, and strove to emulate the flat-chested and hipless physiques of the adolescent boys whose freedom and lack of domestic responsibilities they envied. Predictably, these stylish tomboys were a grave source of worry to parents, educators, physicians and clergymen, who feared that sports and higher education would be ruinous.

—Linda Simon

## **TO MY DADDY!!**

You were there from the day I was born, as I grew older you taught me how to crawl, walk, and ride a bike. You walked me in on my first day of school, and as I hugged you goodbye I saw you tear up. You were a single father and doing your best to take care of me with no help. You overcame so many issues and obstacles because you knew what was best. As I grew to big for your lap I could see you were hurting. You were there to hold me when I had my first heart break and you tried your best to keep me from another one. But as I grew more into my teenage years I never wanted to listen to your advice because I thought I knew everything. You watched me graduate and i never thought i would ever see you cry the way you did. i remember how I would always wish that I was older so I could move out and make my own rules but now that I am I wish I was little again I wish I could crawl in your lap and just stay there. You didn't give me everything I wanted in life but you made sure I had what I needed you are the best father in the whole world!!! I love you dad and thanks for not giving up.

—Unknown

To be black in the Baltimore of my youth was to be naked before the elements of the world, before all the guns, fists, knives, crack, rape, and disease. The law did not protect us.

—Ta-Nehisi Coates

You are a black boy, and you must be responsible for your body in a way that other boys cannot know. Indeed, you must be responsible for the worst actions of other black bodies, which, somehow, will always be assigned to you. And you must be responsible for the bodies of the powerful—the policeman who cracks you with a nightstick will quickly find his excuse in your furtive movements. You have to make your peace with the chaos, but you cannot lie. You cannot forget how much they took from us and how they transfigured our very bodies into sugar, tobacco, cotton, and gold.

—Ta-Nehisi Coates

## **BULLET**

Somebody shot a bullet, and my  
brother died.

Somebody shot a bullet, and for a day  
my momma cried.

Somebody shot a bullet, and my  
brother's not here anymore.

Somebody pulled a trigger, and I  
never will know why.

Somebody pulled a trigger, and my  
brother had to die.

Somebody pulled a trigger, and I  
won't forget that bang.

Somebody pulled a trigger, to be  
accepted by a gang.

Somebody changed my world that  
night, and I'm still asking why.

Somebody changed my world that  
night when my brother had to die.

Somebody changed my world, and if  
I could, I know what I'd do,

But I don't want to be like them—  
So God, I'll leave it up to you.

—Anonymous Teen

We lose eight children and teenagers to gun violence every day. If a mysterious virus suddenly started killing eight of our children every day, America would mobilize teams of doctors and public health officials. We would move heaven and earth until we found a way to protect our children. But not with gun violence.

--Elizabeth Warren

### **EVERY DAY ON AVERAGE (AGES 0-19)**

Every day, 46 children and teens are shot in murders, assaults, suicides & suicide attempts, unintentional shootings, and police intervention.

Every day, 7 children and teens die from gun violence:

- 4 are murdered
- 2 die from suicide

Every day, 40 children and teens are shot and survive:

- 31 injured in an attack
- 1 survives a suicide attempt
- 8 shot unintentionally

—*bradycampaign.org*  
(2016)

### **IN ONE YEAR ON AVERAGE (AGES 0-19)**

17,012 American children and teens are shot in murders, assaults, suicides & suicide attempts, unintentional shootings, or by police intervention.

2,647 kids die from gun violence:

- 1,565 murdered
- 907 die from suicide
- 116 killed unintentionally
- 27 killed by legal intervention
- 32 die but intent was unknown

14,365 kids survive gun injuries:

- 11,321 injured in an attack
- 232 survive a suicide attempt
- 2,747 shot unintentionally
- 65 shot in a legal intervention

—*bradycampaign.org*  
(2016)

I'm a woman that loves make-up and getting dressed up. As I get older, I don't look as good, but I don't give a damn. There's a huge pressure on young girls to look a certain way these days but, as I age, I've lost that incredible insecurity of youth.

—Helen Mirren

I began pulling out old pictures and yearbooks from our Los Angeles high schools and UC Berkeley. Suddenly there we were, thousands of trim-haired, neatly-dressed, conservative-looking youngsters, with perky, forced smiles, encased in identical inch by inch-and-a-quarter boxes for our children to snicker at. Only they did not snicker.

'Mom, this isn't the 60s, is it?'

—Elise Frances Miller

There's a special place in Crazyland reserved exclusively for adolescent girls.

—Unknown

Milk consumption has already been identified as an aggravating factor in the acne 'epidemic' among adolescents, and preliminary successes have been reported with reduced milk consumption. It is even more important that excessive milk consumption can promote diseases commonly associated with a Western lifestyle.

--Bodo Melnik

Young girls of 13 or 12 are great actors.

—Dario Argento

Dear Diary, 24th day of September. The stars and my family align to make my life black and miserable. My mother seeks to make me a fine lady—dumb, docile and accomplished—I must take lady-lessons and keep my mouth closed. My father, the toad, conspires to sell me like cheese to some lack-wit seeking a wife.

—13-Year-Old Catherine  
'Birdy' (1290 A.D.)  
[Karen Cushman]

The middle school years are often fraught with crises: physically, students see the migration of body parts from children's proportions to adult sizes; emotionally, they experience the full panoply of human response from anger to delight in heightened decibels; and socially, they believe that there is too much time or not enough time to develop the important relationships of life. In the midst of their busy lives while searching for the right mix of physical, emotional and social stability, young adolescents can sometimes find in good literature a calm space necessary for balance.

—Donna Bessant

Adolescence is so fleeting that it is easy to neglect it in favor of preparing only for the future—as if life doesn't matter when you're 16 years old. But let's face it, it does. Educators do students a disservice if they're always planning everything based on what they think students will need in the future rather than addressing who they are as 14-, 15-, 16-, and 17-year-olds. If we ignore the fact that 14-year-olds matter, then we eliminate the chance that we're going to value what it means for a student to grow as a 14-year-old.

—Pamela Sissi Carroll

'Adolescence,' in short, is not really a process that young people must all go through. A great deal of it is really a deliberate creation of adult social anxieties. In order to maintain the adult dream of a happy clean world of fun-loving middle-class children, we have to assume that a person takes twenty-odd years to grow into a genuine human being. During this period, everything he is 'not ready for' should be kept from him, which in practice tends to mean that all genuine education should be postponed as long as possible....Whatever is socially undesirable, such as violence, is also to be kept from him, on the theory, if that is the word, that if he never reads about violence it cannot occur to him to become violent. Sex and violence, therefore, come to be associated with adult books, books one reads outside of school or after one has finished school, which is a major reason why the popular taste in reading, and entertainment generally, whether adolescent or adult, is so prurient and sadistic. I think a little more emphasis on genuine literature in school might make this tendency less automatic.

—Northrop Frye

Often fairly realistic, lots of young adult novels don't have a happy ending. The language mirrors adolescent use. The community may see it as coarse. Principals may worry about that. But my argument to principals, is that if they're in the business of teaching, they may want to teach the community about the importance of this literature: that it is useful for kids to read books about kids like themselves, with whose problems they can identify.

—Ted Hipple

Among the social and psychological benefits for teenagers reading young adult novels, say experts, is the experience of finding answers to questions about personal identity and one's place in the scheme of things. As adolescents identify with interesting fictional characters, they use books as a vehicle for asking important questions.

For instance, a student will read *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen and might be disturbed by questions about how his parents are getting along. In class, that student might raise questions about Brian, the novel's protagonist, using Brian as a façade to ask questions about his own situation.

—Pamela Sissi Carroll

Reading, to the young adolescent, is often synonymous with time wasted.

—Jeanneine P. Jones

Young adult novels are also important because they specifically focus on the developmental tasks of adolescents in ways that nothing else does. Adolescence is so fleeting that it is easy to neglect it in favor of preparing only for the future—as if life doesn't matter when you're 16 years old. But let's face it, it does. Educators do students a disservice if they're always planning everything based on what they think students will need in the future rather than addressing who they are as 14-, 15-, 16-, and 17-year-olds. If we ignore the fact that 14-year-olds matter, then we eliminate the chance that we're going to value what it means for a student to grow as a 14-year-old.

—Pamela Sissi Carroll

Reading, to the young adolescent, is often synonymous with time wasted.

—Jeanneine P. Jones

We have faith in tomorrow because of the youth of today.

—Anne Sherren

When I was a child, when I was an adolescent, books saved me from despair: that convinced me that culture was the highest of values.

—Simone de Beauvoir

When a child is born, I once explained to the kids, some dads lay down bottles of wine for them that will mature when they grow up into ungrateful adults. Instead, what you're going to get from me, as each of you turns sixteen, is a library of the one hundred books that gave me the most pleasure when I was a know-nothing adolescent.

--Mordecai Richler

That is what is marvelous about school, she realized: when you are in school, your talents are without number, and your promise is boundless. You ace a math test: you will one day work for NASA. The choir director asks you to sing a solo at the holiday concert: you are the next Mariah Carey. You score a goal, you win a poetry contest, you act in a play. And you are everything at once: actor, astronomer, gymnast, star. But at a certain point, you begin to feel your talents dropping away, like feathers from a molting bird. Cello lessons conflict with soccer practice. There aren't enough spots on the debating team. Calculus remains elusive. Until the day you realize that you cannot think of a single thing you are wonderful at.

—Sarah Shun-lien  
Bynum

The societies kids naturally form are tribal. Gangs, clubs, packs. But we're herded into schools and terrified into behaving. Taught how we're supposed to pretend to be, taught to parrot all kinds of nonsense at the flick of a switch, taught to keep our heads down and our elbows in and shut off our minds and shut off our sex. We learn we can't even piss when we have to. That's how we learn to be plastic and dumb.

—Marge Piercy

When you ask students aged 11 to 15 'Where in school do you feel important?' they look at you as if to say, 'that's ridiculous! Of course you don't feel important in school.'

—William Glasser

Boyhood is the longest time in life for a boy. The last term of the school-year is made of decades, not of weeks, and living through them is like waiting for the millennium.

--Booth Tarkington

'Mr. Vey, you cannot be stuffed into a locker without your consent.' Dallstrom said, which may be the dumbest thing ever said in a school. 'You should have resisted.' That's like blaming someone who was struck by lightning for getting in the way.'

—Richard Paul Evans

I could sum up my younger life in one word—Misunderstanding. Most of my school life was spent in protection mode. Which made any 'benefit' I could get from socializing, useless.

—Tina J. Richardson

The child is surrounded by so much authority, so much school, so much dignity, so much law, that it would have to break down under the weight of all these restraints if it were not saved from such a fate by meeting with a friend.

--Dr. Wilhelm Stekhel

The arrival of the smartphone has radically changed every aspect of teenagers' lives, from the nature of their social interactions to their mental health. These changes have affected young people in every corner of the nation and in every type of household. The trends appear among teens poor and rich; of every ethnic background; in cities, suburbs, and small towns. Where there are our cell towers, there are teens living their lives on their smartphone.

—Jean M. Twenge

As we grow up, we learn that the people that weren't supposed to ever let us down, probably will. You'll have your heart broken and you'll break others hearts. You'll blame a new love for things an old one did. You'll fight with with your best friend, and you'll cry because time is flying by, and eventually you'll lose someone you love. So take too many pictures, laugh too much, forgive freely, and love like you've never been hurt. Because every second you spend angry or upset, is a second of happiness you can never get back.

—Andy Biersack

Teens are doing the same things teens have always done—just digitally. Most adults tend to use the Internet in a functional way. We pay our bills, send emails for work, or book a plane ticket. Teens grow up online: They hang out and socialize with their friends on social networking sites and use the technology to meet their developmental needs. They figure out who they are, express themselves, and try on different identities in the virtual world. They flirt, fight, break up, and make up digitally as well as in person.

Essentially, websites are a virtual food court. Kids spend hours IMing (instant messaging), texting, or leaving each other online comments in the same way we spent hours talking on the phone. Today's parents ask, 'What could they possibly be texting their friends all the time?' Our parents asked the same question when we talked on the phone for hours to our best friend.

