

**10th Grade Argumentative
Prompt: Teens and Dating**

Dating is a pressure that teenagers face today. Before it is acceptable for teenagers to start dating they must, have a sense of who they are and their values, dating is connected with poor performance in certain areas. Also dating is connected to risky behavior.

First of all, teenagers should not start dating until they have a sense of who they are. "Middle adolescence (ages 15-17 years) have an identity development that starts with experimentation with sex, drugs, friends, jobs...." (Oregon Health Authority, 2015) Some believe a teen first needs to form an identity and know who she or he is before developing a healthy or close relationship with another person. Involvement in a relationship during adolescent years can create problems with how a teenager develops.

Secondly, dating is connected with poor performance in many areas with an adolescent's life. "Frequent dating in early adolescence is connected with poor school performance, drug use, and delinquency. Other problems include poor social skills that last years, depression, or sexual activity." (Fogarty, 2008). Even though dating is a way for teens to learn more about themselves, once teens began dating in a serious relationship, they begin to compromise to what peer think is 'acceptable'. Dating has an impact on schoolwork and friendships that begin to suffer.

Last but not least, dating is connected with risky behavior. Once dating, "twice as many acts of risky behavior. These behaviors included unsafe sexual activity, alcohol use and delinquent behavior. In addition, they reported twice as many incidents of lying, cheating, picking fights, truancy, disobedience, and running away." (Lukits, 2013). Entering intimate relationships too early can cause problems, because the teens in the passage were dating, they wanted to fit in. Wanted people to like them, so they did anything they could do."....risk-taking behavior can have an impact on how a child develops." (Oregon Health Authority, 2015).

In conclusion, entering into an intimate relationship too early can cause problems for teenagers. Before teenagers start dating they need to have an identity of who they are, dating is connecting with poor performance among teen is a lot of general areas. Also dating is connected to risky behavior such as delinquent behavior.

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Dating is one of the most talked about subjects in everyone's day to day lives. Everyone has seen the wonderful benefits of having a significant other in their life. A partner can provide comfort, excitement, help in many aspects of life, and offer a good friend to have. Having a partner also requires that a person give their time and learn to compromise with another person. "Dating," says Kate Fogarty, "can be a way to learn many desirable skills. These include socially appropriate behavior, compromise, empathy, and how to develop a meaningful relationship." (Teens and Dating, Fogarty) As wonderful as relationships are, Ann Lukits reports on her article "the Data on Teen Dating" that when young teenagers get into relationships before they are emotionally and mentally ready they increase the risk of substance abuse, unsafe sexual activity, delinquent behavior, lying, cheating, and running away.

Relationships are so delightful, and it is natural for everyone to want a partner at any time in their life, but if a teenager starts dating if he or she is too young they can ruin their life and destroy their potential. A question then rises in every concerned parents mind, "when should my child start dating?" Over the years and after countless studies, evidence has proven that children over fifteen years old have shown to have a smaller percentage of risky behavior and have even progressed from their dating experiences.

Lukits shows data that was collected from a study on teens from twelve local schools. The teens were given a survey that asked them to report their dating activity and their personality traits. After seven years they discovered that on average, the group with the people who had dated or have been dating from about 11 years showed twice as many acts of dangerous activities as the 12 year old group. The "late Bloomers" as they were called in the study consisted of people who had been dating from 14-15 years old. "The late starters, once they began dating, followed a faster path through the casual and group-dating stages before moving to exclusive relationships. They showed no apparent negative effects. Students with high academic goals were more likely to be late bloomers." (Lukits) The teenagers that started dating around fifteen years old, were emotionally capable to handle schoolwork and having a partner in their life.

Many people will read off a list of stories about teenagers that have participated in risky behavior that was caused by a relationship when they were fifteen or older. Being Fifteen years old does not always mean that a child is suddenly ready for a relationship, fifteen is just a common age that, on average proved to have positive consequences. Every teenager is different, and every family has different standards and rules. If a child is 14 and has proven to do well in school and refrain from dangerous behavior, it is up to the parents and the child to discuss what is permitted. If a child is 17 and is unable to handle stress in life, or is too busy for a relationship, it is up to the child whether or not a relationship would be beneficial.

