



"I DON'T THINK OF MYSELF AS
LAZY, BUT JUST RETIRED."

Chapter 1

Have You Put Your Kids On Teenage Retirement?

Are parents creating a welfare psychology?

“Youth today loves luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority, no respect for older people, and talk nonsense when they should work. Young people do not stand up any longer when adults enter the room. They contradict their parents, guzzle their food, put their feet on the table, and tyrannize their elders.”

Socrates, complaining about the youth of Athens. C. 500 BC

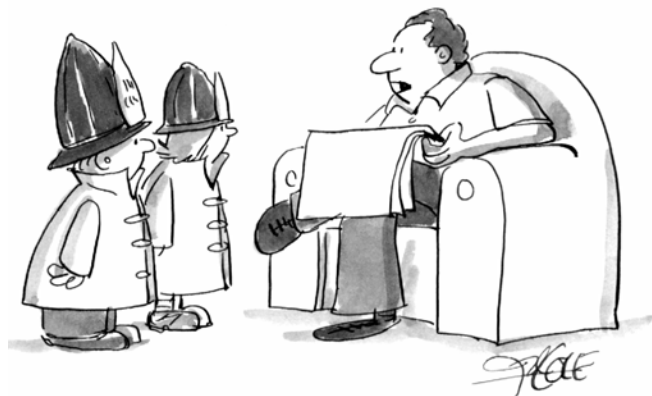
It is 7:00 pm. Mom has worked all day. She cooked a nice meal, they have finished eating, and now the family has left the table. It is the kids' night to clean up the kitchen but they haven't started yet. In fact, the dishes have been sitting there for over an hour, and they are watching television in the front room.

Mom is trying to get the laundry done, and she is tired. As she hurries down the hall she calls out, *“I'm not going to tell you kids again to get started on the kitchen! Do you hear me?”*

There is no response from her three teenagers. After another fifteen minutes passes she comes back into the front room again; now obviously out of patience and upset. She has already asked the kids several times to do the dishes, but they haven't budged an inch!



“THE MONEY YOU GAVE ME TO CLEAN MY ROOM? I SPENT IT ALL.”



“NO, YOU MAY NOT HAVE A CIGARETTE LIGHTER.”

“Get up now!” she demands, “And get in the kitchen immediately and get this mess cleaned up! I'm sick and tired of having to beg you people to do everything! You won't lift a finger around here unless I scream at you!”

Sound familiar? Parents all over the country are constantly trying to get uncooperative kids to clean their bedrooms, do their school work, stop their bickering and quarreling, and do many other things.

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Why are some kids cooperative and polite while others are lazy and insolent? Why do some teens cheerfully do their chores and homework without being asked to while others do not? Are some parents just lucky or do they know something the rest of us need to know?



"I KNOW I'M IN A 'TIME OUT', I'M JUST TAKING A COFFEE BREAK."

Teenage Retirement is a term that describes the attitude and lifestyle of children of any age who do not earn anything, but instead are given everything. These children typically do not learn to earn or save much money. They develop a sense of entitlement, are self-centered, ungrateful and usually lazy. They are taught to be consumers and not producers as they learn to be incompetent and dependent. Why should they work or do anything? They have absolutely no need to work or to be cooperative and pleasant at home, because everything is just given to them.

Teenage Retirement is a curse put upon children by well-meaning but ignorant parents who believe that good parents should provide everything they possibly can for their children. These parents don't realize the importance of work.

Kids who are on **Teenage Retirement** think they don't ever have to do anything. They can act like they are independently wealthy. They have such an abundance that they have no need to work for anything. They know that everything will just automatically be provided for them.

The curse: Teenage Retirement!

By meeting all of our children's needs we have put them on Teenage Retirement! We've put them out of work! If you don't require your children to work and earn what they get, you are robbing them of their opportunity to develop and grow and have self-respect. Even if you had limitless resources it would be terribly wrong to give everything to your kids and rob them of the satisfaction of achieving their own financial and emotional independence. It is a great insult to say, *"I will provide*



"YOU PAID ME \$10.00 TO SHOVEL THE SNOW- AND I SUB-CONTRACTED IT OUT FOR \$5.00."

everything for you because you obviously can't take care of yourself!" Some parents conclude that it is much easier to just provide everything for a child than for them to take the time to teach the child how to work and earn and save for his/her own needs.

Why do parents try to provide everything?

1. They want the child to enjoy childhood.
2. They want the child to have more time to study and get good grades.
3. They think good parents should provide all they can.
4. They are ignorant of correct principles and the damage caused by incorrect principles.
5. It makes the parents feel needed, and sometimes even like "super parents!"
6. It gives the parents pleasure to see their children happy when they give them things.