— Anastasia Goodstein

People do not fully realize that there are terrible consequences when people become things. Self-image is deeply affected. The self-esteem of girls plummets as they reach adolescence partly because they cannot possibly escape the message that their bodies are objects, and imperfect objects at that.

--Jean Kilbourne

I think that the media and its influencers send out a negative message to young girls these days, when it comes to the relationship between power and money. The message that young girls receive these days, from watching reality t.v. shows and such, is that the more money you spend, the more powerful you are. But I'd like young girls everywhere to know that it's not about the money that you spend; but what it's really about is the money that you have! Financial power lies in actually having money and your intelligence is determined by how you spend it. And it's not even about buying only what you need, because we should have the things that we want, too, not only the things that we need! But it's more about knowing the value of material things because without the knowledge of the value, things aren't going to make you happy, because there's always something more that you can buy! So you've got to know how to buy what's really going to make you happy and not just buy things for the sake of spending.

— C. JoyBell C.

Seventy-five percent of people have their first episode of a mental health disorder by age 18. The average amount of time between someone having their first episode and seeking help is about seven years. That's a really long time to further develop ineffective coping mechanisms and have a dysfunctional life.

—Ross Szabo

In your 20s, oftentimes you don't have anything else to worry about other than your narcissistic self. You cry if you don't have the right shirt. You cry if you have work. You cry if you don't have work. It's the worst night of your life if you can't get in to see some band.

—Melissa McCarthy

In 2012, 5.9 percent of young people suffered from severe mental health issues. By 2015 it was 8.2 percent.

—David Brooks

The *White House Task Force on Disadvantaged Youth* reported that one-quarter of our young people are at serious risk of not achieving productive adulthood.

—Ruben Hinojosa

ME TO MY 13-YEAR-OLD (2018)

Please don't smoke, drink, vape, use weed, take pills, have sex, cyber-bully, or eat Tide Pods.

MY MOM TO 13-YEAR-OLD ME (1983)

Please don't bring your Cabbage Patch doll to the dinner table.

—Internet Meme

At 8 a.m. the sight of my sleeping teen warms my heart. At 1 p.m., not so much.

—Internet Meme

There's no such thing as a kid who hates reading. There are kids who love reading, and kids who are reading the wrong books.

—James Patterson

Somedays our daughters can be so quick with the lip it makes us wonder if we really created the person who has the nerve to speak that way. Then we see them use their sass on someone who deserves it and we are thankful they know how to speak the hell up.

—Katie Bingham Smith

Ask the young. They know everything.

—Joseph Joubert

People are always complaining teens are ‘too old’ for trick-or-treating. Let me tell you. If your kid shows up at my door trying to hang onto one last shred of their childhood, I’ll be damned if I’m going to begrudge them a Snickers bar. Childhood is short enough as it is.

—Internet Meme

For those passing out candy this year...when a teenager comes to your door, please give them the candy without saying ‘aren’t you too old to be doing this?’ Because they could be out doing things much worse like Drinking & driving, vandalizing, drugs, etc....I would rather they be knocking on my door asking for candy & having safe/legal fun, than seeing them doing the dangerous things they could be doing! Let them be kids as long as they can be. Kids grow up way too fast. Let them spend one evening channeling their inner childhood.

—D. L. Hughley

There’s a wound most troubled boys share, which, at its core, comes from the feeling that they don’t have their father’s unconditional love.

—Clayton Lessor

When a boy feels as if no one cares about him, or as if he will never amount to anything, he truly believes it doesn’t matter what he does.

—Clayton Lessor

As we examine the youth of today, we must realize that the negative behavior we see on the outside, is a result of a deeper need on the inside.

—Eric M. Watterson

## **THE ANTISOCIAL LADDER**

- Step 1: Ineffective Parenting
- Step 2: Antisocial Behavior
- Step 3: Academic Failure
- Step 4: Peer Rejection
- Step 5: Deviant Peer Group
- Step 6: Delinquency

—Elizabeth Ramsey and  
Gerald R.  
Patterson

Contrary to what many of us believe, bullying in school does not primarily involve boys. Popular portrayals, such as *The Lord of the Flies* and *Lords of Discipline*, which depict only boys as both the bullies and the victims, do not reflect reality....only 47% of the victims of bullying in middle school are boys. Thus, according to the students' own perceptions, the majority (53%) of the victims of bullies are girls.

Not surprisingly, the bullying that takes place among boys tends to be more physical (punching, kicking, pushing, and so on) than that which takes place among girls (which is usually more verbal in nature). Among the students who said that the bullying they had experienced was mostly physical, 89.3% were boys. Among those student who said that the bullying they experience was mostly verbal, 67.1% were girls.

—Frank J. Barone

Many educators say the rise in cheating is due to an erosion of ethics in a self-centered culture. Some point to habits ingrained in students through years of working together in cooperative learning situations. Others pin the blame on teachers who don't care if kids cheat or who would rather avoid the hassle of disciplining those who do. Still others bemoan growing numbers of indulgent parents who refuse to hold their kids accountable....people are so much more concerned about drugs and violence. Cheating is getting worse, but it's getting less attention....More serious is that many parents defend their kids even when they know they cheated. These parents may not even question the evidence. Rather, educators say, parents sometime cut straight to the excuse, hoping to secure more lenient punishments. And teachers often buckle under the pressure. In a survey of 356 high school teachers by The American School Board Journal, roughly seven out of 10 teachers said parental pressure discourages educators from penalizing student cheaters.

The parents sometime offer startling excuses in defense of their children's indefensible behavior. One high school world history teacher who responded to the ASBJ survey says, 'I've had parents say to me that if they had not cheated, they never would have passed French in college.'

At North Springs High School in Fulton County, Ga., school officials are clamping down hard on student cheating. But North Springs principal Peter Zervakos says some parents don't understand why, especially when their kid is the one being punished. They tell him cheating is a fact of life in the business world—so, what's the big deal? Others argue that cheating is a justifiable reaction to academic pressure. 'It's scary because they really believe this,' says Zervakos.

—Kevin Bushweller

Why do children join gangs? Gangs can fill an emotional need for children that is not being met at home. Kids who join gangs are looking for something that is missing in their family life. Gangs offer acceptance that the family may not be offering. The also offer solidarity which may be missing from families where parents are ab-

sent or not available. Gang dress and rituals provide a sense of stability and belonging, and gang membership brings respect and a feeling of power that children find alluring.

—*National Association of  
Elementary School  
Principals*

No form of hazing is OK. While taping players to goal posts or stuffing them in lockers might see like harmless fun, hazing has a tendency to escalate.

Researchers found that 13 percent of kids who were hazed wanted revenge, and that doesn't bode well. The kids who were hazed the previous year tend to be the hazers the next year. What they do is ratchet it up a notch, make it a little more degrading, make it a little more dangerous.

—Hank Nuwer and  
Norman Pollard

It used to be that cheating was done by the few, and most often they were the weaker students who couldn't get good grades on their own. There was fear of reprisal and shame if apprehended. Today, there is no stigma left. It is accepted as a normal part of school life, and is more likely to be done by the good students, who are fully capable of getting high marks without cheating. 'It's not the dumb kids who cheat,' one Bay Area prep school student told me. 'It's the kids with a 4.6 grade-point average who are under so much pressure to keep their grades up and get into the best colleges. They're the ones who are smart enough to figure out how to cheat without getting caught.'

—Regan McMahon

Nationally, 75 percent of all high school students cheat. But the ones who cheat more are the ones who have the most to lose, which is the honors and AP (advanced placement) students. Eighty percent of honors and AP students cheat on a regular basis....For kids with a very high GPA and very high SAT scores, who have taken a ton of AP classes, what distinguishes them is how perfect they are. So there's no room for any kind of error. And if there's no room for error, you tend to cheat, even though these students would have done just fine on the test. They say they cheat because 'this is my safety net.'

—Denise Pope

Athletes in the high-profile male sports such as football, baseball and basketball are more willing to cheat than other athletes. The one women's sport that yields similar results is softball. For generations, sports have been perceived as an endeavor that builds character and instills positive values in youth. Study results prompted many to ask: Just what are the coaches teaching these kids?

The major male sports seem to be spawning a win-at-any-cost mentality that carries over into the classroom. Thirty-seven percent of boys and 20 percent of girls said it was proper for a coach to instruct a player to fake an injury. Forty-three percent of boys and 22 percent of girls surveyed said it was proper for a coach to teach basketball players how to illegally hold and push, for example. Now that is clearly illegal. Whether you call it cheating or just breaking the rules, it's illegal. It changes the game. You're not supposed to hold. In a survey, a substantial number of the young people thought that was permissible. So you have to ask yourself, what is that telling us about the values that sports are generating?

The minimum-GPA factor and the time-management issue—fitting studying in amid the practices and games. I think what allows them to succumb to it is also the fact that there's a sort of mental attitude that it's not that big a deal. I don't think they lose a lot of sleep over it. So as an ethicist, that's the piece of it I worry about. Is there no conscience operating?

—Michael Josephson

The pressure to succeed at all costs has boosted cheating levels in college to record levels also. A graduate of San Francisco's independent Urban School, whom we'll call Ellen, now a junior at the University of Southern California, says, 'Everyone cheats. There is no cushion, so you have to do well; there isn't a choice. In college, there is no room for error. You cannot fail. You refuse to fail. People become desperate, so they'll do anything to do well. That's why people resort to paying others to do their papers. Because you feel: Mess up once and you are screwed. The end.'

Tests are a big part of the grade in college, she says, and those are largely multiple-choice, which were a rude shock to someone coming from a progressive high school. 'It's just memorization,' says Ellen. 'I came from Urban, where I was taught to bask in the glory of learning something, not to just sit down the night before with a bunch of kids on Adderall and go through the 30-page study guide and memorize as much as I can. And you can say that taking a drug to stay up so you can study is another form of cheating.'

—Regan McMahon

Cheating is so common in middle school and high school that after a while 'you just get used to it. It's not even a moral issue for high schoolers. Kids have become immune to it.'

A popular method of cheating is networking, which...is 'the easygoing smart kid gives the answers to some other kid.'

'There was one time in a science class in freshman year when I was networking with some other girl and we didn't get caught. We both got A's. It was a great feeling, actually, I'd have to say with no regret, mainly because I knew I would never have to use that information ever again.'

Technology is a catalyst, but text-message cheating is big because the cheaters are sending out the message. Some people keep their integrity, but some fall into the trap when it's suggested.

—Pirouz Mehmandoost,  
High School  
Student

We call it the morning scramble. In the morning at a high school, you see a ton of kids sitting around copying each other's homework. Because a percentage of their grade is based on their turning in their homework. And a lot of these kids are doing so many classes and after-school activities that there's no way they could possibly do all the work required of them. So kids don't even count that as cheating. That's just sort of survival for them: divvying up the work. That's why they're IM-ing (instant messaging) all the time while they're doing homework. It's another way of divvying up the work. It's a way of ensuring that you get it done. It doesn't matter how you do it, just get it done and get it in.

—Denise Pope

But even if kids are not aware of cheating scandals like Enron, they are absolutely influenced by the role models they see close to them. So when they see their parent go 'diagnosis shopping' to get a doctor to say they have ADD so they can have extra time to complete their SAT test, or they hear a coach tell them to fake an injury in football when their team is out of time-outs to gain an unofficial one, kids get the message that it's OK, even necessary, to do take whatever steps to gain an advantage. And to an adolescent that may translate as lie, cheat and steal.

—Denise Pope

The interesting thing about cheating is that it's a window into a kid's soul, and into the family's soul, too. Because so many of these kids are cheating to please their parents—to get a grade, to get into college, whatever. The 100 or so academic integrity cases I dealt with in 20 years as a high school English teacher and in two years as a vice principal in charge of disciplinary matters showed how desperate kids are to please their parents and help their friends.

—Joe Di Prisco

While small children don't lie much, teenagers lie a lot. This is a time in life when they're naturally inclined to push limits. They lie to avoid punishment. They may even lie when they know there's no need to do so, just to establish a sense of independence.

Helpful: Recognize that lying is part of the normal developmental process. By allowing teens increasing autonomy and freedom, you can reduce their perceived need to lie.

