

Curfew college essay



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Dear Bangkok Post readers, Mothers, fathers and policemen enjoy knowing that the children of Bangkok are safe with an effective curfew. The curfew has been put in place for the safety of teenagers and to reduce the high crime rate. Us teenagers, however, tend to think it is unfair and that the evidence of reduced crime and higher safety is unconvincing. It is scientifically proven that going out with friends to watch a movie, to eat dinner and to go out dancing is a stress reliever.

Most of the time, these teenagers just want to have fun and not cause trouble. Most of them keep their grades stable to please their parents so they will still be let out. Above all, most of these teens are not likely to be involved in crimes. I presume all you parents and under-18s who read the paper know about the curfew that was imposed earlier this new year. It was put into motion for the protection of young citizens, who here in Thailand have been known to increase the 13-17 age criminal rate as recent studies have shown.

Street racing, under-age drinking and vandalizing are the main concerns of the police, however, a strong curfew could have a huge impact on the entertainment industry and could break the valued trust between a teen and their parents. As most of you know, safety is important, but this is the time in a person's life where they create themselves and evolve into an adult. Keeping restrictions such as a strong curfew may cause the child to never fully mature. For example, a child who is kept inside the home at all times, further on in life, may develop social anxiety disorder, misanthropy and schizoid personality disorder according to psychologist Dr. Karill Mozenkov.

On the other hand, a curfew could show a drop in juvenile victimization, under-age crime and dangerous binge drinking in clubs. It is known that in Bangkok, many teenagers either sneak out or are let out by their parents to go to clubs where raids often occur. If these under-aged teens are found either illegally drinking or in possession of any kind of drug, it could have a huge impact on the teen's private life and schooling career, which could put their chance of going to a good university in jeopardy. However, many of these teens are merely going to a mall to watch either a movie, eat out with friends or maybe go to some kind of event that requires them to stay out late.

It is unfair for the teens to be threatened by the police to be home at ten o'clock. A curfew violates the right to freedom of speech, civil liberties, and the right to peaceful assembly. Also, instead of positively reinforcing trust in a family, you are negatively enforcing it on the teens, which may then cause the teens to rebel against such unfair sanctions. Imposing a curfew is usually a sign of mistrust between parents and children; in normal circumstances, this is more or less accepted by the teen. However, a city wide curfew may not be seen by teens as fair, useful or wise as most curfews have had no noticeable effect on youth crime; in fact most studies show cities with very strict curfews have the highest rate of youth crime.

In the end, it only generates dissociation between youths and the government in many cases such as the teen curfew of New York in 2007. Maybe if the police department weren't corrupt and had more effective techniques to keep the curfew in place, it would eventually become integrated into the Bangkok lifestyle. When I say corrupt I mean child

trafficking and bribing. These are things that happen quite frequently here in Thailand.

However, because of teens having fake identification, knowing the real ages of these teens is complicated; they also lie about why they were out after the curfew, giving them a free pass. It is known that the majority of juvenile offenders are born to dysfunctional families, they live in poverty or suffer from a variety of social problems. They are brought up with domestic violence, discouragement and end up having mental health issues, which leads them to crime. So when a minor commits illegal acts, they are legally seen as victims of improper care. This is the time when the government should step in to prevent further, more serious crimes. Also, a curfew doesn't allow the teen to get out of their abusive homes, so they spend more time being physically and verbally abused; this certainly exacerbates the problems and causes the teen to rebel against the law even more.

If I was in a situation such as this, I would be mad at the government for making me stay in an abusive home, as I would try to get out as much as possible. In my opinion, the curfew shouldn't be in action in the weekend as it is the parents' decision, but only on weekdays. On weekdays sleep is essential as most teens wake up early, so maximum time for sleep is essential. I do agree that lack of sleep affects the performance of a child; on the other hand, on the weekend the teen doesn't have to wake up early and can catch up on sleep by waking up late.

The lack of performance in school affects grades, effort and social behavior; however, most teens who wish to go out with their friends on the weekend

have an agreement with their parents: as long as the grades don't fall, they are allowed to meet up with their friends. This is something the curfew does not do; it is a blanket measure, unlinked to behavioral performance and includes every teen, which I think is unacceptable, as band-aid solutions do not work to solve big problems such as this one. In conclusion, a curfew would create irreparable damage to the Bangkok society, as many teenagers will find themselves sneaking out without permission and getting caught, lying and doing the whole process over and over again. Trust should be something a family has, and a curfew could destroy that because of a silly mistake that the teenager might make. I really think it should be up to the parent to decide whether their child should have a curfew, not the government.