Listed below are some items we see in our homes that we automatically provide for our children. With a little thought one can list (literally) a thousand items that we just give our kids that they have now come to expect and that they never lift a finger to earn. We literally could list pages for every room in the house! Here is a partial list to get you started. Try to think about your situation and see how many more you can add.

IN HOME: Hot & cold running water ♦ carpets plumbing ♦ heat lighting & electricity window coverings private baths telephone newspaper & magazines automobile	cupboards tablecloths ♦ spices great variety of food	paint or wallpaper	GARAGE: Car ♦ bikes skates ♦ skateboard sports & camping equipment washer & dryer tools ♦ full freezer
KITCHEN: Dishes ♦ silverware pots & pans sink ♦ soap garbage disposal stove & oven refrigerator (full) electric can opener toaster ♦ blender popcorn popper dishwasher trash compactor microwave	BATHROOM: Private inside toilet wash basin ♦ mirrors bath & shower towels & washcloth soap & shampoo first aid supplies curlers & hair spray toothbrush & toothpaste hair dryer ♦ polish brush ♦ comb razor ♦ rugs tweezers ♦ nail clippers	YARD: Lawn plants & flowers fence ♦ mower lawn tools ♦ hose gym sets ♦ pets	EDUCATION: Schools ♦ college clubs ♦ sports activities ♦ music transportation
	FAMILY ROOM: Carpets ♦ draperies TV ♦ VCR lamps ♦ table sofa ♦ chairs piano ♦ pictures decorations ♦ books	BEDROOM: Personal bed with mattress ♦ sheets pillow & pillow case blankets ♦ dresser electric blanket radio ♦ closet many clothes games & toys CD & tape recorder boom box stereo ♦ books shoes ♦ phone carpet ♦ desk computer ♦ curtains	MISC: Medical & dental care dozens of restaurants movies & entertainment theme parks ♦ beaches parks ♦ vacations buses & planes lessons ♦ dance karate ♦ soccer football ♦ baseball ballet ♦ music

THE TOILET PAPER FAIRY

Everything is miraculously provided without any effort on their part. Just like the toilet paper fairy magically appears and puts the toilet paper on the roll. Kids can't seem to learn how to put it on correctly. We believe that inability is hereditary...because dads don't ever seem to be able to figure it out either!

BEEN THERE! DONE THAT! BORING! I have heard a teen complaining that he had nothing to do. This boy's father was well to do and he had given this boy just about everything. The mother, seeing her son with nothing to do tried everything to interest him: reading, inviting friends over, watching videos, etc. The mother had assumed personal responsibility for seeing that her

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spoiled son was always happy and entertained.

To each of her suggestions the boy moaned, “Been there! Done that! Boring! Booorringg!” The mother continued to try and make suggestions that would interest her son who followed each of her recommendations with his, longer and louder, “Boooooorrrrrinnnggg!” routine.

How sad. A child with everything, and at 14 years old totally bored with life. He had assumed that it was his right to be entertained constantly and that his mother (and others) were responsible to keep him entertained.

TEENAGE RETIREMENT AND TV...

It has been reported that American youth (on the average) watch over 4 hours of television a day. Who can really calculate what long term damage that can cause? How can a parent who is struggling to teach values to a child possibly succeed competing against the desensitizing effects of TV, which offers daily a flood of materialism, blatant immorality and violence?

What are some of the results of putting children and adolescents on teenage retirement?

These children are unchallenged. They develop few virtues, little appreciation, and develop a sense of entitlement, which is the belief that they are entitled to everything. They focus on their ‘rights’ and not on their responsibilities. They become selfish, greedy, self-centered and wasteful. Certainly one can see why. They require more and more external stimulation to keep their attention. They cannot see the need for study and work because, after all isn’t everything free?

These youth can not understand why others get after them to take personal responsibility for their rooms and personal items. They resent parents and teachers who expect them to work and to be accountable for their choices. They do not want to be told what to do.

These children often come to believe that they are victims of society and not responsible for their actions. They often complain about what they do not have. Teenage retirement sets a child upon a course that often leads to ultimate failure and misery.

Teenage retirement is a curse upon our youth and the antithesis of the ennobling work ethic and all it stands for. Work is that principle which provides us with all of life’s commodities. It is a principle which develops character, honesty, integrity, tenacity, appreciation and more.

Kids on teenage retirement develop no sense of value, no appreciation. Teenage retirement is just a welfare program. Is this what we want to teach our kids? They get lots of play time and often become lazy, selfish, greedy and self-centered. They want what they want now! They never learn to defer gratification. They never learn to work!

Learn more about the importance of work in the next chapter.