At the same time, don't underestimate your teen's capacity for lying and the need for your direction. Some lies can be injurious to their well-being. Spotting the signs: When lying, teens are more likely to display an increased number of adapters —nervous movements, such as scratching or playing with their hair. They will also overact in an effort to cover up their nervousness. If you suspect a teen is lying about things that could harm him, be direct. Instead of grilling him with questions, simply say, 'I'm concerned that you're not telling me the truth. And if you're not, you're putting yourself at risk and we're going to have to work this out.'

—Charles V. Ford, MD

Bullying can predict future criminal activity. Studies show that 60% of boys classified as bullies in grades six through nine were convicted of at least one crime by age 24, as compared to 23% of boys not considered bullies. Of boys considered to be bullies, 40% would have three or more convictions by age 24, as opposed to 10% of their non-bully counterparts. Secret Service agents, called in to develop profiles of the Columbine and other school shooters, found that most of them had been humiliated and harassed in school for long periods of time before choosing to attack their perceived perpetrators. Studies show that victims of bullying are at-risk for low self-esteem, depression, and suicide.

—Sandra L. Pollock

Bullying is a widespread problem in schools. Research offers many possible explanations for this. School violence is influenced by parenting practices, temperamental factors, or culture, and societal reinforcement of violence through the media and sports. The predominant theory is that bullying is a learned behavior. Bullies often come from home environments where physical punishment is used and children are taught to strike out physically as a way to solve problems. Parental involvement and warmth are often lacking. These children have little empathy for their victims and often find ways to defend their actions by saying they were provoked. In a study of 558 middle school students, bullying behaviors were positively correlated with the families where physical discipline was used, adult supervision was lacking, negative peer influence was present, and neighborhoods were considered unsafe. Conversely, the likelihood of bullying was significantly reduced for students who spent time with adults who modeled nonviolent strategies for conflict resolution. This suggests the substantial influence adult (parent, teacher, school counselor) behavior can play any child's life.

—Sandra L. Pollock

## EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF TROUBLING BEHAVIOR

- Social withdrawal
- Excessive feelings of isolation, loneliness, or rejection
- Being a victim of violence
- Feelings of persecution
- Low school interest and poor academic performance
- Expression of violence in writings and drawings
- Uncontrolled anger
- Patterns of impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating, and bullying behaviors
- History of discipline problems
- History of violent and aggressive behavior
- Intolerance for differences and prejudicial attitudes
- Drug or alcohol use
- Affiliation with gangs
- Inappropriate access to, possession of, or use of firearms
- Serious threats of violence

*—Early Warning, Timely  
Response: A Guide  
to Safe Schools*

Discipline continues reign and his education's king of problems and we'd like to see it reduced to prince or knave. Misbehavior receives a great deal of media attention. Some of this attention is exaggerated, some is underrated and some is deserved. The point is, general breakdown of discipline in today's classroom is common. What the media sometime neglect to mention is the direct connection between family breakdown and classroom breakdown. Both kinds of breakdowns are inextricably linked yet teachers and schools tend to be blamed for children's total behavior and functioning, in and out of the classroom. Unfair!

The truth is, today's child often brings to school a body that can't sit and attend, a mind that has absorbed too many adult themes, a vocabulary that is more street-wise than wisdom-wise, an attitude influenced by memorization of students' rights, not responsibilities, a philosophy of 'Me-ism,' not 'We-ism,' and overt behavioral patterns that invite continual conflict and disruption during precarious instructional time.

*—Stanley T. Dubelle, Jr.  
and Carol M.  
Hoffman*

Most of it [lying] boils down to punishment avoidance....It's developmentally normal for these kids to test their limits. Parents need to spend some time talking about trustworthiness and keep the conversation going for the next six to seven years....Occasionally it happens that some kids have repetitive and serious issues with lying. This is the time for a serious discussion and parents might want to seek out a therapist to resolve emotional issues.

—Dr. Jan Remer-Osborn

When tweens start to spread their wings, parents want to hold on tighter. For reason, too, since kids at this age tend to lie more about their whereabouts and activities. Tweens want to control their own lives more than their younger counterparts and may try manipulation to achieve their goals.

Kids also begin to engage in risky behaviors at this age, behaviors their parents probably would not approve. Ground rules should be established and discipline must be consistent.

But if your child continues to lie or the lies become related to more serious behaviors such as drugs, sex or unlawful behavior, parents must intervene.

—Michelle Sussman

When the adolescent becomes aware of the fact that his present experiences and anxieties are not unique and that others have had the same impulses and conflicts, he may be better able to handle them. Frequently, literature is the only means by which he can see he is 'normal' and allay guilt and fear thereby.

—Louise Rosenblatt

Learning-disabled adolescents are especially aware of their own feelings of inferiority, failure, and impotence... pupils express empathy for characters, identify with situations they read, and are delighted to discover fictional and factual whose characters experience problems similar or comparable to their own. Reading such stories reinforces their feelings of 'normalcy' and helps the students to realize that they are not alone in facing adolescence's problems and the special problems created by their disabilities.

—Ronald S. Lenkowsky  
& Barbara E.  
Lenkowsky

## **THE NEED FOR A PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE**

A well-conceived and relevant curriculum attuned closely to the needs of young people can generate a mood of positivism within a school and thusly reduce the need for rigid administrative control. So also does the classroom teacher stand as a major deterrent to infringements against school order. Although a dynamic curriculum and a professional staff can certainly reduce behavioral deviations, guidelines for

student behavior are mandatory. Adolescents at the high school level are fast approaching adulthood. Indeed, many of them have physically reached adulthood by the time they graduate, but in reference to emotional growth and maturity they are several years removed from adulthood. Inherent in the teenager is the desire and often passion for freedom from authority. A large part of maturity is the responsible control of one's emotions and urges, and many adolescents have not yet reached that stage of maturity. Those excesses of the adolescent, therefore, which do not succumb to controls from within must be modified from without.

Limits for student behavior must be clearly understood and accepted within the school. Adelaide Johnson attributes 'a sizable incidence of juvenile delinquency to the inability or refusal of adult authority figures to establish clear limits for youth to operate within.' Such limits are needed by all, in differing degrees depending on maturity levels. For the insecure teenager in a world of conflicting values, interests, and behavior these limits are mandatory. Just as our American society bases its order on the Constitution of United States of America so must the school prepare a carefully written code of behavioral management. The purpose and procedure of this code should reflect the school's philosophy of education and the worthwhile values of the community. This codification of the laws of the school should serve as a guide for the educational program in that it makes discipline a working part of the school's philosophy of education, clarifies each student's status, minimizes hasty and emotionally influenced action, and establishes a clear-cut support for teachers and administrators. Once a well-defined philosophy of discipline is in hand and clearly understood, the school community has a strong base from which to work toward the positive emotional growth of the student body.

—Dan L. Miller

There is good news and bad news regarding the literacy levels and literary engagement of today's youth. The good news is that today's young people are reading and writing at high levels heretofore unachievable. They are engaged in literacy activities for major portions of their day. The bad news is that their reading and writing is comprised of communicating through social media—Twitter, Facebook, and texting. Although the level of literary engagement is high, the quality of the engagement is quite low. Texters and chatters communicate with phrases, single words, sentence fragments, misspellings, myriad abbreviations, web slang, acronyms, and emoticons-:).

—Dan L. Miller

Many teens feel hemmed in by mistakes they've made, and it's important for them to realize that their mistakes and bad choices don't always have to define them. That hopefully their lives will be full of second and third and fourth chances.

—Jandy Nelson

Adolescence is the age of risk-taking. Adolescents are supposed to take risks so that they learn from both their successes and failures. It's also the age of identity formation, so they may take on many different personas, looks, etc. to explore whether this is who they are or not.

It can be hard to watch your child dye his or her hair blue or fail a test or lose a friend or not get a date to a dance. But these and similar experiences are necessary. I tell parents that unless it is really harmful, they should just ride it out.

If parents are always stepping in to protect their children from unhappiness, the children come to rely on their parents instead of themselves to make things right. But nobody is happy all the time, and people have to learn to deal with uncomfortable feelings as well as comfortable ones. That is how you gain the confidence that no matter what life hands you, you will be able to handle it.

—Cecelia Horan

Maturity is when your world opens up and you realize that you are not the center of it.

—M. J. Croan

No adolescent ever wants to be understood, which is why they complain about being misunderstood all the time.

—Stephen Fry

Adolescence is like having only enough light to see the step directly in front of you.

—Sarah Addison Allen

All my life I've felt like there was something wrong with me. Something missing or damaged.

Every teenager in the world feels like that, feels broken or out of place, different somehow, royalty mistakenly born into a family of peasants.

—Cassandra Clare

If a society is to preserve stability and a degree of continuity, it must learn how to keep its adolescents from imposing their tastes, values, and fantasies on everyday life.

—Eric Hoffer

GenX'er teens didn't slow down—they were just as likely to drive, drink alcohol, and date as their Boomer peers and more likely to have sex and get pregnant as teens. But then they waited longer to reach full adulthood with careers and children. So GenX'ers managed to lengthen adolescence beyond all previous limits: they started becoming adults earlier and finished becoming adults later.

—Jean M. Twenge

Adolescence—the time when teens begin to do things adults do—now happens later. Thirteen-year-olds—and even 18-year-olds—are less likely to act like adults and spend their time like adults. They are more likely, instead, to act like children—not by being immature, necessarily, but by postponing the usual activities of adults. Adolescence is now an extension of childhood rather than the beginning of adulthood.

—Jean M. Twenge

When a child reaches adolescence, there is very apt to be a conflict between parents and child, since the latter considers himself to be by now quite capable of managing his own affairs, while the former are filled with parental solicitude, which is often a disguise for love of power. Parents consider, usually, that the various moral problems which arise in adolescence are peculiarly their province. The opinions they express, however, are so dogmatic that the young seldom confide in them, and usually go their own way in secret.

—Bertrand Russell

At sixteen, he was inclined to be rather priggish and self-righteous. Not such bad qualities in adolescence after all, since most of us have to be self-righteous before we can be righteous.

—Vera Brittain

If we understand the signals they are giving us, middle school kids can be fun and adventurous. If we can find it in our hearts to overlook some of their quirky and mysterious behaviors, we can find them to be energetic and curious about how the world works around them. If we see the world as they view it, we can take their hand and guide them across the narrow bridges and frightening valleys they see sprawling before them. And finally, if we can reveal the patience to talk with them about the issues that confuse and bedevil them, we can find a world open for discussion and journey.

—Dr. Kid Brain

The angst of adolescence is the fear the pretty Italian girls across the street will never come over. The crisis of mid-life is learning they never will.

—Mark Darrah

As children inch their way into adolescence, the parent changes. He is an authority, a source of answers, and a chastising voice. Depending on the day, he may be resented, emulated, questioned, or defied.

Only as an adult can a child imagine his parent as a whole person, as a husband, a brother, or a son. Only then can a child see how his parent fits into the world beyond four walls.

—Nadia Hashimi

In youth, our blood rises and becomes volatile. Desire, worry, and anxiety increase. External circumstances now direct the rise and fall of emotions. Will and intention become constrained by social conventions. Competition, conflict, and scheming are the norm in interactions with people. The approval and disapproval of others become important, and the honest and sincere expression of thoughts and feelings is lost.

—Lieh-tzu

It was bad, but what in high school is not? At the time we're stuck in it, like hostages locked in a Turkish bath, high school seems like the most serious business in the world to just about all of us. It's not until the second or third class reunion that we start realizing how absurd the whole thing was.

—Stephen King

Teenage girls are not taken seriously by the culture at large, especially not their darker or more complicated feelings—of aggression, desire, ambition. To me, these feelings and drives are so fundamental to girlhood and to womanhood, and I love exploring them. And trying to give voice to them as best I can. I think women are always trying to figure out their own adolescence. We never stop.

—Megan Abbott

We are at that age that balances between independence and conferring with your friends about every minuscule decision you make. I've never liked that part of adolescence.

—Tarryn Fisher

For the first time in my life, I actually wished that everyone was the same. And I despised myself for my differentness or uniqueness as an individual. In the world there are lots of social groups people can fit into, and I've spent time roaming in and out of a few and being kicked out of many. Now I stand on the outside and look in. Wondering where is my place. Coming to a conclusion, I have no place.

—Laura Hanna

I can do one of two things. I can be President of the United States or I can control Alice Roosevelt. (His 19-year-old daughter.) I cannot possibly do both.

