**YOUTH PROBLEMS**

**1. What does it mean to be young for you?**

young

a lot of opportunities

not enough time for study

**Is it easy to be young? Why?**

**2. What does the phrase “youth problems” mean? Can you name such problems? Brainstorm ideas!**

Youth problems

**3. Read what other people think and say what problems worry young people in the world today?**

**Youth is a Difficult Time**

Youth is a special time for any person: he or she is no longer a child and not yet an adult. And young people have some problems special to this period of life. One of them is the problem of finding oneself. Some teenagers still remain in a condition of Great Uncertainty: they don’t have particular interests or hobbies; there are no particular aims in their lives. That’s why they are in a constant search, which sometimes makes them choose the wrong way, for example drug addiction. I think if a person has a goal in life, or there is something in the world that interests him or her very much, that person is lucky. A wide range of interests is a sign of an intelligent and broad-minded person. That’s why almost all young people try different sides of life in order to find something which attracts them most of all.

*By Girnik*

Everybody thinks that youth is the best period of life. But young people have as many problems as grown-ups.

The problem which alarms me most of all is the problem of planning my future career. It is essential to have a good job. And to get a good job you have to be well-educated. So, after leaving a secondary school I should choose a university and see what entrance exams I have to pass. I can’t enter any university without good knowledge, for example, of English, so it is necessary to pay for special lessons which means heavy expenses.

After graduating from the university, you have another problem. How to find a good job? Unemployment is a sore point in our country. Even qualified professionals often cannot find a good job. So, in planning my future I have to think a lot about the possibility of finding a good job after finishing my education.

*By Tanya*

Nowadays teenagers have rather difficult lives. They have so many problems. The main ones are: hard drugs, diseases, such as AIDS, problems with adults, early pregnancy and of course violence and crime among youth.  
Our world is facing a drugs crisis. The greater part of teenagers are using, or have used drugs. This is the main problem in the world, I think.

Because of drugs, boys and girls become angry. They loose their connection with their parents, and misunderstand them. They have a lot of communicative problems. Teenagers don’t have much money to buy drugs, so they must steal. And using drugs evokes such a dangerous illness as AIDS. Drug addicts are aware of their illness and with this their lives end.

To my mind our government should take the first step in stopping this problem and prevent the selling of drugs. Besides our government should lead different educative programs, such as “Stop AIDS”, “Say No”, or something like that. Even in schools we should have lessons dedicated to these problems. So, in my point of view, we should stop drugs. Teenagers should think about their future life. They should have dreams about their future career. And even if they are given drugs, they should just say “No”.

*By Olga*

As for me, the number one problem among young men is conscription. In our country all boys must go to the army. (Of course, if they haven’t got a serious disease.) It doesn’t mean that I don’t want to carry out the duty of a male citizen of our republic. But our army is like a prison today, with violence, bad food and poor clothes. I think, that military service should be a job; a professional army would be more organized. Of course, this problem can be solved only by the government and even they cannot solve it now. But adults must remember that the young are society’s future. If the present generation of youths grows up to be “lost”, we have no future.

*By Sergey*

Every day we have to make important decisions. It is very hard to make them in youth, because we are not children, for whom the world is so simple, and not yet adults, who have life experience.

In this transition period teenagers are very changeable; full of self-criticism, frequent changes of mood, dissatisfaction with their appearance.

Teenagers are also easily influenced by others. And just in this period a great number of people begin to smoke, communicate with different groups. But I think, you should love yourself, in order to find the right way in life and place in society. I guess, you should not only follow your wishes, but also fulfil all your duties in time; control yourself. I would like to say that we shouldn’t be illiterate. Ignorance makes unemployment a sore point.

So, we are responsible persons and we should respect ourselves and other people, too. And to respect yourself means to wish yourself happiness and try to make your dreams come true.

