

# Misunderstood adolescents



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Stereotypes of a group of people can affect the way society views them, and change society's expectations of them. And with enough exposure to a certain type of stereotype, society may come to view the stereotypes more of the reality, rather than it being a "chosen representation," which can cause a misunderstanding between people. The public's perception of today's teenagers, stereotypes them in such a way that portrays teenagers as "bad."

Teenagers are believed to be obnoxious and ignorant (moody, insecure, argumentative, impulsive, etc. because of how society sees the majority of teenagers. People believe that teens are rebellious, immature, and trouble for their parents. People tend to think teens are violent, reckless, and lazy. Many people do believe that strict eye should be kept around teenagers, especially those who tend to create problems or those who misbehaves.

However we all do realize and know that not all teenagers are like that. Some may fall into the mentioned criteria, while others do not. I do understand, there are teenagers whose overall, general idea during their adolescence, is to have fun and "explore" during their younger years (like how many people say to enjoy your teenage years), but there are also teenagers who focus on more serious aspects of life. We cannot classify teenagers as adults when in reality, there are some who act like children, but at the same time, we cannot and or shouldn't classify them as children either for the few of those who do act like adults. In my opinion, society bases their stereotypes on the teens they come into contact with as well as the ones that stand out from the rest.

These portrayals trigger the “ involuntary response” that all teenagers must be that way—a false assumption of both parents and teenagers. The negative stereotypes not only affect how adults see teenagers, but they also influence how teenagers see themselves. Knowing the feeling that the majority of the world doesn't respect or understand teenagers does little when trying to encourage a positive sense of self-worth in themselves. Believing in a stereotype has its disadvantages.

I believe that it is in part because of the misinterpretation and hugely overstated way teenagers are depicted through the media (in movies, television, etc. ) First of all, nobody likes being judged because of a stereotype. Nobody wants to be known as someone they're not. Adults insist on stereotyping teenagers because they often act in stereotypical ways. For example, making generalizations that adults think they are no good and will do bad things just because they don't agree with them on a particular issue. Teenagers want their voice heard and with these stereotypes, however nobody's willing to listen to their perspective or side of the story.

So teenagers appear to be rebellious, when they get stubborn in attempting to get their point of view across. These stereotypes about teenagers are so common that, now teens do re-question about themselves, in general, if they are bad. A personal experience that I had with how people viewed me in comparison with other teenagers on school campus, was just recently when I was a new student to McLane High School. Coming from Clovis Unified, and knowing what I hear about McLane, I already knew that McLane wasn't the best school or was in the best neighborhood as well.

I would often hear stories about how students would ditch their classes and not even come to school, probably like come to school every other school days. And sadly, some not even able to graduate with their high school diploma. My first day on the McLane campus, I was especially shocked when I met up with a counselor and was asked if I was “planning to drop out of school, or attend college.” Obviously, I wanted to go to college, but knowing about how some of the students in McLane aren’t eligible to go to college, I took that more of a concerned question rather than a put-down comment.

It’s true that teenage is characterized by having mood swings and or abrupt behavior due to “hormonal” changes, but yet it is the same for every teen in the world. Teenagers are more intelligent and skilled than what society “assumes” they are. During our adolescence, it is simply more of a phase transition into adulthood, where there are various reasons why we do and act the way we do, to be able to understand us, society should let teenagers themselves explain the stories behind the stories that people assume about them, and let people listen.

Stereotyping teenagers (and or for any other group of people) doesn’t seem unjust, but yet it happens in society. Groups are misunderstood because people aren’t willing to listen to what one another has to say about their view, which causes confusion or we just start to assume based on what we know only (which is only one side of the full story).