Study after study, evidence always leads to older teenagers in relationships being safer and more helpful. However, the parents and their child should discuss what their standards are, and decide for themselves what is permitted, and what they should refrain from.

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The teenage years are filled with many new and exciting privileges and responsibilities. These new experiences always bring consequences with them, whether negative or positive. As we grow up, one of the main things we look forward to are falling in love, dating and eventually getting married. In the dating world, there is one question that parents and teens all over the world are trying to get an answer to. How old should an adolescent be before they begin dating? There are many opinions on this, but the right age to start dating is sixteen years old. This is a good age to start dating because dating too early can result in many problems physically, mentally and emotionally, having a serious relationship too early in your teen years can decrease school performance and time you spend with family and friends, and with age comes experience. These are all reasons why sixteen is the best age to begin dating.

The first reason why sixteen is the best age to begin dating is because dating too early in your teenage years can result in many problems, whether it's physical, mental, or emotional. Serious relationships typically after time, end in a serious break-up that everyone hears about. These breakups usually end up also destroying any friendship that was created before the romantic relationship began. As a young teen, still trying to decide who you are, a serious breakup can leave you confused and depressed. Despite the age, breakups are hard, but when you are older you are able to deal with such an event in a more reasonable way and are able to move on and still be friends. In an article entitled "Teens and Dating", it states that "Desiring a romantic partner is a natural, expected part of adolescence. However, involvement in a serious romantic relationship in the early teen years can create problems." This statement is very true and shows that it's okay to desire a romantic relationship, but best to wait as to avoid problems and challenges you will regret getting into.

Another reason why sixteen is a good age to begin dating is because having serious relationships when you are too young can draw you away from your family, friends and your school work. The biggest problem with taking a lot of time away from your friends is the fact that when you don't have a romantic relationship anymore and your weekends suddenly become vacant, you will have no one to spend time with. Also, taking a lot of time away from your family can weaken relationships, and cause conflict within the home. Taking time away from homework and school work, can have negative effects on your future because bad grades and limited knowledge will limit your options for future college and career paths. The best thing you can do if you have a serious relationship, is let your partner know how important family, friends and school are to you, if they don't agree, they really aren't there for you. In the article called "Teens and Dating", it states that "Frequent dating in early adolescence is connected with poor school performance, drug use, and delinquency." I'm sure these are issues many teens deal with and look back regretting the decisions they made. It's never a good idea to give up something that you know is good for you for something you think might be good for you.

The last reason why sixteen is a great age to begin dating is because with age comes experience. This "experience" I speak of is not only dating and romantic experience, but also includes experience with social skills and good communication, sharing feelings with others, lessons learned from your past dating experience, and experience with being yourself. This experience doesn't come the day you turn twelve but is gained over time, much of it being in high school. In an article called "When to let Your Teen Start dating", it says that "There's an enormous difference between a fourteen—or fifteen year old and a sixteen- or seventeen year old in terms of life experience." This life experience believe it or not, comes with experiencing life. Although at age sixteen you still have much to learn, you are at a higher stage of development and have in some cases, gone through the phases of falling in love and having your heart broken. It is shocking to see the statistic stated in the article "Teens and Dating", that "26% of 12 year olds" have had a romantic relationship with someone. This is surprising because most twelve year olds don't even know what a romantic relationship is or even what it entails. As stated earlier, with age comes experience, experience I believe to be extremely valuable in learning to love someone and build a relationship from that.

Although age sixteen is the best age to begin dating, there are some young teens that have relationships that work out for the best. Also, some twelve year olds have experienced more of life than a sixteen year old because of their home situation or something they may have encountered or been exposed to whether through media or word of

mouth. Stating that sixteen is the best age to begin dating is not to say that a relationship between anyone younger will never work, but it is to say that relationships between older teens, tend to work out better for the emotional state of an individual, and can help keep teens out of trouble.

