

“Is There More Pressure On Young People Today Than Use To Be”

Since the 80's there has been a vast incline in the number of suicides among young people “ suicide amongst young men aged 15 - 24 increased in the 10 years up until 1994”. Girls aged 15 - 19 are at the greatest risk of suicide attempts. In 1994 859 people aged between 15 – 24 took their own lives. Suicide is not just something you read about in the news it is something which happens on a regular basis and every so often you hear about someone who has committed suicide.

Are these increasing numbers just a sign of the changing times are is there a reason behind them? Childline says the main reason for suicide is, abuse, constant rows with someone close, bullying, and stress over exams, and worries the future. These can lead to feelings of anxiety, low self-esteem, isolation and depression. The groups of people more at risk include the unemployed, homeless, young gay men and lesbians and drug addicts. People who also find themselves in bad situations a death, pregnancy or even a relationship ending may contemplate suicide.

From this you can see there is a lot of pressure being put on children or children putting it on themselves.

One of the main causes of depression in young people is bullying. Everyone comes across bullying in one way or another (physical or mental) in their young life. Bullying hurts and it may make the person who is being bullied feel scared or/and upset. Bullying happens on a daily basis everywhere sometimes the people who can help our ignorant of what is actually going on so it may continue for a long time until the person can ask for help. Bullies come in many different forms they could be the tough rugby players, the people who stand at the back of the lockers smoking, family members or even a teacher. Bullies can beat a person up or they may torment them mentally by trying to make you feel bad in front of large numbers of people, by shouting at you and by teasing or making fun of you. The pressure of bullying can lead to depression, eating disorders and skipping school.

The media has a huge influence of the viewing public and so creates the perception of the perfect person. Advertisements show you young, beautiful, skinny women or young tanned muscular men telling you what you need. These give young people especially girls (there are also some boys) the idea that they need to look a certain way or they will not be accepted. Many girls diet and want to be at most 8 stone some of these people know when to stop losing weight, but anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa can occur and the person can only see himself or herself as being overweight. Both of these can cause mental and physical problems if the problem is not sorted out the problem can leave to death. Some girls take laxatives, which if taken too much can lead, to serious harm. There is also the problem of eating too much to

comfort themselves this is known as compulsive eating and the effects can also be very harmful.

The programmes on television put pressure on young people to conform to the ideas, which they are being shown to be the norm. Ideas like sex, drink and drugs are all shown on T.V. before the watershed which means children younger than 10 are being told this is what is expected of them when they are older.

Parents can put pressure on their own children without even realising what they are doing. Parents want to see their child do well at school, in sport and socially. When a child does badly in an exam most parents will shout at their child and call them names and criticise them when they really need encouragement and support. Many children have to compete with their older siblings if they have done well previously many parents will hold the other children up to this and expect the same. Some kids who do sport have the added pressure of their parents telling them how they should be playing and making them train harder. There is also evidence now that young people are suffering from stress and overuse injuries.

The biggest cause of pressure for young people is peer pressure; they want to fit in can make many people do things that they usually would not do. The pressure comes from your friends and sometimes you may not even notice what they are doing. There is increasing numbers of underage people smoking and drinking and even taking illegal drugs. If all your friends are out partying and having a drink and a smoke and you are not they can make you feel excluded and perhaps not even invite you out anymore? Companies who make alcoholic drinks are cashing in on the fact that young people are now drinking. They are producing drinks which are geared towards children's tastes e.g. W.K.D., the variety of flavours available in Hooch and Bicarid Breezers. It takes a very strong person to stand up to peer pressure and many end up doing something they don't want to.

Some people believe "You've never had it so good" which is the slogan for a recent McDonalds advert, where a war veteran can't believe the prices of the food. People today have everything at their finger tips they can go on the internet find whatever they want and even buy it and get it delivered without leaving the house. Many young people spend hours upon hours watching T.V., playing computer games or socialising with friends which does not seem to be the most stressful environment.

A lot of children use their parents as their own personal cash machine and parents just say how much? Many parents have to give their kids lifts everywhere as many children are too lazy to walk whereas our parents would have walk 3 / 4 miles without flinching.

There are many more opportunities for qualifications now, even if you do badly in your GCSE's you can go to tech and take a GNVQ from this there could be the opportunity of still going to university.

Today most families are closer than what they use to be, they will talk more about their problems and some children may even go to their parents for personal

advice. Many parents are not as strict as their parents may have been as many of our parents would have been terrified of them if they had done something wrong.

I believe that young people growing up today and our parents when they were growing up share some of the same pressures. However I think that young people today are faced with extra pressures like drinking, smoking, having sex and looking a certain way. Young people will have to learn how to deal with these new problems to avoid people suffering depression and other problems.