

Essay on youth lack life skills

Business



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Imagine giving a group of elderly people cell phones and asking them to text a friend. Now imagine giving high school students needles, thread, and buttons.

The general expression of astonishment would beg the question, “ Now what?” The generation gap is far too wide; just as the older generation struggles to keep pace with technology, young people are lost when it comes to basic, practical life skills. Many high schools today focus on honors classes, college academic preparation, and standardized testing, and fail to teach students the life skills that they will need in college and beyond. Not long ago, a home economics course was required. Students learned basic domestic skills like cooking and sewing. I believe that a similar class should be mandatory today.

The class, which would be more of a “ life skills” course, would include cooking, sewing, cleaning, car maintenance, domestic and self-organizational skills, and manners/etiquette. High schools strive to prepare students for college academics but neglect to prepare them for the times when they are not in class. There is nothing wrong with giving the option of post-secondary classes at local colleges, or offering courses with college-level curriculum in high schools. However, schools must consider whether students are also learning the basic life skills they will need to prioritize and organize themselves. Do they know how to change the oil in their car? High schools and students must take a step back and view the “ big picture.” In the long run, a student’s ACT and SAT score is not everything.

Will that affect them 20 years down the road? Probably not. Being able to organize oneself and knowing the correct etiquette when going into a job interview are examples of critical life skills today. Knowing how to take notes and memorize facts won't help much in this situation. When seniors graduate, they must quickly adapt to a very different world, whether they are going to college or entering the workforce. A student who already has various life skills will experience a much easier transition from home to college or the workplace. Before Home Economics classes existed, the family fulfilled the role of teaching young people necessary life skills.

Mothers and grandmothers taught girls to sew, cook, and clean. Boys learned farming, building, and machinery repair from fathers and grandfathers. Today family dynamics are changing. Grandparents may have passed away. Mom and Dad may be divorced or have full-time jobs.

Who, then, is left to teach youth “the basics”? For today's technologically enhanced generations, knowledge is always at our fingertips. If students want to learn something, they turn to the Internet. However, with so little time, the last thing on our minds at the end of the school day is teaching ourselves something new. Therefore, high school is the ideal away-from-home place for young people to learn life skills. Learning basic life skills may help students uncover unknown talents and interests.

For instance, a student who learns how to sew a button or hem a pair of slacks may consider a career in the fashion industry. One major factor for the recently graduated is money. A college student who can cook will save more money than the one who eats out or purchases a full meal plan. Knowing

these life skills creates self-confidence and self-reliance. Torie Bosch, a writer for Slate magazine, states, “ You could make the case that home ec is more valuable than ever in an age when junk food is everywhere, obesity is rampant, and few parents have time to cook for their children.

” Cooking lessons would give students ideas for easy, healthy meals they could prepare on their own. Chances are, these skills will be retained for life. Even though today’s high schools claim to prepare students for the future through an academic focus, the younger generation still lacks valuable life skills. An updated home ec course would help teens prepare for life. When given needles, thread, and buttons, high school students would finally know what to do.