

*Discursive Writing*

## Should Teenagers Have Jobs?

Parents, teenagers and even school teachers have all had their fair say in this subject, but can teenagers physically manage having a job and doing their school work with out one of them suffering?

As your little siblings turn from sweet little angels to demanding teenagers parents start to crumple by their ever lasting demands. "I want that, I want this!" Girls especially seem to have a real problem when it comes to spending money. Teenagers are the biggest money spenders for any normal household family, and they simply don't care now much or how little they spend but as long as they are happy it doesn't matter. They dig deep into your wallets and purses and I'm sure any parents would admit it is a real nuisance. Teenagers these days need to understand the real value of money first hand, and feel proud of them selves for being able to spend their own money that they have worked hard for. Teenagers should be encouraged to get a job once their National Insurance number arrives three months before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Having a job has many good side effects. It allows a young teenager to get introduced to a work place where you have to be trusted and kept on your feet at all times. This will give them some good experience for later life when the world of opportunity is open to them. Also it allows your teenagers to appreciate money and teach them money doesn't just grow on trees but it has to be earned by hard work.

Having a job as a waiter myself has really changed my life. I now have the privacy to buy whatever I want with out always having to ask for money from parents. Also you can save it all up to buy some thing you desire. This will allow teenagers to be more thoughtful about how much money they really should spend, especially if it is coming out of there own pocket! For instance my brother, who is now 18, has been working since he was 15. Because he saved his money he was able to buy himself a car at the age of 17, and that was for only working one night a week. Also you tend to spend less when you know that you have to suffer with an empty bank account. All this is getting you ready for your later life when you no doubt will have a job of your own and are no longer living out of your parents' pockets or credit cards.

Also because you are working as a group with other people you meet new people from different walks of life, which allows you to get advice from people older and wiser than you.

Although having a job, as a teenager can be great for all the money you make, you also can physically suffer from the stress and late nights that the job might entail. Due to working long hours for a night job, you can become very tired, and your schoolwork may suffer. For me I find this problem a nuisance, as it can affect my concentration while trying to do revision or homework. Teachers and schools don't particularly like the idea of their students having jobs and try not to encourage it, for the obvious reasons. This is a very fair point, as most teenagers at that age have very important exams on like their GCSEs, AS and A Levels, and the work must be done for them to the best of their ability. Also having a job might cause them to become stressed out, also leading to lack of concentration on course work and in school. Government studies have found that when teenagers work more than

20 hours a week, the work often leads to lower grades, higher alcohol use and too little time with their parents and families.

At present there are nearly 2 million young teenagers at work, and a new study has revealed that they all could be facing a repetitive strain injury epidemic which could seriously be damaging the health of your teenagers, which is caused by working long hours during the week. Do you want your teenagers to suffer due them starting to work? Still, many parents urge their children to work, saying it is better than sitting around watching television.

Although this may be the cause, young working teenagers are vital for the economy, and it would have disastrous effects on us all if they didn't work at all.

For teenagers in poor city neighbourhoods, a job can be especially beneficial because it fosters discipline and provides needed role models. Also these after-school jobs can be very useful because they teach responsibility, provide pocket money and keep the teenagers out of trouble.

Not all jobs are bad, for example taking up a job in a child care centre where they would teach young kids. This job could help their schoolwork, and help them focus more when doing homework as they are determined to finally become a teacher.

As we all know parents worry, and how do we know that our children are going to work in safe environments? They could be mixing with drug dealers or alcoholics and getting themselves into trouble with the law. How are we to know that they are safe? In the restaurant where I work, there are many drug abusers and alcoholics. These are the types of people who work here full time and waste their money away. In a way it has encouraged me to work in school and ensure that I do well in my exams to succeed in life, as I certainly don't want to work as a waiter all my life.

Work places can be dangerous places too. About 70 teenagers die each year in the U.K alone in work-related accidents, and safety experts say these accidents occur because teenage workers often receive little training or supervision. Once again the question is asked whether your teenagers are working in safe environments.

Restaurant and shop owners love to employ young teenagers for the simple reasons that they do what they are told and work for a very low wage. They are easy train, and don't complain. These types of environments allows teenagers to now the good and the bad side of jobs, and could get them prepared for later life.

In many countries, those pushing for tougher restrictions include paediatricians' groups, PTAs women's clubs, teachers' unions and the National Consumer League. Those opposing tighter restrictions usually include business groups and the many parents who see benefits in teenagers' working, and who have warm memories of their own first jobs as waiters or supermarket clerks.

In conclusion, after looking at both sides of the story I think that teenagers should have the option of having a job. I have come to this conclusion as I firmly believe that it will have a remarkable effect on them in their later life, giving them appreciation for money and getting them associated with the modern work place of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

***By Josh Nixon***