—Theodore Roosevelt

Being a failed teenager is not a crime, but a predicament and a secret crucible. It is a fun-house mirror where distortion and mystification led to the bitter reflection that sometimes ripens into self knowledge. Time is the only ally of the humiliated teenager, who eventually discovers the golden boy of the senior class is a bloated, bald drunk at the twentieth reunion, and that the homecoming queen married a

wife-beater and philanderer and died in a drug rehabilitation center before she was thirty. The prince of acne rallied in college and is now head of neurology, and the homeliest girl blossoms in her twenties, marries the chief financial officer of a national bank, and attends her reunion as president of the Junior League. But since a teenager is denied a crystal ball that will predict the future, there is a forced march quality to this unspeakable rite of passage. It is an unforgivable crime for teenagers not to be able to absolve themselves for being ridiculous creatures at the most hazardous time of their lives.

—Pat Conroy

At seventeen, the smallest crises took on tremendous proportions; someone else's thoughts could take root in the loam of your own mind; having someone accept you became as vital as oxygen. Adults, light years away from this, rolled their eyes and smirked 'this too shall pass'—as if adolescence was a disease like chicken pox, something that everyone recalled as a mild nuisance, completely forgetting how painful it had been at the time.

—Jodi Picoult

This was a factory, a sorting house. We were no different from dogs and pigs and cows: all of us were allowed to play when we were small, but then, just before reaching maturity, we were sorted and classified. Being a high school student was the first step toward becoming a domestic animal.

—Ryū Murakami

As sexual power is learned by adolescent boys through the social experience of their sex drive, so do girls learn that the locus of sexual power is male. Given the importance placed on the male sex drive in the socialization of girls as well as boys, early adolescence is probably the first significant phase of male identification in a girl's life and development. ... As a young girl becomes aware of her own increasing sexual feelings ... she turns away from her heretofore primary relationships with girlfriends. As they become secondary to her, recede in importance in her life, her own identity also assumes a secondary role and she grows into male identification.

—Kathleen L. Barry

Fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, lemme tell you. Those are big years. Everybody always thinks of it as a time of adolescence—just getting through to the real part of your life—but it's more than that. Sometimes your whole life happens in those years, and the rest of your life it's just the same story playing out with different characters. I could die tomorrow and have lived the main ups and downs of life. Pain. Loss. Love. And what you all so fondly refer to as wisdom. Wanna know the difference between adult wisdom and young adult wisdom? You have the ability to

look back at your past and interpret it. I have the ability to look at my present and live it with my whole body.

—Lidia Yuknavitch

We become adolescents when the words that adults exchange with one another become intelligible to us.

—Natalia Ginzburg

His adolescent nerdliness vaporizing any iota of a chance he had for young love. Everybody else going through the terror and joy of their first crushes, their first dates, their first kisses while Oscar sat in the back of the class, behind his DM's screen, and watched his adolescence stream by. Sucks to be left out of adolescence, sort of like getting locked in the closet on Venus when the sun appears for the first time in a hundred years.

—Junot Díaz

Grown-ups are always more fascinated by what you might become than what you are.

—Jim Lynch

It's hard not to be impatient with the absurdity of the young; they tell us that two and two make four as though it had never occurred to us, and they're disappointed if we can't share their surprise when they have discovered that a hen lays an egg. There's a lot of nonsense in their ranting and raving, but it's not all nonsense. One ought to sympathize with them; one ought to do one's best to understand. One has to remember how much has to be forgotten and how much has to be learnt when for the first time one faces life. It's not very easy to give up one's ideals, and the brute facts of every day are bitter pills to swallow. The spiritual conflicts of adolescence can be very severe and one can do little to resolve them.

—W. Somerset Maugham

A monster. You and your friends, all of you. Pretty monsters. It's a stage all girls go through. If you're lucky, you get through it without doing any permanent damage to yourself or anyone else.

—Kelly Link

Being a teenager is such a compelling time period in your life—it gives you some of your worst scars and some of your most exhilarating moments. It's a fascinating place; old enough to feel truly adult, old enough to make decisions that affect the rest of your life, old enough to fall in love, yet, at the same time too young (in most cases) to be free to make a lot of those decisions without someone else's approval.

—Stephenie Meyer

When you're seventeen you know everything. When you're twenty-seven if you still know everything you're still seventeen.

—Ray Bradbury

Most parents try really hard to give their kids the best possible life. They give them the best food and clothes they can afford, take their own kind of take on training kids to be honest and polite. But what they don't realize is no matter how much they try, their kids will get out there. Out to this complicated little world. If they are lucky they will survive, through backstabbers, broken hearts, failures and all the kinds of invisible insane pressures out there. But most kids get lost in them. They will get caught up in all kinds of bubbles. Trouble bubbles. Bubbles that continuously tell them that they are not good enough. Bubbles that get them carried away with what they think is love, give them broken hearts. Bubbles that will blur the rest of the world to them, make them feel like that is it, that they've reached the end. Sometimes, even the really smart kids, make stupid decisions. They lose control. Parents need to realize that the world is getting complicated every second of every day. With new problems, new diseases, new habits. They have to realize the vast probability of their kids being victims of this age, this complicated era. Your kids could be exposed to problems that no kind of therapy can help. Your kids could be brainwashed by themselves to believe in insane theories that drive them crazy. Most kids will go through this stage. The lucky ones will understand. They will grow out of them. The unlucky ones will live in these problems. Grow in them and never move forward. They will cut themselves, overdose on drugs, take up excessive drinking and smoking, for the slightest problems in their lives. You can't blame these kids for not being thankful or satisfied with what they have. Their mentality eludes them from the reality.

—Thisuri Wanniarachchi

Love is rare and hard to find and takes years upon years to develop. Teenagers don't fall in love.

—Kody Keplinger

It was only high school after all, definitely one of the most bizarre periods in a person's life. How anyone can come through that time well adjusted on any level is an absolute miracle.

—E. A. Bucchianeri

I hated high school. I don't trust anybody who looks back on the years from 14 to 18 with any enjoyment. If you liked being a teenager, there's something wrong with you.

—Stephen King

Young adolescents are involved in the process of self-creation at many levels. They are establishing their identities in terms of racial and ethnic belonging and acceptance. They are developing a sexual identity as they come to terms with their changing bodies and examine sexuality in relation to morality. Body image is a significant challenge for young people as they learn to accept their own body's unique shape in relation to cultural standards and norms.

As young adolescents attempt to change their identity from that of a child to that of an adult, their transition is often bumpy. It is normal to find the freedoms of adults more attractive than the responsibilities of adults. The desire for new experiences through this process can often lead youth into risky situations. Their urge to be free of the limitations of childhood can lead them away from protective restraints that once kept them safe. Their natural struggle is toward independence.... It should not be surprising that young adolescents sometimes demonstrate egocentrism at this time in their lives. Looking at race, gender, and societal roles, they must often experiment with different views of themselves. Our reactions to them are unwittingly important because much of their self-image is built through the mirror held before them by how others see them.

—Connie J. S. Monroe

A recent study of 13-year-olds in 6 countries placed Americans last in mathematics and Koreans first. But when students were asked whether they were 'good at mathematics,' 68 percent of the Americans said yes (the highest), compared with only 23 percent of the Koreans (the lowest).

This was no quirk. The psychologist Harold Stevenson, of the University of Michigan, who has studied American and Asian students for years, finds the same relationship. Americans score lower in achievement but, along with their parents, are more satisfied with their performance.

'If children believe they are already doing well—and their parents agree with them—what is the purpose of studying harder?' he writes.

—Robert J. Samuelson

Out teenagers live in a dreamland. It's a curious and disorienting mixture of adult freedoms and childlike expectations. Hey, why work? Average high-school students do less than an hour of daily homework. Naturally, they're not acquiring the skills they will need for their well-being and the nation's.

Don't mistake me: I'm not blaming today's teenagers. They are simply the latest heirs of an adolescent subculture—we have all been part of it—that's been evolving for decades. American children are becoming more and more independent at an earlier and earlier age.

—Robert J. Samuelson

When you're young, your ego is so strong. Then you get older and you get freed from yourself.

—Peter Dinklage

## **IDENTITY VS. ROLE CONFUSION**

The fifth stage of Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development is identity vs. role confusion, and it occurs during adolescence, from about 12-18 years. During this stage, adolescents search for a sense of self and personal identity, through an intense exploration of personal values, beliefs, and goals.

During adolescence, the transition from childhood to adulthood is most important. Children are becoming more independent, and begin to look at the future in terms of career, relationships, families, housing, etc. The individual wants to belong to a society and fit in.

'The adolescent mind is essentially a mind or moratorium, a psychosocial stage between childhood and adulthood, and between the morality learned by the child, and the ethics to be developed by the adult.' (Erik Erikson)

This is a major stage of development where the child has to learn the roles he will occupy as an adult. It is during this stage that the adolescent will re-examine his identity and try to find out exactly who he or she is. Erikson suggests that two identities are involved: the sexual and the occupational.

According to [Helen L.] Bee, what should happen at the end of this stage is 'a re-integrated sense of self, of what one wants to do or be, and of one's appropriate sex role'. During this stage the body image of the adolescent changes.

Erikson claims that the adolescent may feel uncomfortable about their body for a while until they can adapt and 'grow into' the changes. Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of fidelity.

Fidelity involves being able to commit one's self to others on the basis of accepting others, even when there may be ideological differences.

During this period, they explore possibilities and begin to form their own identity based upon the outcome of their explorations. Failure to establish a sense of identity within society ('I don't know what I want to be when I grow up') can lead to role confusion. Role confusion involves the individual not being sure about themselves or their place in society.

In response to role confusion or identity crisis, an adolescent may begin to experiment with different lifestyles (e.g., work, education or political activities).

Also pressuring someone into an identity can result in rebellion in the form of establishing a negative identity, and in addition to this feeling of unhappiness.

—Saul McLeod

Having friends or lacking them is just one part of a more complex psychological portrait; to be complete, the portrait needs to include an assessment of the quality of the child's friendships as well as the identity the child's friends.

Five attributes describe the quality of children's friendships: (1) content, or whether friends act in prosocial or antisocial ways when they're together; (2) constructiveness, which describes whether friends settle differences through negotiation or assertion; (3) closeness, which measures the time and types of activities children share with one another; (4) symmetry, or the degree to which children have equal or unequal power in their relationship; and (5) affect, which tells whether the friendship is supportive and secure or whether it is filled with conflicts.

—Willard Hartrup

How a child gets along with other children is 'the single best childhood predictor of adult adaptation.' Friends provide several important functions in child development. First, children who have friends have a much-needed emotional resource—a security system, you might say—that helps them be brave instead of timid. In school, having friends could give a child the courage to sign up for a classroom play or volunteer to explain a math problem in front of the room. A child's confidence, boosted by friends, can also make it easier to meet new people and handle stresses outside of the classroom, such as living in a trouble household. And kids with friends tend to laugh and smile more often, a sign that they're enjoying life and having fun.

—Willard Hartrup

Middle school students learn a whole lot better when they are not being lectured to, being directed, forced, or ordered, but when choice is given and learning is interactive. Traditional classrooms in our society today define teacher and the classroom in general as a straight-answer, fact-feeding, dictatorship that cares little for the opinions and interests of the pupils, and that teaches little about the reasons behind the facts. Schools are meant to prepare kids for life and make them more apt to be successful in their life. One would suppose that the government having authority over public schooling would want the generations of the future to be more successful in life, thus feeding the needs of the economy and the requirements of democracy, the spread of freedom, the reduction of discrimination in all forms, and exercising the rights and morality of citizens. One would assume that the government—wanting such a society—would encourage the development of these attributes through schooling. However as we look at the teaching of present schools, we see suspension of constitutional rights, undemocratic classrooms, and the implementation the fact-

feeding teaching methods and passive roles for students. Now maybe it's just me, but I would have to think that we should be promoting the opposite of these things. Am I wrong?

—Anonymous 8th Grader  
quoted by Nancy  
Doda & Trudy  
Knowles

What middle school teachers don't get about their students is that we don't like being treated like two year olds. We like to be treated like we are in the middle because that's where we are—we are between children and teenagers. It embarrasses us when we are handled like kids.

