

The most significant changes to the pre-modern childhood



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The most significant changes to the pre-modern childhood era to the modern era began when the roles of children changed from worker to student.

The importance of attending school meant time spent away from assisting the family economically thus, children became a liability to their parents.

Family sizes began to decrease simply because children cost money to house, feed and clothe as well the new need to provide school supplies.

Industrialization and urbanization also happened and more families moved away from farm life and into the city. During industrialization, children's jobs were being replaced by machines further supporting the need for children to be in school. Since children were away from their parents attending school it made it harder for adults to see how childhood fit in the "real world". While adults seen the value of school and children's gained knowledge was supported and seen as essential for adulthood, it was still seen as privilege and in return adults found it difficult to see the meaning in the lives of children and their childhoods. A. Prout indicates that we are in another period of transformation because there was once was a clear distinction between adulthood and childhood that was a trait of the modern era.

In childhood today, he describes that line between adulthood and childhood as "blurred". Children are exposed to media more then they have ever have and their innocence is being taken away by what they witness. It has become increasingly harder to separate the idea that children are innocent and dependant on adults.

Children are becoming more competent and independent perhaps forced by the hurried and chaotic way of living of today's culture. Also, children over

the past few decades have become more educated, given more rights and respect and are becoming more valued by adults than they ever had before in the past century. This is giving children essentially more power and confidence to know what they want, how to get it and demand that their wants and needs be met. Prout describes these changes in children as being more difficult to “ manage, less biddable and troublesome and troubling” which clearly points to change happening.