

Rumspringa essay

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The Amish event “ Rumspringa” is literally translated as “ running around”. It is a time when Amish adolescents, usually at the age of about 16, experience life outside of the Amish community and are allowed luxuries they would not otherwise be able to enjoy.

There are something’s about Rumspringa you may not know. It starts with enjoying English lifestyles; experimentations, marriage and reversion. In a majority of instances, while being able to experience certain luxuries, children still have to abide by certain restrictions. They are able to date, but they have a curfew and sexual activity is still considered sinful. Children in engage in more innocent activities such as buying electronics, going to movie theaters, and playing sports. Sometimes kids gather together at “ supper parties” after mass.

The main idea behind this event is so that even with temptation, children will be dedicated enough to their faith to come back. The experts from Elizabethtown College state that “ A fling with worldliness reminds Amish youth that they have a choice regarding church membership; however, most of the forces of Amish life funnel them toward church membership. Knowing they have a choice likely strengthens their willingness to obey church standards and, in the long run, the authority of the church itself. ” Even though in most cases, the luxuries enjoyed by Amish Children are innocent, the restrictions vary by community. In some communities, no restrictions are enforced, and kids roam the outside cities partying, drinking, doing drugs, and having unprotected sex. Tom Schatmans book “ To Be Or Not To Be Amish: Rumspringa” illustrates Amish children going from solid colored, fully

garbed work horses dedicated to the lord, switching to delinquents dressed in cut off shirts, drinking and partying with no regard of the religion or safety.

A direct quote from his book states that “ Near Shippsh, Berlin, and Intercourse, those Amish youngsters walking on the wild side of Rumspringa during this weekend will party on until, late on Sunday, they return home to sober up and ready themselves for Monday and the workweek. Although this lifestyle is glorified in his book and documentary “ Devils Playground”, it is certainly not the norm and most children still have rather heavy restrictions. The book “ The Amish” describes the process as “ a measure of freedom before settling down, getting married, and becoming adult members of the community. ” During this time they generally are finding the person they choose to marry. Once they choose who they want to marry, the ritual of Rumspringa is over, and they must revert back to no electricity, hard work and heavy church dedication. In a majority of cases, the children return to the community and the Amish lifestyles.

In very rare cases, children get swept up in English life and decide to not come back, which results in shunning from the community and are never allowed to return. Rumspringa is a time where adolescents get to “ taste the forbidden fruit” so to speak. It is a time meant to test a person’s Amish faith, and as to see whether or not they will return. It starts with enjoying English lifestyles; experimentations, marriage and reversion.