*By Helen*

**4. Write some associations under each word in bold.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **hobby** | **goal** | **dream** | **happiness** |

**5. Talk to each other:**

1. What are you dreaming of?

2. What goals do you want to reach in your life?

3. What is happiness for you?

4. Do you have anything to complain about?

5. Do you have any problmes with your parents, sisters or brothers, teachers?

6. Do adults understand teens today?

**6. Look through the opinions and find the sentences the meaning of which is close to the following:**

1. Girnik says young people always look for something.

………………………………………………………………………………

2. The person is fortunate, if he has an aim in life.

……………………………………………………………………………

3. Young people have as many problems as adults.

………………………………………………………………………………

4. To get a good job you have to be scholarly.

………………………………………………………………………………

5. People without a job is a sore point in Tanya’s country.

………………………………………………………………………………

6. There is a ‘generation gap’ between teenagers and their parents.

………………………………………………………………………………

7. Using drugs causes such a dangerous illness as AIDS.

………………………………………………………………………………

8. The number one problem among young men is enrollment in military service.

………………………………………………………………………………

9. Teenagers are also easily affected by others.

………………………………………………………………………………

**7. Find the ideas to say whether the following words are true or false. If the idea is wrong correct it.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Young people don’t know what they want.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ To find something attractive young people try various sides of life.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ It’s not important to have a good job.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ If you can pay you can enter any university without good knowledge.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ Our world is facing a drugs crisis.

6. \_\_\_\_\_ Boys and girls sell their clothes to buy drugs.

7. \_\_\_\_\_ Olga wants her government to prevent the selling of clothes.

8. \_\_\_\_\_ Sergey is glad to join the army.

9. \_\_\_\_\_ Helen says it’s not bad to be illiterate for young people.

**8. Read the text again and complete the table.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Girnik | Tanya | Olga | Sergey | Helen |
| Youth problems: |  | *planning a career* |  |  |  |

**9. Do you have the same problems? Your friends? Make a list of problems you want or have to solve. Let your partner give you advice.**

**For example:**

Student A: *My friend is a drug addict. He wants to get rid of this addiction but can’t.*

Student B can use the following phrases:

*In my opinion, …*

*I personally believe …*

*Not everyone will agree with me, but …*

*To my mind, …*

*I am absolutely certain, that …*

*From my point of view, …*

*They say …*

*Have you thought about …*

*If I were you, I would …*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**10. Look at the pictures (Pic. 8a, 8b). Do they have anything in common? Write down as many words or phrases as you can to these pictures.**

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Pic. 8a Pic. 8b

…………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………

**Compare the list with your partner’s. Are there more positive or negative words there?**

**11. What notions are described below?**

- of, relating to, or applicable to those aged 13 through 19;

- any question or matter involving doubt, uncertainty, or difficulty;

- a person who has attained the age of maturity as specified by law;

- failure to understand correctly;

- a correctional institution where persons are confined while on trial or for punishment;

- habitual psychological and physiological dependence on a substance or practice beyond one's voluntary control;

- a way of life that reflects the attitudes and values of a person or group;

- without interest or concern; not caring; apathetic.

**12. Read the text below and find its main idea.**

Today it is fashionable to speak about teenage problems. A few years ago alcohol, fights, killings and other kinds of violence were more problems for adults than for young people.

But now violence, AIDS, drugs and alcohol are more and more associated with youngest. For many children from poor families violence, drinking problems and all that is associated with poverty becomes more real than reality.

The Government surveys show that every fifth teenager who was arrested for criminal actions, was younger that 14 and couldn't be sent to prison. Almost half of teenagers have an experience with drugs, alcohol and sex under age of 16. A lot of teenagers who have drug or alcohol addiction almost never believe that they are dependent. These things are often combined with family and school problems. What has gone wrong? Some specialists explain that the changes of our society, the system of our life force young people to choose their own lifestyle. On the one hand, our society agrees that 15-17-year old people are old enough to be responsible for what they do and give them quite a lot of freedom and rights. On the other hand, most adults think that teenagers are too young to be taken seriously. This misunderstanding produced many problems. Actually, a lot of teenagers say that their parents let them do anything they want and are quite indifferent to their problems. Many teenagers get upset or depressed when they can't solve their problems. As a result, it makes them believe that there is only one way out - to stop living and commit suicide. No doubt, the teens' problems will increase. And young people should fell that they are cared for.

**Do you agree with the conclusion of the author?**

**How can the text be titled?**

**13. Complete the sentences with a word from the box. Then write out phrases with the given words and use them in the sentences of your own.**

|  |
| --- |
| exclusions rate excess urgent drunk  rate constant seeking |

1. Glasgow had the lowest economic activity rates, the highest claimant rate, the highest level of school … and the most drug-related crimes.

