

## Understanding the People of Tomorrow, Today

As the Children's Society publish the UK's first independent national inquiry into childhood - The Childhood Inquiry, young reporters at Headliners report on the changing attitudes of adults towards young people.



Since the beginning of time, adults and kids have never exactly been the best of friends, but today more than ever, it seems as though the already fragmented relationship between them is teetering on a knife's edge – literally. It's no surprise to me that [The Children's Society](#) has found that adults believe that conflict between them and young people is getting worse. Maybe Cameron's "hug-a-hoodie" brainwave wasn't the smartest of solutions, but it scratched the surface of an issue that is affecting hundreds of communities and having an impact on the lives of many young people.

Whilst walking to school at midday for an exam a few years ago, I was stopped by a Community Support Officer who insisted on taking down all my details. Unsure of which terrorising youth demographic I fitted into (I was a white fourteen year old girl wearing school uniform and my prefect badge), I attempted to reason with the officer in a bid to make it on time to my exam. His rudeness, incompetence and unwillingness to listen were entirely reminiscent of the negative attributes young people are constantly branded with, and it made me wonder why there is so much angst and so little understanding between the generations. Adults were all young once; have they really forgotten how unfair and unpleasant it is to be judged as a criminal before you've even opened your mouth?

With that in mind, I appreciate that much of the onus is on young people to change and mould the perception of themselves, but the incessant put downs from older generations don't make this easy. For example, I have read countless newspaper articles about the failings of ASBOs due to the untameable unruliness of kids, but do we ever hear about the ten young people to every one committing an antisocial offence that actively volunteer and try to make a difference to their community? It seems that there are signs of real progress from youngsters, but the failure of adults to realise this is costing us dearly.

Overall, I think it's up to people of all ages to learn to appreciate and respect the value of one another, both on a local and national level. The detrimental effects of the mistrust and disregard between people of all ages is clearly taking its toll on our society, and as the adults of tomorrow, the time has never been more right to start making positive changes for the future.

### About this Story

This story was produced by Charlotte Lytton, 16, and was commissioned by the Children's Society as they launched the UK's first independent national inquiry into childhood – The Good Childhood Inquiry.

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