—Anonymous Middle  
School Student  
quoted by Nancy  
Doda & Trudy  
Knowles

I think every middle school teacher should know, or try to understand, the social whirlwind of statuses that form and so quickly harden with every student in their place. What may seem, to a teacher, a classroom full of students peacefully working, may be exactly the opposite to a student. It becomes a room full of pitfalls, danger signs, and safe havens situated carefully in familiar territory. Every student, throughout the day, moves cautiously on 'safe' paths from room to room. They will not read in another level (or) territory. They will not mix; everyone knows their place. Only a teacher or a student from a higher level will cause them to mix. The separation between boys and girls is even more pronounced. Boys have territory separate from girls, and their own divisions in that. Boys and girls will absolutely not mix, except in the rare groups of girls and boys that are friends; these groups are either absolute highest status, or the very bottom. Every student, boy or girl has this place, their territory, their paths, the people they can stay with on their level. I think middle school teachers should know of and try to understand this code of the students. This network of statuses and levels is ever present in middle schools. While some students may not be directly aware of it, they always have a subconscious understanding of where they fit. This is very important for middle school teachers to know.

—Anonymous Middle  
School Student  
quoted by Nancy  
Doda & Trudy  
Knowles

Young adolescents do not just want friendly peer relationship, they want respectful, collaborative, and equitable relationships. They want to feel psychologically safe, they want others to also feel safe, and they are seeking adult assistance in securing such safety. In the current educational milieu, with heightened attention to student achievement as measured by standardized tests, many middle level schools are choosing to devote less rather than more time to the affective dimension of school life. Packaged anti-bullying programs are not what these middle schoolers are asking for. Instead, they are asking for the quality of human exchange in schools and classrooms to be more democratic, humane, and respectful.

— Nancy Doda & Trudy Knowles

Teacher expectations of students play a powerful role in student learning and achievement. In middle schools, it seems clear...that we have yet to dismantle the 'hormones with feet' image of the young adolescent learner. As middle school educators endeavor to advance student learning and achievement and offer equally engaging learning to all young people, they will need to redefine the capacity of this age group, recognizing that puberty does not necessarily place young adolescent learners at intellectual peril.

— Nancy Doda & Trudy Knowles

I think one of the most important things they should understand is that every single student has their own hopes and dreams. For some it may be to be on the honor roll all through high school, go to Harvard, and grow up to be a very 'successful' person. For others, it may just be not to flunk out of high school. You need to embrace everyone's wants. That doesn't mean that you should give more attention to those with higher hopes. Just work with each one and encourage them to do their best.

—Anonymous Middle School Student  
quoted by Nancy Doda & Trudy Knowles

I can imagine that teaching eighth graders must be pretty tough. Half of us don't even know who we are, so how could teachers understand us? It's hard, but I can think of some ways. First of all, it must be understood that we are all trying to fit in. Eighth grade is a hard year and everyone has insecurities. I'm not saying to walk on eggshells around us, but be aware that our emotions can change like the wind. Be firm, but understanding and strict but gentle. Also, we need to get breaks from class work and homework. We have a life outside of school. Parts of us wish we were older, but other parts wish we were still in kindergarten, playing in the sand

box. If it's nice weather, don't give a lot of homework. You could even have us read aloud outside or something. We need time to breathe and enjoy life while we're still kids.

—Anonymous Middle  
School Student  
quoted by Nancy  
Doda & Trudy  
Knowles

Adolescence brings with it this new power: One can consider how others think about oneself. This development not only allows for more mature social interactions, but may also produce the intense self-consciousness sometimes referred to as 'adolescent egocentrism.' Suddenly, what a child imagines that everyone else is thinking infuses each choice he or she makes in the classroom. At the same time, young adolescents do not yet accurately distinguish between their internal imaginary audience and the actual perceptions of their friends. They may swing rapidly from an intense desire for privacy to an equally audacious desire for attention. This tension is just one of many that young adolescents experience, and act out, during this period of rapid physical, cognitive, and psychological change.

—Kathleen Cushman &  
Laura Rogers

They don't want to be embarrassed by being goody-goodies in school, and so they try to act up just to get approval from the other kids at school. Sometimes, some kids will go through physical torture, like gettin in fights at school, just to fit in with the other kids. It makes no sense at all.

—Middle School Student  
Daquan as quoted  
by Kathleen  
Cushman & Laura  
Rogers

Must parents and others accept the turmoil of adolescence like the 'terrible twos' and wait for their children grow out of it? [Joan] Lipsitz contends that this dangerous attitude essentially says to young people, 'Be good, have fun, stay out of trouble, prepare of life, and we'll get back to you later when you are normal. Then, we will like you better and understand you more.' To troubled teens and preteens, such a passive, permissive attitude appears to be rejection rather than understanding, acceptance and support.

—Br. Eagan Hunter

Many adolescents...dismiss their own mortality, believing they are simply too young to die. An illustration of this unreal concept of death happened a few years ago: A middle school honor student rode his beloved bicycle to a downtown hotel, carefully locked the bike so no one could steal it, then proceeded up several floors inside the hotel where he climbed the railing and flung himself into the atrium several floors below. The image of that locked bike is striking—after he had completed his attention-drawing escapade, he fully believed he would walk to his beloved bike and ride home. In his mind, there existed no contradiction. His teachers reported later that he was obsessed with the concept of death and had submitted writing assignments of poems and essays on this theme. But no one recognized the clearly expressed danger signals.

—Br. Eagan Hunter

The initial signs of trouble are frequently whimpers. If there is no response, troubled adolescents can go in two directions: retreat into an inner shell closing off the world or explode in various forms of violence. When troubled adolescents cry out in pain, they need our love, our understanding, and our help. We need to reach out to them in their suffering—real or imaginary. We need to complement them rather than criticize—to simply be present to them. There are warning signs in their conversations and language; the essays they write at school; the type of friends they have; the movies they see and the violent video games they play; their separation and isolation from friends; their sudden and radical changes in moods and habits, their seeming inability to absorb or retain information regardless of the effort being made; and the loss of self-esteem or bodily integrity through illness, incapacitation, or disfigurement. Each of these is a cry for help.

—Br. Eagan Hunter

### **EIGHTH GRADERS' WORRIES (1993)**

- Getting good grades
- Your parents' health
- Friend, relative, family member dying
- Taking tests
- Getting into college
- Getting a good job after high school/college
- Not being attractive to others
- Dying
- Going to high school
- Getting AIDS

—Tom Carr

## 9 TOP THINGS TEENS WORRY ABOUT (2014)

Friends. Friends are unquestionably one of the most important aspects of any teenagers life, as they provide support and company during one of the most confusing and difficult periods of your life.

Sex.

Work.

School.

Further Education.

Family.

Drugs.

The Future.

Love.

—<https://teen.allwomenstalk.com/top-things-teens-worry-about/>

The physical growth of students varies more in grade five through eight than in any other years. Boys' growth rates and timing are haphazard at best. A quick glance inside almost any middle school classroom reveals both muscular, physically mature boys, and boys who appear to have been smuggled out of the fourth grade.

The same variety is evident among girls. By ages 12 to 14, many girls look like high school seniors and, to the chagrin of school principals and nervous parents, they enjoy it. They are the students who can't understand why we don't permit high school students to attend middle school dances.... Middle level students quickly develop a new concern about how they look, spending an inordinate amount to time in front of mirrors, lamenting whatever is out of proportion, admiring what seems in place, and assuring themselves that nobody else in the world has the same problems.

—Samuel H. Campbell

The three most important aspects of school for middle level students are friends, friends, and friends. These students will do almost anything to get—and keep—a friend. Their unspoken motto is, 'My Friends Can Do No Wrong.'

The ways friends interact varies according to gender. Girls like to discuss intimacies among themselves, sharing their most treasured secrets. Boys tend to emphasize the importance of supporting each other—to the degree that they never 'rat' or 'tell' on someone else. It is not considered masculine.

Unfortunately, students use hitting to indicate both friendship and enmity, so the wise educator puts hitting into perspective. Boys and girls may both show they 'like' each other by hitting, tripping, twisting arms. etc.

—Samuel H. Campbell

Because adolescence is so prolonged now it is frequently subdivided into three periods—early adolescence (ages 10-14), middle adolescence (ages 15-17) and late adolescence (ages 18 and up). Adolescence is not thought of as a clearly demarcated

stage, however, but as a continuous adaption period with no clear boundaries between initiation into or exit from the period or its subperiods. This continuity makes it difficult for youngsters to determine when they cease to be children and become adults. Though part of the same period, youngsters in early and late adolescence have virtually nothing in common with each other. Early adolescents are barely out of childhood; late adolescents are almost adults.

—Stephen B. Hillman

Though youngsters in early adolescence are often thought to be quite homogenous, nothing could be further from the truth. They are a group characterized by great variability and diversity. The ranges of differences during these years are greater than those in either elementary school or high school. Some girls at this age may have already given birth, while others were still waiting for the onset of puberty. Reading levels range from second grade to early college levels, with thinking ranging from concrete to mature adult forms.

—Stephen B. Hillman

American adolescents who live in small towns do not have very different attitudes toward school and teachers from their urban counterparts of more than a generation ago. Instead of being concerned about curriculum, homework, and tests, they think much more about their relationships with teachers. They want their teachers to respect them, to engage them in joyful activities in the classroom, to have fun with them, and to respond flexibly in helping them learn....adolescents were not concerned with their teachers' subject-matter competence, breadth of knowledge, or ability to do well in college classrooms. Rather, they wanted teachers to be human beings who would show trust, respect, and understanding of youth.

—Richard A. Schmuck  
and Patricia A.  
Schmuck

Where do alienated youth spend six hours a day, five days a week? The answer is school. Just as department stores are perceived as responsible for defective merchandise, schools are blamed for alienated youth. Alienation is a massive construct which, like the full moon or Friday the 13th, is cited as the primary cause of adolescent discontent. The high school is held responsible.

—Clement A. Seldin

Adolescents have little opportunity to share their feelings in school regarding such concepts as friendship, love, sex, guilt, parents, siblings, aggression, peace, their future, etc. Many students simply hold their feelings inside and share little. This only

serves to exacerbate their sense of isolation. Others may share with a friend who may be supportive but who also is struggling with questions of personal power and identity.

—Clement A. Seldin

Thirteen is a time of crushes and best friends; of big feet, blossoming bodies, and a few pimples. It is a year when individualization begins while conformity reigns, when parents become stupid, boys continue to be stupid (for girls), girls continue to be tall (for boys), and daydreaming enters with both barrels.

Age thirteen signals a transitional period; teen years begin while childhood is left behind. The thirteen-year-old has a foot in both camps, sometimes stepping backwards into the security of childhood and sometimes taking a precarious step forward into adolescence and the unknown. It is a time of wonder and excitement as the young teen begins to form her/his own distinctive personality, but it is a time of conflict as well.

—Patricia Carlson

Pressure from peers to behave or not to behave in certain ways is almost universally recognized as one of the dominant characteristics of adolescent society in the United States today. To many—educators, parents, adolescents themselves—it is an awesome force. Its power and presence can be seen in almost every aspect of adolescent life: choice of dress, music, language, involvement in school or community affairs, and involvement with family....

Young people are confronted with peer pressure well before middle school and well after. But during the middle school years peer pressure becomes particularly noticeable. At this time adolescents undergo extensive physical, intellectual, emotional, and social changes; and these changes commit young people to the serious task of becoming autonomous individuals. Throughout the middle school years, early adolescents accelerate their developing independence from the family. As they do, they begin to coalesce into distinct groups, and the need to belong to a peer group gives the group both influence and power.

—Donna Rae Clasen and  
B. Bradford Brown

A paradox in American culture is the attitude we hold concerning youth. On the one hand, we idolize, emulate, and envy them. Youth fashions, fads, and idiosyncrasies readily make their way into adult culture. The ‘groovy,’ ‘hip,’ and ‘now’ adults let their hair lengthen, modify their speech, and wear distinctive apparel to indicate their acceptance of youth’s mores and idioms. On the other hand, society exacts its toll upon youth. There is a constant pressure to make them less adolescent and more adult. Physiological maturation and the cultural changes have caused adolescence to decrease in terms of its length or importance. Eighteen-year-olds voting, pressure for career and vocational decisions, and access to economic and

social status associated with adulthood are indications that youth are being pressured by our society. The consequence is that the period of youth is both venerated and depreciated.

