



**2017
News &
Highlights**



A word from Teen Esteem's Founder & Executive Director, Linda Turnbull

Every generation of parents experiences anxiety when it comes to their kids, especially as it relates to new technologies, music, television, video games and youth cultural trends. Much of the concern today revolves around the inescapability of a mobile device having a profound impact on the way kids communicate with one another and how they spend their free time.

CNN recently interviewed psychologist Dr. Jean Twenge, author of *Generation Me*, who began conducting research on generational differences 25 years ago. Her findings reveal a concerning trend as smartphones are now the norm for many young people. The results are alarming:

- More than ever before, kids feel sad, hopeless, useless; like they can't do anything right
- Kids feel more left out and lonely than ever before
- Clinical-level depression increased 50% between 2011 and 2015
- The suicide rate has substantially increased

When most of us were growing up, we weren't aware of all the social events that we were not invited to. We didn't care what we looked like when we just hung out with friends because we didn't need to worry about someone taking a photo and posting it on social media. When bullying happened, it was usually left at school and not done publicly for everyone to see.

Last year, our passionate and engaging speakers reached 15,000 students through our assembly and classroom programs starting as early as 4th grade. We bring a message of hope and encouragement to students. We emphasize that **their value is not based on what they do, but on who they are and that every one of them is unique and has value.**

To learn more about our programs and how you can partner with Teen Esteem, please check out our website at www.teenesteem.org.

Together we are making a difference!

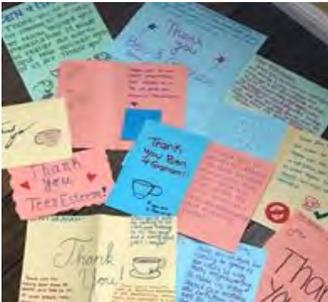
Equipping Students... Impacting Lives!

When our kids understand and embrace our core message that **their value is not based on what they do, but on who they are... and that EVERYONE deserves to be treated with RESPECT**, they are better equipped to overcome the many challenges they face. When we at Teen Esteem get to witness this fundamental message resonating with these students first-hand, we get to see the positive impact it's having...and it is truly something special!

We start with our "Better Together" message in 4th & 5th grade assemblies talking about why words matter, bullying and the importance of kindness. Halfway through one of these assemblies, a young girl asked permission to go to the back row because there was a girl sitting by herself and she didn't want her to be alone. The girl sitting by herself was going through a really difficult time and it was heartwarming to see.



We build on that message in our middle school multi-media assembly and then hit the tougher topics head-on in high school. Another inspiring interaction came after hearing the "teacup" analogy in a classroom presentation. An excited student ran up to our volunteer speakers saying, **"The teacup analogy was so great! I never understood why my friends act the way that they do, but getting a deeper understanding of why someone might actually feel like a solo cup explains why they act the way that they do."** She then runs over to the teacher, "Mrs. C!! Mrs. C!! EVERYONE needs to hear this! We HAVE to get everyone over to the MPR so they can hear this presentation. It is SO important!" Our message stirred up a passion inside this student, so much so that she could hardly contain herself. It was a moment our speakers will treasure.



Weeks later, Teen Esteem was encouraged with a bundle of touching thank-you notes after a classroom presentation.

Impacting lives by equipping students with our life-affirming messages of hope... it's what we do!