

School uniforms: a solution to school violence and bullying issues

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Imagine walking into school every day to find students tormenting and abusing and victimizing another young, defenseless student all because of his or her clothing choice. Kids across the country go through school constantly looking over their shoulders in fear of a verbal or physical attack. Do schools not hear the weak wails of these vulnerable children? Are schools really doing everything in their power to put an end to this injustice? Maybe not everything. All schools should require the implementation of school uniforms in order to decrease bullying and violence.

If schools demand the use of uniforms, they might create equality, raise self-esteem, and could potentially reduce the risk of violence, such as school shootings. Unlabeled uniforms in particular eliminate one's ability to show signs of wealth or superiority through clothing labels. In turn, when it comes to clothing, students can coexist as equal as the scales of justice. "Label competition," the tormenting of "kids with cheaper clothes by their more privileged counterparts," continuously contributes to bullying in schools ("Too"). Do schools want their students to feel the need to one-up their peers? Because the absence of label competition decreases bullying, self-esteem among students may increase exponentially. Students' self-esteem could increase because "kids seem happier and more confident when they don't feel outclassed by a classmate's fancy clothes" ("Should").

Similar to bullying, social humiliation will also decrease. Most types of social humiliation often revolve around criticizing one's clothing choice. The elimination of social humiliation also eliminates other issues along with it.

Thus, with uniforms, social humiliation cannot take place. Also, school

shootings would be less likely to occur because most school shootings
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actually stem from incidents of social humiliation. School shooting risks will decrease because most “ school shooters are likely to have suffered social humiliation or rejection, which prompts retaliation” (Englander 1).

In fact, “ harassment and bullying have been linked to 75 percent of school-shooting incidents, including the fatal shootings at Columbine High School near Littleton, Colorado, and Santana High School in Santee, California” (“ Bullying”). So, if uniforms have even the slightest chance to put an end to the bullying and social humiliation that prompts these retaliations, schools should use uniforms. Schools should take every precaution to avoid school shootings no matter how small of a difference it may make. In spite of the overwhelming benefits of school uniforms, many students, along with their parents, believe that uniforms limit a child’s ability to express themselves. Because “ school uniforms allow little—if any—dissimilarity in student’s dress and are typically more formal,” they could prevent a student from expressing themselves through their clothing (Dress). Parents in turn might be afraid that if their kids cannot express themselves through clothing, how else will express themselves.

It may be true that uniforms can alter students’ ability to express themselves, and this could potentially be a major issue with developing creativity—if clothing were the only way that student expressed could themselves. Despite the fact the uniforms are similar, “ some schools allow different combinations of tops and bottoms, including polo shirts, turtlenecks, knee-length shorts, and jumpers (dresses)...,” and these different combinations allow students more expression than they are

believed to have (Dress). Uniforms do not prevent student from doing their hair however they want, painting their nails, decorating the inside of their lockers, talking about emerging fashion styles, and so on. Students can express themselves in a plethora of ways not just clothing. Overall, uniforms create a domino effect on solving all school issues, not just violence and bullying. Uniforms decrease bullying; the absence of bullying increases self-esteem increases, and, therefore, decreasing the possibility of social humiliation among students—the main cause of school shootings.

Simply stated, uniforms give way to an astronomical number of advantages while decreasing bullying and violence at the same time. More schools need to bring up this matter in school board meetings and talk about this issue because parents need to know that there is a better, safer option for their kids at school. Parents should pick up their phones, call their school superintendent or school board members, and advocate for the implementation of school uniforms in their school.