—J. Merrell Hansen

The pressures upon youth are awesome. The consequences of these pressures have prompted rises in suicide, changes in sexual and adjustment patterns, and alterations in family and interpersonal relationships. Society has changed. The political and economic milieu has been irrevocably transformed. Unsurprisingly, these conditions have produced a new and perplexing world for our young people. Educational experience have reached a point where these also must be changed. Emphasis upon individual, personal, and social objectives is necessary to prevent an education for a one-dimension existence when the future will demand multiple abilities.

The schools must be places where identity, responsibility, and integrity are promoted. Experiences must include opportunities for adulthood and citizenship. Growing up is difficult. Many of us, if it is not too painful, remember it well. As educators, we can, if we will, help young people not only to survive but to enjoy and appreciate these golden, precious days. Perhaps this will include the richest rewards of teaching.

—J. Merrell Hansen

In our culture, teenagers experience not one but several passages: the major transformation at puberty; a challenging transition as they leave middle school and enter high school; and the completion of high school. Each is a time of enormous change—for students, families, and faculties. Students must say good-bye not only to relationships with others, but also to a childhood self.

—Rachael Kessler

In order to know whether a human being is young or old, offer it food of different kinds at short intervals. If young, it will eat anything at any hour of the day or night.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

For though, as we have said, all children are heartless, this is not precisely true of teenagers. Teenage hearts are raw and new, fast and fierce, and they do not know their own strength. Neither do they know reason or restraint, and if you want to know the truth, a goodly number of grown-up hearts never learn it.

—Catherynne M. Valente

Real teenage boys aren't like characters in the books you read. They smell funny and are obsessed with video games and say dumb things. They're still learning.

—Stacey Jay

One of the most brutal things in the world is your average nineteen-year-old American boy.

—Philip Caputo

Small children take it as a matter of course that things will change every day and grown-ups understand that things change sooner or later and their job is to keep them from changing as long as possible. It's only kids in high school who are convinced they're never going to change. There's always going to be a pep rally and there's always going to be a spectator bus, somewhere out there in their future.

—Stephen King

Why hasn't someone lassoed a few teenagers and had them sit down and write out all the supposed answers they have so we can solve the world's problems already?

—Richelle E. Goodrich

We leave such a trail of bodies through our teens and twenties that it's hard to tell which one is us. How many versions do we abandon over the years

—Dan Chaon

I was miserable, of course, for I was seventeen, and so I swung into action and wrote a poem, and it was miserable, for that's how I thought poetry worked: you digested experience and shat literature.

—William Matthews

Teenagers of every ilk also operate under the dark cloud of knowing that the easiest part of their lives is over and the terribly difficult years are about to commence. They understand they are beginning to make career and character defining decisions that will indelibly shape their future. Sensing that they must make life-defining decisions when they lack the maturity to apprehend the ramifications of their actions, heightens their pressurized anxiety.

—Kilroy J. Oldster

Nearly 40% of iGen high school seniors in 2016 had never tried alcohol at all, and the number of 8th graders who have tried alcohol has been cut nearly in half.

—Jean M. Twenge

I wasn't afraid of being alone, but I was afraid of what people would think about my solitary state. People, even well-intentioned people, were always trying to take away our quiet little successes and joys and replace them with big, overarching fears. At this school, the worst thing was trying to rise above the limits set for you by the minds of others. Each girl was an island of her own dreams and insecurities, thoughts that made us different in a deeper way than the differences of musical taste, clothes or even culture. Thoughts about the best way to be stoic, how to live

with very little control in life, how to make the most of a miserable time doing something that you were supposed to love. And if people thought that fifteen-year-old girls never thought about these sorts of things, it was only because we didn't have the words to express them.

We talked all the time, but we hadn't yet learned the words to link thoughts and ideas with any depth of feeling, because we didn't really talk to adults. We talked only to each other. And within this little world, we imprisoned one another. You could be anyone you wanted, until you were judged and held captive by everyone else's thoughts. Nothing has a stronger hold over a girl than the fear of the thoughts of her peers— thoughts that change five times in a day. No wonder things are so complicated with teenagers.

—alice pung

The leading cause of death among teenagers is road traffic accidents, and in this regard, even the slightest dose of insufficient sleep can have marked consequences, as we have discussed. When the Mahotomedi School District of Minnesota pushed their school start time from 7:30 to 8:00 a.m., there was a 60 percent reduction in traffic accidents in drivers sixteen to eighteen years of age.

—Matthew Walker

Due to these influences and many others, iGen is distinct from every previous generation in how its members spend their time, how they behave, and their attitudes toward religion, sexuality, and politics. They socialize in completely new ways, reject once sacred social taboos, and want different things from their lives and careers. They are obsessed with safety and fearful of their economic futures, and they have no patience for inequality based on gender, race, or sexual orientation. They are at the forefront of the worst mental health crisis in decades, with rates of teen depression and suicide skyrocketing since 2011.

—Jean M. Twenge

The best thing about being fifteen is that you don't have to be fifteen for more than a year.

—Paul Auster

A lot of teenagers today are influenced by the media's depiction of perfection....they don't have to follow the unofficial laws society creates, to be liked by others.

—Erica Sehyun Song

Any kid will tell you that, yes, their music is both an escape and a survival mechanism, and that sometimes the music gives them hope and inspiration. It doesn't just placate and pacify.

—David Byrne

Many young men are not being taught the impact that sexual assault has on a woman. They are inundated by sexual imagery in the media, and often come to the (incorrect) conclusion that having sex is not a big deal. This, no doubt, is why the number of sexual assaults is so high.

I am also shocked by adults who feel that rape is an inappropriate topic to discuss with teenagers. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, 44 percent of rape victims are under the age of 18 and 46 percent of those victims are between the ages of 12-15. It makes adults uncomfortable to acknowledge this, but our inability to speak clearly and openly about sexual issues endangers our children. It is immoral not to discuss this with them.

—Laurie Halse Anderson

Yes, I was scared, vulnerable, and fragile and lived in books more than real life. Yet there was nothing Mom could do to make things easier for me, just worse by grounding me for life at the slightest hint of truth. Why? Because in spite of what she said she did not trust me or, to put it in her words, I did not know what was good for me.

Being a teenager sucks! I might as well have been in prison.

—Gaia B. Amman

We were fifteen, and we couldn't get our feelings to match up with our brains. So we went with our feelings.

—Karen Swallow Prior

Beauty had nothing to do with the garbage TV tried to sell us. It was more a matter of confidence. Either way, I had none.

—Gaia B. Amman

Teenagers can be so cruel. I'm embarrassed to be one of them.

—Colleen Hoover

Secretly all teenage girls feel exactly like me. And maybe one day, when we all realize that we all feel the same, we can all stop pretending to be something we're not.

—Zoe Sugg

She had read enough about teenagers to understand you couldn't confront them directly. You couldn't even agree with them. The best strategy was to feign indifference to whatever wrong direction they were headed in, then plop in little facts, like Alka-Seltzers, round innocuous comments, let those sink in, take slow, antidotal effect . . .

—Melissa Pritchard

Not every teenager who is depressed or going through anxiety is crying over some breakup. Some actually have real life problems.

—Wahid Bhat

I was sixteen, and I honestly believed I was due a love story.

—Sara Barnard

It hurts to get things out in the open, but it hurts even more not to.

—Chrissy Moon

Some people were simply created with the right genes and the proper social skills, I figured. They ended up at a lunch table with a group of good-looking individuals, like them, who did what all good-looking individuals managed: making the rest of us feel both envious of them and sad for ourselves, intentional or not. They had activities outside of school and followers online—people of social necessity who sat at home on Friday nights and ‘liked’ popular posts in hopes that they, too, might one day be as attractive and personable.

—Bryant A. Loney

Seventeen. At that age, we’re mostly high-pitched and crazy. All urgent chemicals raging around the blood course. And that’s why we do dangerous and embarrassing things, as if simultaneously we’re immortal and going to die tomorrow. And that’s why we look back on that time so fondly from the dimmer years to come. Remembering the days when we were like Greek gods. Mighty and idiotic.

—Charles Frazier

This was 1991, remember. We didn’t have the Internet. So, as teenagers, we lived on the phone. There was no webcamming, no social networking. We dreamt simply of having our own personal phone lines one day, along with uninterrupted hours to talk, and we rarely got that. No matter who we were talking to, no matter how private the conversation, parents picked up the phone accidentally, siblings demanded their time. The introduction of call waiting made all of this even worse, as it allowed aunts and uncles and people you didn’t even know to butt in. This is part of why we talked so late in the night, Lindy and I, all of us teens. This is why we looked so pale in our grunge clothes. These night hours were the only times we felt we could tell the truth without danger, the only times we could live separately from our parents while still inside of their homes. There were no cell phones. No private text messages. It was simple one on one conversation and, if it was any good at all, you had to whisper.

—M. O. Walsh

Insecurity, thy name is teenager.

—Jim Butcher

Teenagers are complicated and at times stubborn, yes, but we are not dumb. We see the world in a different light than the rest do, and sometimes, we're misunderstood because of it. And that's alright. That must be the definition of 'human being': Misunderstood. But neither of us should tolerate degradation in any of its forms.

—Pamela Nicole

Men can be teenagers until well into their twenties.

—Alexander McCall  
Smith

Most teenage girls don't give old people the time of day which is sad because all old people do all the time is think about how nice it was to be a teenager so long ago.

—Aimee Bender

You will need to stay calm as you witness the candy floss in your daughter's smile harden into brittle bitchiness. You will need to muster a new resolve as your son's fascination with Pokémon shifts to porn. You will have to recalibrate your mothering instinct to accommodate the notion that not only do your children poop and burp, they also masturbate, drink and smoke. As their bodies, brains and worlds rearrange themselves, you will need to do your own reshuffling. You will come to see that, though you gave them life, they're the ones who've got a life. They've got 1700 friends on Facebook. They've got YouTube accounts (with hundreds of subscribers), endless social arrangements, concerts, Valentine's Day dances and Halloween parties. What we have—if we're lucky—is a 'Thanks for the ride, Mum, don't call me, I'll call you,' as they slam the car door and indicate we can run along now.

—Joanne Fedler

When I was a teen, I liked to hang out around popular girls, I thought they had some magic, secrets that only they knew and I wanted to learn it... Though pretty soon I realized... popular girls were just like spam... they promised a lot, but only thing they had and could use were their well-built bodies and ability to apply make-up here and there. Mostly they were deceptive and had no senses... they had no idea about friendship, kindness and beauty as it is. Friendship for them was not something more than poor relations, sort of like in God Father. Love for them was not something bigger than sex. Kindness for them was to have a kitty or a dog (which was already very rare case)... And beauty for them was... well, you can imagine. Concentrated selfishness.

—Galina Nelson

Don't be so quick to count out the teenagers. Some of the world's greatest changes, brilliant poetry, and innovations have come from the teenage mind.

—Steve Maraboli

If you work around at-risk teen students, actually tell them you love them and have faith in their success. No one tells them that. No one.

—Ace Antonio Hall

Kids are more advanced these days. The teenage years now start at 11.

—Michael Crichton

It's just the genetic code of a teenager. If your parents forbid something, you have to want it.

—Brynna Gabrielson

Youth is happy because it has the capacity to see beauty. Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old.

—Franz Kafka

What a weary time those years were—to have the desire and the need to live but not the ability.

—Charles Bukowski

Youth ends when egotism does; maturity begins when one lives for others.

—Hermann Hesse

Little girls think it's necessary to put all their business on MySpace and Facebook, and I think it's a shame...I'm all about mystery.

—Stevie Nicks

I just want to be someone, to mean something to anyone.

—Charlotte Eriksson

To tell the truth is very difficult, and young people are rarely capable of it.

—Leo Tolstoy

Some are young people who don't know who they are, what they can be or even want to be. They are afraid, but they don't know of what. They are angry, but they don't know at whom. They are rejected and they don't know why. All they want is to be somebody.

—Thomas S. Monson

Young people are in a condition like permanent intoxication, because life is sweet and they are growing.