2. Dumfries and Galloway had the second highest … of teenage pregnancy and the second highest … of children in care or being looked after.

3. Health Minister said the figures demonstrated that … action was needed to tackle alcohol misuse among youngsters.

4. The number of youngsters who said they had … alcohol in the week before they were questioned rose from 19% to 21%.

5. The smoking rate remained … at 13% among girls while it had fallen to 9% among boys.

6.

"We are working closely with Health Education Board for Scotland to educate young people about the dangers of … drinking.”

7. Alcoholics Anonymous has reported a steady rise in the number of young people … help.

**14. Governments of various countries conduct surveys concerning youth health. Have you read one of them? Read the article written after one of the surveys. But first look through some notes. Correct some of them after reading the text.**

*- 23% of young men in Britain are overweight;*

*- 8% of young men in Britain are obese;*

*- Even underweight women are trying to lose weight;*

*- women at the age of 18 smoke more than at 16;*

*- 53% of young men aged 21drink at least 3 days a week.*

The Health of Young People survey is the most comprehensive ever commissioned by the Department of Health.

The survey painted a grim picture of Britain's youth with smoking, drinking and obesity commonplace. Twenty-three per cent of young men and 19% of young women are overweight, and 6% and 8% respectively are obese, according to the survey.

However, the research also uncovered evidence that many young females, aged 16-24, worry unnecessarily about their weight.

The survey found young women tended to perceive themselves as overweight when they were not.

Among those with a desirable weight, 20% said they were too heavy and 45% were trying to lose weight.

Even among underweight women 10% were trying to lose weight.

Chief medical officer Professor Liam Donaldson said: "Weight at all times of life is a particularly important predictor of health. If you are very overweight you run a risk of developing a heart attack or a stroke.

"The fact that a high proportion of children are overweight and 10% are obese is a worrying finding.

"But we found a group who, despite being below their ideal weight, were still trying to lose weight.

"That was particularly adolescent girls. We know about the problems of eating disorders and perception of body image among young girls, and this was a particuarly worrying finding to find it confirmed in such a striking way in the survey."

The survey also found that among the 16-24 age group:

* The proportion of young men who smoke increased from 20% at the age of 16 to 40% at the age of 18. For young women the proportion was higher at the age of 16 (25%), but lower at the age of 18 (30%);
* The prevalence of cigarette smoking was much higher in lower social groups;
* The proportion of young men who reported drinking on at least three days a week increased from 10% at the age of 16 to 53% at the age of 21, and then declined to 42% at the age of 24. The corresponding percentages for young women were 6% at the age of 16, 32% at the age of 21 and 18% at the age of 24;
* Over half (53%) of young men aged 18-24 said they had exceeded four units of alcohol at least one day a week, and one third exceeded eight units at least once a week. Among women, 28% exceeded three units and 13% exceeded six units at least once a week.

Professor Donaldson said the survey showed that teenagers were prepared to take risks with their health.

He said: "We cannot stop it entirely. If we tried to stop it entirely we would be unsuccessful.

"What we have to do is to help control it, ensure that fewer young children and teenagers adopt those adverse lifestyles, drinking, smoking and getting overweight.

"If we can do that and stop them from carrying the behaviour forward into adult life we will have been successful."

The survey is based on information taken in 1995, 1996 and 1997 from 14,582 children aged 2-15 and 5,126 young adults aged 16-24.

**15. Find the following phrases in the text above. Read aloud the sentences.**

To uncover evidence; run a risk of; to increase; to increase from… to …; to decline; to be based on.

**16. Make the sentences complete using the phrases.**

1. The police ….. of a plot.

2. Smoking in pregnancy ………………. the risk of producing a low birth weight baby.

3. If you refuse this assignment you …………………. losing your job.

4. The number of day students ………………….. from 2000 to 1000.

5. The novels are all …………………… the author’s life.

6. The number of job applicants ………………200……400.

**17. Make your own sentences with the phrases.**

**18. Take a group survey. Find out how many students in your group smoke, drink alcohol, use drugs. Discuss your survey results.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| name | smokes | drinks | uses drugs |
| *e.g. Natalia* | *+* | *-* | *-* |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |