

What effect can rap music have on children that listen to rap on a regular basis?

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Rap has been around since the 1970s began in block parties in New York City. DJ Kool Herc was the one to kick off this new genre of music. All he wanted was to start new music to keep the parties fun and entertaining. Today Rap has had a big turn in which now the songs in this genre include misogyny, bad words, and explicit content. Many people argue if Rap has a negative or positive influence on society. This explicit content in these lyrics and music videos is very accessible to children. This can cause kids to want to try alcohol at a very young age. As they grow up, they could have a strain on their physical and mental well-being. Furthermore, children are easily influenced by what they see and hear which can only become a bad thing, rap music has lyrics that can bring hatred or no respect for women and negative stereotypes. On the contrary Rap music can help be a stress outlet, a form of expression, and a way to learn more about the outside world. All of these effects will be explained based on research and examples of song lyrics or music videos.

First of all, the first effect to be discussed is listening to music encourages violence or could lead kids to act out. Many rap songs have very convincing and are "an escape from reality is provided for teens in the "better tomorrow" depicted by some rap songs. Rags-to-riches' stories can be appealing at many developmental stages. Youthful desires to break the rules and become one's own person are condoned by rap music." (Cone, 2019, p1) To children, it is easy to continue a habit or something they learned if they aren't told differently or told what the correct way to do something. Rap songs like do depict a life of no worries and no rules, they do not understand the level of influence they have on the youth. Artists like Eminem put out songs with very graphic and explicit lyrics. For example, in the song "Kim" Eminem (2000) raps, "You and your husband have a fight/One of you tries to grab a knife, and during the struggle/He

accidentally gets his Adam's apple sliced (No!)/And while this is going on, his son just woke up/And he walks in, she panics/And he gets his throat cut (Oh my God!)/So now they both dead, and you slash your own throat/So now it's double homicide and suicide with no note." These song lyrics are talking about the very graphic scene between a family stabbing each other. When a child listens to this they will react as if it is something normal and could upon what the song says and do as the song says. According to experts, "that is, for violent lyrics to promote youth violence or for substance use portrayals to encourage experimentation with illicit drugs, young audiences presumably must find violent or substance related messages in the songs."(Roberts, Christenson, & Gentile, 2003, p.7) A lot of these songs can arise many personalities if they are heard at a young age. Since it is very easy to be influenced and could arise many bad habits or get into the wrong group of friends.

Another effect of listening to rap music at a very young age is that a lot of the songs talk about drug usage as well as alcohol. Most are involved with drugs and alcohol they post about it on their social media and we hear about it in the news or from friends. Blogger Liam Cone writes, "A study from the University of Pittsburgh stated a person comes across 251 references of drugs per day in rap music compared to 5 references per day in pop music." Rap music has the most drug reference than any other music genre. As time goes on the more of these songs keep including the use of drugs and alcohol in their lyrics. Rap artists like Lil Pump and Lil Wayne are a few examples of artists that are a part of the ones that include drugs and the use of alcohol in their songs. Most songs that include drugs or alcohol glorify that they make everything better and you can be worry-free. In "Kush" Lil Wayne (2008) raps, "And this anthrax wax give you asthma attacks/ I'm a smoker, you's a choker, go on and pass that back/ Lightning weed, that's my dope style/ Eyes lower than my profile/ This'll hit your lung, you'll cough both out." This

song talks about the use of drugs and how it makes him feel. When he says, " that's my dope style" he is saying that while he is doing these drugs, he is cool and that is an everyday thing for the way he glorifies the drug use. According to Emmanuela, "According to American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, many of the rap lyrics contribute to the suicide, violence, and inappropriate sexual content in lyrics that also influence and contribute to teens taking part in drugs and alcohol in a younger age."(2019, p.1) Kids do not understand the big effects that doing drugs has on them. They are starting addictions from a very young age, not only them but they influence their friends to do so too. Ryan Hill claims that " Dozens of the rappers who are labeled as mumble rappers have died recently from overdoses, gun violence and other acts that they seem to promote and gloat about in their music."(2020, p.1) As rappers who are involved with drugs are usually killed or die from an overdose, many have very young listeners, and they see this as a very regular thing to happen to them. Apart from the use of drug use or alcohol they can develop bad ideas from songs.

