

## Our Voice, Our Vote by Caitlin Rott, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade, Simon Kenton High School

We need to think about the younger generations and the ones to come because what we do or do not do now will affect them later. Any problems we cause, they will have to fix. That kind of pressure shouldn't be left on them, which means we need to right a few wrongs. . . starting with our voting privileges and ending with freedom of speech.

Everyone over the age of eighteen who votes is limited to the topic or candidates on the ballot. Sometimes kids who don't have a say because they're too young to understand, yet that doesn't mean they shouldn't have a chance to be heard. In the article "Young People Have a Stake in Our Future, Let Them Vote," the writer offers, "We typically don't think about the fact that kids have very few rights as a moral issue. Why not? Perhaps because the people who are currently experiencing it get fewer platforms to talk about it, have less practice articulating their perspectives, and are stereotyped as bratty, entitled, and ignorant--especially if they complain about their lives."

Some kids want to have a say in what goes on in their lives, but unfortunately are ignored. And, according to some adults, kids shouldn't vote. Everyone has a voice and once people are given the chance to speak up, it's surprising how much someone has to say. As for the freedom of speech, some young people are afraid to speak. They're afraid they'll be ridiculed for what they believe -- and every day the situation is getting worse. We are being judged by what we wear, what we say, and what we do which kills our self confidence. In the article "Helping Your Child Develop Their Own Voice," the author states, "We desire to create an inviting space for our children to use their own words, whether by mouth or device, so they will gain the courage to speak thoughtfully and confidently in the greater world." Without confidence children will refuse to say what's on their minds. They'll become quiet little lambs instead of mighty lions.

Everyone needs a chance to be heard. Even the younger generation who may be too young to fully comprehend or understand. What we do and say now affects what happens later. So after we right our wrongs, we will finally be one step closer to giving future generations the lives they deserve.