—Aristotle

In terms of days and moments lived, you'll never again be as young as you are right now, so spend this day, the youth of your future, in a way that deflects regret. Invest in yourself. Have some fun. Do something important. Love somebody extra. In one sense, you're just a kid, but a kid with enough years on her to know that every day is priceless.

—Victoria Moran

We could love and not be suckers. We could dream and not be losers. It was such a beautiful time. Everything was possible because we didn't know anything yet.

—Hilary Winston

Beauty is one of the great facts of the world, like sunlight, or springtime, or the reflection in dark waters of that silver shell we call the moon. You have only a few years in which to live really, perfectly, and fully. When your youth goes, your beauty will go with it, and then you will suddenly discover that there are no triumphs left for you...Time is jealous of you, and wars against your lilies and your roses. You will become sallow, and hollow-cheeked, and dull-eyed...Ah! realise your youth while you have it. Don't squander the gold of your days, listening to the tedious, trying to improve the hopeless, or giving away your life to the ignorant, the common, and the vulgar...Live! Live the wonderful life that is in you! Let nothing be lost upon you. Be always searching for new sensations. Be afraid of nothing...The world belongs to you for a season...how tragic it would be if you were wasted. For there is such a little time that your youth will last. The common hillflowers wither, but they blossom again. The laburnum will be as yellow next June as it is now. In a month there will be purple stars on the clematis, and year after year the green night of its leaves will hold its purple stars. But we never get back our youth. The pulse of joy that beats in us at twenty, becomes sluggish. Our limbs fail, our senses rot. We degenerate into hideous puppets, haunted by the memory of the passions of which we were too much afraid, and the exquisite temptations that we had not the courage to yield to...Youth! Youth! There is absolutely nothing in the world but youth.

—Oscar Wilde

What was youth at best? A green, an unripe time, a time of shallow moods, and sickly thoughts.

—Oscar Wilde

Young people think they never can change, but they do in the most wonderful manner, and very few die of broken hearts.

—Louisa May Alcott

The secret message communicated to most young people today by the society around them is that they are not needed, that the society will run itself quite nicely until they—at some distant point in the future—will take over the reigns. Yet the fact is that the society is not running itself nicely... because the rest of us need all the energy, brains, imagination and talent that young people can bring to bear down on our difficulties. For society to attempt to solve its desperate problems without the full participation of even very young people is imbecile.

—Alvin Toffler

Her fine high forehead sloped gently up to where her hair, bordering it like an armorial shield, burst into lovelocks and waves and curlicues of ash blonde and gold. Her eyes were bright, big, clear, wet and shining, the color of her cheeks was real, breaking close to the surface from the strong young pump of her heart. Her body hovered delicately on the last edge of childhood—she was almost eighteen, nearly complete, but the dew was still on her.

— F. Scott Fitzgerald

People only talk about how wonderful youth is when they have forgotten how hard it was.

—Louis L'Amour

I do not expect old heads on young shoulders.

—C. S. Lewis

Youth is a period of missed opportunities.

—Cyril Connolly

Youth is a disease from which we all recover.

—Dorothy Fuldheim

The secret to youth is to fill your mind with beauty!

—Linda Ballou

I never saw being different in and of itself as the point to being Goth—dressing different from most others, maybe, but the point to me was to get together with people who liked the same music and clothes, or at least very similar music and clothes, and go to clubs, go to movies, go to coffee-houses and hold poetry readings and, in general, just have some good harmless fun. Did I look like a dork? Sure, but so did everybody else in the club. We weren't being different, at least not all of us, we just were different and the point was to stop bitching about being different and just have fun.

—Ruadhán J. McElroy

In youth your excitement about the world transferred itself onto everything you saw and made it brighter.

—Julian Barnes

We are nowhere, wanting to be somewhere, idling at the starting line of adulthood.

—Libba Bray

If youth once falls under the influence of a shadowy terror, it imagines there will never be full sunlight again; its first calamity it fancies will last a lifetime.

—Charlotte Brontë

The aged prospers in wisdom and the young in possibility.

—Jason Versey

Everyone says how wonderful it is to be young. I've never seen it.

—Iris Murdoch

She's not very old but the cigarettes help her to feel like she is.

—Samantha Hunt

You are young, so young  
that failure seems impossible.

—Ben Ditmars

Youth is the most difficult time of life. For example, suicide rarely occurs amongst old people.

—Hermann Hesse

There is a time limit to how long a spirited young person can be kept in cold storage.

—Iris Murdoch

Youth need coaches, not critics.

—Amit Kalantri

When we are young, we give ourselves completely. We allow our first friends, our first lovers or first songs inside us, to become a part of our unformed being, without ever thinking of the consequences, or of their permanence within us. This is one of the beauties of youth, and one of its burdens.

—Frances de Pontes  
Peebles

When children become teenagers, their feelings are often invalidated by others because they have a hard time expressing them. They can't find the words to use so adults deem their emotions as a stage of adolescence. As a result, everything beautiful and raw about life is reduced to a phase they'll grow out of. Although how often is our growth just abandonment? Some people don't mature, they just run away from their problems faster than they used to and happen to age. We greatly underestimate the tragedy of leaving behind the unaddressed. Many of our most intuitive and sincere experiences are lost to time. It is one of life's saddest deficits.

—Karl Kristian Flores

Most lives are rotten. It's only when one's young one expects otherwise.

—Iris Murdoch

I remember my youth and the feeling that will never come back any more—the feeling that I could last for ever, outlast the sea, the earth, and all men; the deceitful feeling that lures us on to joys, to perils, to love, to vain effort—to death; the triumphant conviction of strength, the heat of life in the handful of dust, the glow in the heart that with every year grows dim, grows cold, grows small, and expires—and expires, too soon, too soon—before life itself.

—Joseph Conrad

Youth is no longer wasted on the young because it's wasted on the war instead.

—Philip Kerr

How strange it is that when I was a child I tried to be like a grownup, yet as soon as I ceased to be a child I often longed to be like one.

—Leo Tolstoy

Youth's job is always the same: to disturb the order.

—Marty Rubin

You always end up back where you started: hungry for the one thing everybody loses—young loving.

—Toni Morrison

Youth and patience are foreign to one another.

—R. J. Lawrence

If we are genuinely concerned about engaging young people, particularly those that are vulnerable or at risk, we must listen to them properly.

—Libby Brooks

Youth is a disease but it's curable and passes quickly.

—Nick Mad

Will the freshness, lightheartedness, the need for love, and strength of faith which you have in childhood ever return? What better time than when the two best virtues—innocent joy and the boundless desire for love—were the only motives in life?

—Leo Tolstoy

As we grow older we are apt to forget that the despair of the young is even more gigantic and immediately overwhelming than their hopefulness: we never again face such towering blank walls of misery.

—J. B. Priestly

It is also good to love: because love is difficult. For one human being to love another human being: that is perhaps the most difficult task that has been entrusted to us, the ultimate task, the final test and proof, the work for which all other work is merely preparation. That is why young people, who are beginners in everything, are not yet capable of love: it is something they must learn.

—Rainer Maria Rilke

I pass a construction site, abandoned for the night, and a few blocks later, the playground of the elementary school my son attended, the metal sliding board gleaming under a streetlamp and the swings stirring in the breeze.

There's an energy to these autumn nights that touches something primal inside of me. Something from long ago. From my childhood in western Iowa. I think of high school football games and the stadium lights blazing down on the players. I smell ripening apples, and the sour reek of beer from keg parties in the cornfields. I feel the wind in my face as I ride in the bed of an old pickup truck down a country road at night, dust swirling in the taillights and the entire span of my life yawning out ahead of me.

It's the beautiful thing about youth.

There's a weightlessness that permeates everything because no damning choices have been made, no paths committed to, and the road forking out ahead is pure, unlimited potential.

I love my life, but I haven't felt that lightness of being in ages. Autumn nights like this are as close as I get.

—Blake Crouch

Youth believes itself immortal. There is a cure for such an attitude, but unfortunately it is a cure from which one never recovers.

—Peter David

A young body, a young heart, and endless courage. That last part is the most important. Don't let anyone tell you any differently. Why do you think we used to send so many kids your age off to war?

—Karina Halle

Old and young are opposites that secretly identify with each other; for neither fits well into the mainstream of life.

—Michael Meade

Like most young people nowadays, boredom is what you dread most in the world, and yet, I can assure you, there are worse things.

—Agatha Christie

O youth! youth! you have no concerns, you possess, as it were, all the treasures of the universe, even grief is a comfort to you, even sadness suits your looks, you are self-assured and bold, you say: 'Look, I'm the only one alive!' while the very days of your life run away and vanish without a trace and without number and everything in you disappears like wax, like snow in the heat of the sun... And perhaps the entire secret of your charm consists not in the possibility of doing everything, but in the possibility of thinking you can do everything, perhaps it consists precisely in the fact that you want only to scatter on the wind energies that you wouldn't know how to use for anything else, perhaps it consists in the fact that each one of us seriously regards himself as a spendthrift and seriously considers that he has the right to say: 'Oh, the things I could have done if only I hadn't wasted my time!'

—Ivan Turgenev

If I am young, thou shouldest look to my merits, not to my years.

—Sophocles

The most aggravating thing about the younger generation is that I no longer belong to it.

—Albert Einstein

I love the optimism on the shores of youth, where time hasn't yet eroded faith.

—Amy Neftzger

Look at yourselves. Some of you teenagers, students. How do you think I feel and I belong to a generation ahead of you—how do you think I feel to have to tell you, 'We, my generation, sat around like a knot on a wall while the whole world was fighting for its human rights—and you've got to be born into a society where you still have that same fight.' What did we do, who preceded you? I'll tell you what we did. Nothing. And don't you make the same mistake we made.

—Malcolm X

What you are, as a teenager, is a small, silver, empty rocket. And you use loud music as fuel, and then the information in books as maps and coordinates, to tell you where you're going.

—Caitlin Moran

The world should not pass judgement upon the Negro, and especially the Negro youth, too quickly or too harshly. The Negro boy has obstacles, discouragements and temptations to battle with that are little known to those not situated as he is.

—Booker T. Washington

With few exceptions, the Negro youth must work harder and must perform his tasks even better than a white youth in order to secure recognition. But out of the hard and unusual struggle through which he is compelled to pass, he gets a strength, a confidence, that one missed whose pathway is comparatively smooth by reason of birth and race.

—Booker T. Washington

The problems on campus life today are not about free speech. They are about how the students have absolutely nothing to do with their lives but sit and listen to lectures, find the best parties to attend, and otherwise discover first-world problems to stew about and protest. That's the root of the problem. This is not a commercial environment where people are incentivized to find value in each other. Campuses have become completely artificial 4-year holding tanks for infantilized kids with zero experience in actual life in which people find ways to get along. These students are not serving each other in a market exchange, and very few have worked at day in their lives, so their default is to find some offense and protest. It's all they've been taught to do and all they know how to do. Idle hands and parents' money = trouble.

—Jeffrey Tucker

At eighteen the true narrative of life is yet to be commenced. Before that time we sit listening to a tale, a marvelous fiction, delightful sometimes, and sad sometimes, almost always unreal. Before that time our world is heroic, its inhabitants half-divine or semi-demon; its scenes are dreamscenes; darker woods and stranger hills, brighter skies, more dangerous waters, sweeter flowers, more tempting fruits, wider plains, drearier deserts, sunnier fields than are found in nature, overspread our enchanted globe. What a moon we gaze on before that time! How the trembling of our hearts at her aspect bears witness to its unutterable beauty!

—Charlotte Brontë

There is something about the defencelessness of youth that moves me to tears. Youth is so vulnerable. It is so ruthless—so sure. So generous and so demanding.

—Agatha Christie

Insecurities make girls believe they don't have voices and they can't say what they need to say. The more they know the importance of their voices and gain confidence, the better chances of greatness the world will have.

—Paballo Seipei

This is one of those moments when I wish I could be young forever. Not just stop time for a second, but for an eternity.

The old paradox that youth is wasted on the young is not true for us. Neither I nor my friends take our youth for granted.

In fact, all of the young people I know are all too aware that someday soon time and gravity won't be on their side anymore.

And there's nothing we can do about it. So the young do the only thing they can do. They live and they love and they dance and they sing, they dream and they scheme, they ponder and they plan.

