

# Frustrations of a modern teenager

Seventeen year old Glenlola Collegiate pupil **Cara Thompson** came to the Spectator for a week's work experience. We wanted to know what life is like for the modern teenager and here she reveals why it's not as simple as it might appear from the outside.

**AS A teenager in today's internet swamped society, there has increasingly become a lot more expected from us. Our lives have become frustrating and full of mixed emotions.**

I am doing my A levels at school. I find that education is a big part of my life and constantly meeting expectations can become overwhelming, especially from teachers who are always setting targets that need to be met.

My social life being of 'high' importance to me, meeting these targets very often does not happen. I enjoy spending time with my friends despite the fact my mum always complains, saying I go out far too much. This however does not stop me.

Girls being girls, especially as teenagers, boys are the main topic of conversation, particularly in my friend group. This is not always a bad thing, as having this 'expertise' can come in useful.

In October I broke up with my boyfriend who I was with for a year, which doesn't seem like very long, however we did spend a lot of time together. Being a teenager break-ups can be very hard, there are different feelings of not being good enough for someone and your confidence can be knocked. Teenagers automatically think that this is their life over! We have spent a period of time with someone getting to know them, and being a big part of their lives, and when this is ended and taken away, it can become hard, especially when there are a lot of other things to try and cope with.

However, I feel it is your view on relationships that will influence your emotions, and for me I have always told myself if it is meant to be it will be and if it isn't then they aren't for you!

Regardless of how we feel about ourselves, teenage girls will always be judged on appearance, and we are always expected to meet this specific standard of 'beauty'. This requires a lot of our time, doing our hair, makeup, and going shopping to pick out the 'right' outfit, usually



**Cara Thompson.**

resulting in having a tantrum because your mum continuously tells you she doesn't approve. Lesson learned, do not bring your mum shopping.

Social media also paints this picture of expected standards and young girls are now comparing themselves to others. I can admit I do this as well, but usually these images are edited and unrealistic.

Instagram is the worst for this as

you can edit photos and buy followers, therefore teenagers are getting this idea that if you get 'likes' and followers that defines that you are accepted by society and you acquire this false image of being 'perfect'. There is a sense of validation attached to 'likes' which is unfair.

As a teenager I feel like older generations stereotype us as being rude and disrespectful and not

having the same 'morals' as they did when they were growing up. However it is never considered that we are growing up in a generation where things are a lot different, with younger people now being given the opportunity to voice their own opinions regarding gay marriage and other controversial issues - issues that were not considered in previous generations.

Don't get me wrong I do think that there are many teenagers who are disrespectful and don't accord the courtesy and respect they should to older generations, but believe it or not, not all teenagers are violent and rebellious.

Surely teenagers now are not much worse than previous generations? Our generation never gets a positive thing said about them. Take GCSEs for example - we do better than the past generation so the work and exams must be getting easier - obviously.

Older generations can be rude and disrespectful towards younger generations but never seem to be called 'disrespectful'. However, respect works two ways. People seem to be quite judgemental of teenagers, how we look and where we go and I think that it is a shame that middle-class children are treated with more respect than that of a teenager wearing a hoodie.

One of my friends works in a takeaway food outlet and an older woman made a comment to him saying rudely that he was 'getting nowhere in life' working there. He was shocked at the way he was spoken to and replied telling her that he is in fact at university doing a mechanical engineering degree. This is a prime example of older generations coming to the conclusion that 'all' teenagers have no ambition.

I would like older generations to understand that not all teenagers are what they assume, there is a lot going on for our generation. A lot is expected from us which a lot of people don't see as they are too focused on how life is 'easy' for us. Having so much access to the internet and new technology can become overwhelming and is not always positive.