

## **Children Should Be Seen and ~~Not~~ Heard**

By Amy Hodges

Have you ever felt that when you have to say something, no one cares enough to listen? I know I have. At times I feel like no one wants to hear my thoughts, so I shouldn't speak my mind. Sometimes I feel like adults control everything I say and do. It feels as if I will only be visible if I suddenly skip about five years of my life. It feels that just because I am a kid, I shouldn't get to speak my opinion. Well I have one thing to say to that: children shouldn't only be seen, but heard as well.

I'm not even a kid anymore. I'm a teenager becoming a young adult and I am still not taken seriously. Why don't people respect my ideas and feelings? Is it right to discriminate against people because of their age? Do adults think kids can't handle the truth? Or do they think we don't understand it? Or is it just that most adults can't stand to see us grow up?

Teachers. We love them. Some love us as well, but why do they always tell us to respect them, but they don't all have to respect their students? Don't get me wrong, I know that some teachers really do value our ideas, but some don't. I know that the school controls most of what they do. But is it fair to close off doors to places and ideas that we never even got to think about? Am I not right? Do they not teach only what they want us to hear? The answer is yes, sometimes. It can be different. Some of our teachers do listen to us and try to expand our knowledge of everything, but often if they don't believe it, then it is automatically "wrong" in their classroom.

It's not only teachers; parents are guilty of not listening too. Why do parents make us listen to them, but we get in trouble if we speak our minds? Why isn't it mutual respect? Is it fair to have to respect and listen to them, but then what we say doesn't matter? Again, it's not every Mom or Dad on the planet, but you and I both know that most are guilty of not listening.

There is no right or wrong, just perceptions of reality. Adults and children often have different perceptions of reality, but we should have enough respect to at least hear each other out and not label one another wrong. Kids have good ideas too. Imagine a world where no one had freedom of speech, how awful would that be? Kids live in that world until we turn 18, because we technically don't have any rights until then.

Why can't the adults who don't listen step back and hear what we have to say and what we feel? Respect everyone's opinion and you will broaden your mind to all the possibilities.

*“Never apologize for showing feeling. When you do so, you apologize for the truth.”*

~Benjamin Disraeli