Like there's no tomorrow. For tomorrow brings us one day closer to the inevitable and one day further from the impossible.

And being young is all about achieving the impossible. Or at least believing you can.

The old mistake our denial for ignorance, our immaturity for irresponsibility.

We understand the rules of life, we just don't want to play by them.

Not yet.

Not today.

Not tonight.

Because tonight is a good night to be young and alive.

—A. J. Compton

We're too young to want to stop living, because after all, we shouldn't stop something we haven't even started.

—Internet Meme

There are things you do when you are a teenager, or a dancer, or just a girl, I guess. You cut your food up in special ways, or you cut yourself, or paper dolls. You pretend that there is an invisible audience watching you all the time, and you do things to impress them or pretend that they didn't see what you just did because their live video feed was interrupted somehow. You steal things or tell lies or speak to strangers in a Russian accent. You have sex with someone you love, or with someone who gets you really drunk. You lie to your parents, your boyfriend, yourself, your therapist. You cheat on your homework or do other people's homework for money. You get up, you take class, you rehearse, you perform, you go to bed. How do you decide which of these things are truly crazy and which are just being alive?

—Meg Howrey

The young have everything but wisdom.

—Adriana Trigiani

When you're a kid you have these notions about how things are going to be.... You get a little older and you pull back on some of that. I think you wind up just tryin' to minimize the pain.

—Cormac McCarthy

He was still a kid inside. His body had grown, stretched, towered, tanned its skin, hardened its muscle, darkened its tawny shock of long hair, tightened its lines around jaw and eyes, thickened fingers and knuckles, but the brain didn't feel as if it had grown in sympathy with the rest. It was still green, full of tall, lush oaks and elms in summer; a creek ran through it, and the kids climbed around on its convolutions shouting, This way, gang—we'll take a short-cut and head them off at Dead Man's Gulch!

—Ray Bradbury

In youth, our blood rises and becomes volatile. Desire, worry, and anxiety increase. External circumstances now direct the rise and fall of emotions. Will and intention become constrained by social conventions. Competition, conflict, and scheming are the norm in interactions with people. The approval and disapproval of others become important, and the honest and sincere expression of thoughts and feelings is lost.

—Lieh-tzu

My aim is not to survive but to be thrown to the wolfs with adrenaline still pumping in my veins and hear the gods laughing saying that was one hell of a youth and everything I do I do in order to push my senses and levels of natural ecstasy. I want to be so awake that I pass out by exhaustion every night with a smile on my face and no thoughts of tomorrow because today was all I ever could make of it and I am sick and tired of boredom. Bored people slumbering boring words about bored habits and I want to get out.

—Charlotte Eriksson

Ah, those foolish days, those foolish days when we were unselfish and pure-minded; those foolish days when our simple hearts were full of truth, and faith, and reverence! Ah, those foolish days of noble longings and of noble strivings! And oh, these wise, clever days when we know that money is the only prize worth striving for, when we believe in nothing else but meanness and lies, when we care for no living creature but ourselves!

—Jerome K. Jerome

A young man is the perfect soldier. He has great potential for aggression and a limited critical capacity—or none at all—with which to analyze it and judge how to channel it. Throughout history societies have found ways of using this store of aggression, turning their adolescents into soldiers, cannon fodder with which to conquer their neighbors or defend themselves against their aggressors.

—Carlos Ruiz Zafón

When one is young one must see things, gather experience, ideas; enlarge the mind.

—Joseph Conrad

It is an illusion that youth is happy, an illusion of those who have lost it; but the young know they are wretched for they are full of the truthless ideal which have been instilled into them, and each time they come in contact with the real, they are bruised and wounded.

—W. Somerset Maugham

There are two times in a person's life when there is the possibility of pure happiness: in youth and in summer.

—Brielle A. Marino

The only thing scarier than death is the disappearance from youth.

—Marc Spitz

The hardest period in life is one's twenties. It's a shame because you're your most gorgeous, and you're physically in peak condition. But it's actually when you're most insecure and full of self-doubt. When you don't know what's going to happen, it's frightening.

—Helen Mirren

Young things like you don't need any ornaments but those you wear to-night: youth, health, intelligence, and modesty.

—Louisa May Alcott

One of the greatest challenges facing young people today, is the large scale availability of half truths and manipulated facts.

—Oche Otorokpa

That's what it was to be young—to be enthusiastic rather than envious about the good work other people could do.

—Kurt Vonnegut

They fear nothing, and they respect nothing, the young don't.

—D. H. Lawrence

How can we, scarce mastering our passions, expect that youth should keep itself in check?

—Friedrich von Schiller

From the time he was young, he dressed the way you told him to dress; he acted the way you told him to act; he said the things you told him to say. He's been listening to somebody else tell him what to do... He hasn't changed. He is still listening to somebody else tell him what to do. The problem is, it isn't you anymore; it's his peers.

—Barbara Coloroso

The thing about the old is that we never change so much as the young. We slip in degrees, adding rings like trees—a new wrinkle here, a shade less color there, but the young transform like caterpillars into butterflies. They become whole new people as if overnight.

—Michael J. Sullivan

When you're young, you don't really believe you'll ever be anything other than young.

—Meg Wolitzer

The three of them were beautiful, in the way all girls of that age are beautiful. It can't be helped, that sort of beauty, nor can it be conserved; it's a freshness, a plumpness of the cells, that's unearned and temporary, and that nothing can replicate. None of them was satisfied with it, however; already they were making attempts to alter themselves into some impossible, imaginary mould, plucking and pencilling away at their faces.

—Margaret Atwood

To love and be loved, that is the miracle of youth.

—Victor Hugo

Fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, lemme tell you. Those are big years. Everybody always thinks of it as a time of adolescence—just getting through to the real part of your life—but it's more than that. Sometimes your whole life happens in those years, and the rest of your life it's just the same story playing out with different characters. I could die tomorrow and have lived the main ups and downs of life. Pain. Loss. Love. And what you all so fondly refer to as wisdom. Wanna know the difference between adult wisdom and young adult wisdom? You have the ability to look back at your past and interpret it. I have the ability to look at my present and live it with my whole body.

—Lidia Yuknavitch

Something must be radically wrong with a culture and a civilization when its youth begins to desert it. Youth is the natural time for revolt, for experiment, for a generous idealism that is eager for action. Any civilization which has the wisdom of self-preservation will allow a certain margin of freedom for the expression of this youthful mood. But the plain, unpalatable fact is that in America today that margin of freedom has been reduced to the vanishing point. Rebellious youth is not wanted here. In our environment there is nothing to challenge our young men; there is no flexibility, no color, no possibility for adventure, no chance to shape events more generously than is permitted under the rules of highly organized looting. All our institutional life combines for the common purpose of blackjacking our youth into the acceptance of the status quo; and not acceptance of it merely, but rather its glorification.

—Harold Edmund  
Stearns

Sean was young, vibrant, capable. Life hadn't even begun to digest his hope.

—Marianne de Pierres

The fever of desire in youth is a fleeting disease that intimacy promptly cures.

—Frank Harris

Early youth is a baffling time. The present moment is nice but it does not last. Living in it is like waiting in a junction town for the morning limited; the junction may be interesting but some day you will have to leave it and you do not know where the limited will take you. Sooner or later you must move down an unknown road that leads beyond the range of the imagination, and the only certainty is that the trip has to be made. In this respect early youth is exactly like old age; it is a time of waiting before a big trip to an unknown destination. The chief difference is that youth waits for the morning limited and age waits for the night train.

—Bruce Catton

The much-sought prize of eternal youth  
Is just arrested growth.

—Edgar Lee Masters

Outside of note passing and the occasional tight-lipped kiss after school events, 'going together' in seventh grade was pretty meaningless. You couldn't drive, had nowhere to go, and either weren't allowed or couldn't afford to do anything. It was kind of like being an old married couple, except you could control your bowels and stay awake past 8 p.m.

—Eric Nuzum

Little children, headache; big children, heartache.

—Italian Proverb

Foolishness, radicalism, morbidity are marks of promising youth, the obvious signs of inward ferment. The melancholy pose, the affectation of pessimism and cynicism, the sentimentality, the conviction of genius, that many of us deplore or deride in certain young people, may be as natural to their age and disposition as the sense of immortality of which Hazlitt writes so feelingly in one of his essays. We should rejoice to find them. They are among the indications of spiritual growth.

—Robert M. Gay (1917)

Heredity is what sets the parents of a teenager wondering about each other.

—Laurence J. Peter

Adolescence: A stage between infancy and adultery.

—Ambrose Bierce

There isn't anything that a teenager doesn't NO.

—Richard E. Turner

Violet will be a good color for hair at just about the same time that brunette becomes a good color for flowers.

—Fran Lebowitz

At fourteen you don't need sickness or death for tragedy.

—Jessamyn West

[I]nwardly, we're much older than other girls our age. Even though I'm only fourteen... I feel I'm more of a person than a child.

—Anne M. Frank

It is hard to convince a high-school student that he will encounter a lot of problems more difficult than those of algebra and geometry.

—Edgar W. Howe

Thou knowst the oer-eager vehemence of youth,  
How quick in temper, and in judgement weak.

--Homer

When I was young I was amazed at Plutarch's statement that the elder Cato began at the age of eighty to learn Greek. I am amazed no longer. Old age is ready to undertake tasks that youth shirked because they would take too long.

--W. Somerset Maugham

In several educational institutions during the last few years manifestation of student activity in riots has been exciting the country. To the conservative mind, these riots bode no good. As a matter of fact student riots of one sort or another, protests against the order that is, kicks against college and university management indicate a healthy growth and a normal functioning of the academic mind. Youth should be radical. Youth should demand change in the world. Youth should not accept the old order if the world is to move on. But the old orders should not be moved easily certainly not at the mere whim or behest of youth. There must be clash and if youth hasn't enough force or fervor to produce the clash the world grows stale and stagnant and sour in decay. If our colleges and universities do not breed men who riot, who rebel, who attack life with all the youthful vim and vigor, then there is something wrong with our colleges. The more riots that come on college campuses, the better world for tomorrow.

--William Allen White

He who is of a calm and happy nature will hardly feel the pressure of age, but to him who is of an opposite disposition youth and age are equally a burden.

--Plato

Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty; for in my youth I never did apply hot and rebellious liquors in my blood; and did not, with unbashful forehead, woo the means of weakness and debility: therefore my age is as a lusty winter, frosty but kindly.

--William Shakespeare

According to the *National Institutes of Health*, nearly one in three of all adolescents ages 13 to 18 will experience an anxiety disorder.

These numbers have been rising steadily; between 2007 and 2012, anxiety disorders in children and teens went up 20%.

These stats, combined with the rate of hospital admissions of suicidal teenagers also doubling over the past decade, leaves us with many concerning questions....Chronic anxiety can lead to serious mental health problems—depression, substance use, and even suicide.

It can interfere with the ability to focus and learn, causing school problems that can have lifelong impact. It can also lead to physical problems, such as headaches, chronic pain, digestive problems, and later heart disease.

Anxiety disorders cut across all demographics—suburban, urban, and rural. They affect those who are college-bound and those who are not.

—Dr. Claire McCarthy

Young people are the primary drivers of language change.

—John McWhorter

Between standardized testing and a culture of achievement, today's youth can feel pressure to succeed in ways previous generations did not.

A survey done every year by *Higher Education Research* asks incoming college freshmen if they feel overwhelmed by all they have to do.

In 2016, 41% of students said 'yes' compared with 28% in 2000 and 18% in 1985.

—Dr. Claire McCarthy

A pair of 2016 studies led by April Smith, a psychology professor at Miami University, in Ohio, showed that over the past few decades, young people have become newly fearful of reaching adulthood, agreeing more and more with statements such as 'I wish that I could return to the security of childhood' and disagreeing with ones such as 'I feel happy that I am not a child anymore.' Is it any wonder that another example of today's kidspeak is referring to grown-up activities with the ironically distancing term adulting?

—John McWhorter

Nothing looks better in your 50s than sunscreen in your 20s.

—Jennifer Garner

Youth is a dream, a form of chemical madness.

—F. Scott Fitzgerald

How horrible it would be if one never changed...if she were condemned to be the plain, shy Millicent of a few years back for the rest of her life. Fortunately there was always the changing, the growing, the going on.

—Sylvia Plath