



Teenage Affluenza

Is this an epidemic fuelled by parents?

Is life too easy?

Life is so easy for too many children; they don't know what it means to work hard to acquire their desires. They ask for and are given just about everything they want far too easily. We are in a generation of excess. They want it all, and they want it now!

Watch this with your teenagers

Take as little as 5 minutes to watch this [YouTube](#) video with your teenager. Although a little old this video does a great job juxtaposing the problems of young people in a rich country vs. the monumental difficulties young people in poor countries face, but in a sarcastic way that isn't too overbearing or preachy.

Results of over indulgence

Some psychologists say that parents who overindulge their kids may be setting them up for future anxiety and depression. Recent studies show that kids who were given too much too soon often have difficulty coping with life's disappointments as adults. They have a distorted sense of entitlement that gets in the way of successful relationships at home and in the future - the workplace.

What the experts say

Experts also warn that parents are spoiling their kids; not just with material things, but by failing to set limits, not requiring that chores be done on a regular basis, not making the child wait or earn money for items they want, and smoothing away all the child's frustrations in order to keep them happy, no matter what. According to experts, this type of parenting can lead to lack of motivation, low self-esteem and irresponsible behaviour.

What happens when you don't say no

Parents who can't say no is an unexpected legacy of the affluent 90's. This generation of parent has always been driven to give their teen every advantage. Now a growing number of psychologists, educators, and parents have come to the realisation that all this overindulging is producing lazy, self-involved, and irresponsible teenagers that are prone to drop out of school, continue to live with



their parents into their mid to late twenties and beyond, and may develop a dependency on drugs and alcohol.

Be their parent

What children need most at this time is for parents to be a parent; not their best friend. Today's parents put in more hours on the job; at the end of the work week it's tempting to give in to the guilt for not spending quality time with their kids, or to buy peace with a "yes." Overindulged children often have lower self-esteem, a direct contradiction to what most overindulgent parents are trying to achieve with their coddling. Instead of having a sense of self-confidence they have a sense of knowing that their parents will come to the rescue and take care of things for them.

Saying No

According to psychologists parents need to find a balance between the advantages of an affluent society and the critical life lessons that come from waiting, saving, and working hard to achieve goals. Don't confuse permissiveness with love. In your quest to keep your child happy, you may forget to impart the ethics and values you really want to teach.

The Marketing Phenomenon

Susan Linn, an instructor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, believes most parents are doing their best in the struggle against what she calls a marketing maelstrom. Corporate America is largely to blame for our overindulged society, she said. "Parents and children are living in a commercially driven culture that glorifies conspicuous consumption, and that's harmful," said Linn, author of *Consuming Kids: The Hostile Takeover of Childhood* "Children are just inundated with very sophisticated marketing messages by companies that encourage them to nag their parents (to buy them things)." Those messages persuade parents and kids they can't be happy without certain brands or products, she said. "People are buying into that belief that what makes a child happy is buying them things," Linn said. "But the research tells us that things don't make us happy."

Remind yourself and your children: The best things in life aren't things!

"Though no one can back and make a brand new start. Anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending"

Anon