In conclusion sixteen is the best age to begin dating because dating is not something you should do just for the thrill of it, but a romantic relationship should be based on love for another person and the desire to learn more about yourself possibly through a relationship. Remember, falling in love is natural and in some cases, having a serious romantic relationship may also be natural, but never let that relationship change your personality in a negative way, allow you to take too much time away from family friends and school work, or decrease your self-esteem.

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Teen dating can be a touchy subject. Young teens are constantly asking their parents if they can date, and when they are told no, they need to know why. The thing about dating in their teenage years is that they may not see the long term consequences of dating early. There are many good reasons as to why it is good to wait to date. First of all, there is always the fact that the older you are, the more mature you are. Also, for someone to be comfortable in a relationship, they need to be comfortable with themselves, which takes time. One of the obvious reasons is that if you date early, there is a much higher risk of getting into the habit of bad behavior and activities.

As Dr. Ron Egar points out, "There's an enormous difference between a fourteen- or fifteen-year-old and a sixteen- or seventeen-year-old in terms of life experience." (*When to Let Your Teenager Start Dating*) This is an obvious point. The development and maturity of a seventeen-year-old is going to be much higher than that of a fourteen-year-old. They have much more knowledge about the social aspect of life, and overall have more experience. Older teens are much more focused on the future, which helps them make better choices in terms of whether or not they choose to be in a relationship. Waiting until your child has reached the age of sixteen will be better for both you and your child in the long run.

For someone to be in a healthy relationship with someone else, they need to have a healthy relationship with themselves. If they constantly need reassurance and depend on other people for validation, they aren't ready to support someone else emotionally in a committed relationship. In the article *Teens and Dating*, Kate Fogarty comments: "Some believe a teen first needs to form an identity and know who she or he is before developing a healthy close relationship," supporting the fact that you need to be comfortable with who you are before you can be comfortable being with someone else. When teens in relationships don't know who they are, or need reassurance for every move, their significant other won't be able to have a healthy relationship because it is always about that one person. This can result in the relationship not working out, which can take a heavy emotional toll on the teen.

If someone decides not to wait, there can be many consequences. There are many statistics proving that those who date earlier get into more trouble. In a study done recently and recorded in the article *The Data on Teen Dating*, it reads: "The early starters reported twice as many acts of risky behaviors as the middle group. These behaviors included unsafe sexual activity, alcohol use and delinquent behavior," (Lukits, Ann) which goes as far as to say that those who don't wait to date will end up with consequences such as the use of alcohol and other unsafe activities. It is a pattern of behavior. If a teen dates against their parents' will, who's to say they won't do other things that they shouldn't do? It's a dangerous path down a very slippery slope.

Although it may not seem like there are large consequences for dating before one is sixteen, there really are. It is a safer decision to wait until they have more maturity and are confident with who they are in the first place. Why make a decision that has the possibility of leading down the wrong path? It is much better to make the choice that has the best possible outcome. Waiting to date seems like a trivial decision, but it can have a big impact on your life.

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Dating is a part of being a teenager and developing necessary social skills. It seems as though kids are beginning to date earlier every year which may not seem like a major problem but, it can lead to some prevalent dangers. Kate Fogarty even said that Teens feel strong pressures to date, in "Teens and Dating." Adolescents should be at least sixteen years old before they begin dating because they have not yet developed intellectually or in their own identity, it will lead to risky behaviors, and when teenagers are older they are more mature and able to make better decisions. Here is some advice, if teenagers will make the choice to wait until they are older to date and not date so seriously, they can save themselves from unnecessary problems.