Many of these rap songs have another repeating theme, which is misogyny. Misogyny is the dislike of, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against women. Much new rap songs are sexualizing women claiming they are only an object for men. This new form of rap music glorifies big money, degrading of women, drugs, alcohol, and guns. De'ja Stokes writes, "Male rappers soon began to incorporate an excessive amount of slurs and derogatory statements directed to women into their lyricisms," (2020, p.1) she talks about an incident that happened to Megan Thee Stallion where she was shot at by Tory Lanez. "On Sunday morning, I suffered from gunshot wounds as a result of a crime that was committed against me and done with the intention to physically harm me," said Megan via Instagram." (Stokes, 2020, p.1) which was what caused many male rappers to go against her are started to say she was faking everything.

Which caused them to make more rap songs with misogynistic lyrics in them. De'ja continues to write, "These lyrics consisted of disrespectful and violent behavior towards women. Harsh lyrics continue to be normalized causing some to feel comfort in applying it to their everyday lifestyle—not just in music." Kids will find a new way of viewing women and disrespecting them. And girls will grow up thinking it is okay to be treated incorrectly by little boys according to these songs. Here's an example of a song with misogynistic lyrics. In the song "Cruise" Florida Georgia Line (2012) says, " Yeah, when I first saw that bikini top on her/ She's poppin' right out of the South Georgia water/ Thought, 'Oh, good lord, she had them long tanned legs!'/ Couldn't help myself so I walked up and said...." This song is a way to remind women that the only thing about them that matters is a bikini top and some short shorts because all they're good for is sex. This isn't a great mentality to have when you are a young kid. Learning to be respectful to women is important not only to women but the others and yourself

Lastly, many rap artists have talked about how they drop out of high school or did not go to college to become rappers. They show off their many cars and loads of money they have to prove that education isn't necessary to be successful. In the article, "*Negative Effects Of Rap Music On Youth*" the author writes, "Many youth are starting to come up without a decent education, because youth are dropping out of school to pursue a rap careers."(p.1) They see the way their favorite artist is living and prefer to go the same route they did and not continue studying to get a degree. This same article says, "Youth want to become rap artist, so they can live a thug lifestyle."(p.1) As rappers continue to show off their many accomplishments without their college degree or high school diploma, kids are influenced to do the same and not continue going to school with hopes to have the same luxury lives as their favorite rappers. An example of an artist who we all know dropped out of high school is Drake. Aubrey "Drake" Graham is a

Canadian rapper, singer, songwriter, actor, producer, and entrepreneur. A prominent figure in popular music, Drake is credited for popularizing the Toronto sound. He first gained recognition by starring in the teen drama television series *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, pursuing a career in music, he left the series and released his debut mixtape *Room for Improvement*. In Sean Michaels' article, he writes, "Drake has graduated from high school. The 25-year-old rapper has one less thing to mope about, revealing that he has finally earned a diploma after dropping out of school in his teens." (2012, p.1) Drake is a very big artist and lots of people listen to his song and hope be as big as he is in the music industry. Another artist that talks about dropping out isn't so bad is Lil Pump. He started off uploading his songs to SoundCloud. He started to gain popularity in 2017 after launching his single, "Gucci Gang." He also made a song called "Drop out" (2019) in which he raps, "Dropped out, then I got rich (yeah)/ Dropped out, then I put a Patek on my wrist (brrr)" In this song, he talks about how dropping out got him a Patek. A Patek is a Philippe watch that can be worth up to 176,000 dollars. Rappers have gained so much popularity that they are now millionaires and want the same for their audience. If children follow the steps of rappers and drop out of school, then slowly the demand for lawyers or doctors will increase. Rappers do not understand how much influence they have on this new generation and can cause many people to drop out.

In conclusion, Rap music isn't very appropriate for children. It can condone violence, encourage drug or alcohol use, create a form of bad behavior, and can influence them to not continue in school in order to become rappers. If rappers continue to make very explicit content and lyrics with very negative meanings behind them then they will create a world in which people do not have many ambitions and a sense of self-respect. This is why rap music shouldn't

be something children or kids under 13 listen to. It can only have a negative impact on their future and can grow bad habits.

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