"Cause I Said So!"

How are the lives of young people controlled?

With the viral videos, “Shit... says,” many people have brought to light underlining issues of violence that many people are victims of, and examining those that they we may actually create. Such videos have been broad but enlightening such as, “Shit White Girls Say to Black Girls, and Shit Straight Girls Say to Gay Guys.” “Things like “lets go dancing, but not a gay bar,” or “not to sound racist but...” are micro-aggressions that impact the lives of minorities to cause real pain and suffering.

Many of the current examinations of the viral ads are critical to social movements movements and the general population. While we think about how straight people act to queer folks, we must also think about how ageism and adult-ism pervade in our society and how it marginalizes the tail ends of our community. People experience marginalization by the abuse of power that takes advantage of, and makes decisions of both the young and the elderly. It is one of the only oppressions that everyone experiences, both as victims and as potential perpetrators. Decisions that impact the very livelihoods of these groups have been decided by those who “know better” and who can “take ownership” in the direction of the controlled human beings. This power dynamic dichotomy is evident in common vernacular with things like, “you don’t know better,” or “you are just a kid.” Policy is then crafted to restrict voting, medical decisions, personal autonomy, and employment opportunities based solely on age. Even the educational system creates rules that particularly impact homeless youth or young folks experiencing familial strain. It is all a form of social control by those who “know better.” Your parents financial information is usually required into the consideration in the cost of attendance, even if they do not support you. Why is it that you can be drafted into the military at 18 but you can not enter an establishment that serves alcohol? In particularly with the queer community, many public gathering spaces are very commonly crafted around 21+ establishments ie. queer bars, but with this restriction, where do queer youth go when they want to get to know each other? Not everything can be accomplished on the Internet.
Young people, and increasingly the elderly, have no public spaces to find solidarity, support, and personal connection. Many elderly folks voice that they have to go back into the “closet” as they grow older. Ageism affects the tail ends of society, and adulthood is how adults control, judge, and manipulate the autonomous rights of young people. Such isolation, must end because the everyone should have control of their own body.

We made a list of some of the things we have heard adults say to young people. These are all best read with a little bit of sass and some attitude.

Signed by,
Students at the University of Washington
I Q Center

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I am more mature than you.
How old are you?
Oh my god, when I was your age...
You know what would be so fun for you?
Cause’ I said so!
Oh that probably wouldn’t be fun for you.
This is boring adult stuff.
We have a youth advisory board, you should totally volunteer for us!
You know you should really outreach for us - we really want to get more youth involved with...
You just do not appreciate how easy you have it now, thanks to the struggles I had to go through
You’re so articulate!
You know, I had to wait until I was old enough to go to the bars too.
Just get a fake ID...
‘All-Ages?’ why would I want to be somewhere with a bunch of kids!
You’re really lucky that I’m your mentor!
You are so smart and mature for your age!
Oh my, she’s only 13 and she’s already talks about feminism.
Oh, they are only 11 and they can sing and dance so well!
You don’t understand...
You don’t know what your doing.

Feel inspired? Email us, and let’s keep the dialogue going!

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