First off, younger adolescents' brains are just not developed yet. In the chart labeled "Stages of Development," it states that in early adolescents, intellectually, their cause and effect relationships are underdeveloped and their thoughts are based on the "here and now." They haven't developed good thought process and they are not focused on other people. When in relationships, it is going to hinder their mental development and their emotional development. Young adolescents are in a period of time where they are trying to discover their identity. "Stages of Development" says that they are often faces with questions about who they are and how they fit in. This is a venerable stage and dating will only confuse and mess with these stages. In "Teens and Dating" it says, "Some believe a teen first needs to form an identity and know who she or he is before developing a healthy close relationship." These kids are unable to create stable relationships because they themselves are not stable. If they don't even know who they are, how can they really discover and invest in who somebody else is?

Another important point that needs to be recognized is that the earlier individuals choose to date, the more likely they will develop more risky behavior. It has been proven in "Teens and Dating" that frequent data leads to a poor performance in school, drug use, and delinquency. It can also cause problems with their social skills, depression, and sexual activity. Children should not be involved in these things. Their main focus should be school and having fun, not stressing over a relationship. In "The Data on Teen Dating" they state, "The early starters reported twice as many acts of risky behavior as the middle group. These behaviors included unsafe sexual activity, alcohol use and delinquent behavior. In addition, they reported twice as many incidents of lying, cheating, picking fights, truancy, disobedience, and running away." Two different sources say almost the exact same thing. Teens that date early will end up having a lot of difficult problems.

Lastly, Teenagers that wait to date until they are older are more mature to make better decisions. In "When to Let Your Teenager Start Dating" Dr. Ron Eager says that he advises that there should be no single dating before the age sixteen. He also says, "There is an enormous difference between a fourteen- or fifteen-year-old and a sixteen- or seventeen-year-old in terms of life experience." It may not seem like a big difference but that year or two can mean the difference of a fully developed brain or not. Be safe when dating and just wait until after sixteen. In "Stages of Adolescent Development," the difference between late and early adolescence in terms of intellectual growth and Identity Development are major. Late adolescents have established abstract thought and are philosophical and idealistic. They also know their limits and are more capable of intimate relationships.

While there is a lot of evidence point towards having teens wait until they're older to date, there are some other plausible claims. Some believe that dating can help teens learn social skills. In "When to Let Your Teenager Start Dating," they said that they spend as much time with their same sex friends as they do with members of the opposite sex. The important thing to note is that Teenagers need to be safe and aware when it comes to these matters.

Dating is both becoming more serious and at a younger age. Adolescents need to be old enough to make good decisions when dating and a good age to start is sixteen. Youth should try to wait to date until then because they aren't ready yet in both intellectually and emotionally speaking. Dating early is leading to more risky behavior and the more mature the brain is, the more likely it is to make good decisions in terms of dating. Ann Lukits states, "The late starters, once they began dating, followed a faster path through the casual and group-dating stages before moving to inclusive

relationships. They showed no apparent negative effects.” Be smart when it comes to dating and wait until at least sixteen years of age.

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There is no specific age to start dating.

The teenagers, from the relationships that they have with the opposite sex, help them to find more about themselves, to build their own world and future and to do the right choices. It doesn't matter when you start dating, you can do it whenever you feel it. There is no fear about dating in young age, I know people that they're dating from elementary school. To have a relationship from this young age it doesn't mean anything. Most of the children that have, are doing that only because they want to act like adults, for fun or because are interesting in this part of life.

Love is really a beautiful thing, so you must choose when you want to explore this piece of yourself. Society or anyone else can choose for you when you must date. It's only and only your choice. This kind of relationships, help the person to socialize her/his oneself with the world that it's around her/him. Help the person in her/his first steps for the entire life, to communicate and understand better the people in the same age, (and to start a part of the adult's life). So bring good relationship with the family members, parents.

A lot of people think that, the dating is one part of the bad attitude, true is that reflects the personality. This could be bad or good it's based on the person and its past. Some teenagers it's difficult to control then when they have experience, how is to be in a relationship. They getting crazy and a lot more often frustrated with their life. The rejection, is something that brakes them in to pieces. But if they don't get hart they'll never learn.

My opinion is that is never too early or too late, to have a relationship. All the things have their own way. You just must to wait for the best moment.