

Curfews



Several weeks ago, Family Weekly reported on a highly provocative subject—curfews for teen-agers. Some experts believe they can help law-enforcement agencies check juvenile delinquency. Others feel they do nothing but cover up a community problem which can only be solved by more constructive programs. Readers were invited to give their opinions about the merits of teen-age curfews, and hundreds of letters came from youngsters, parents, ministers, community leaders, and others interested in this vital modern problem. Here are excerpts from these letters, representing both sides of a perplexing question.



HERE'S WHAT FAMILY WEEKLY READERS SAY

I studied the cases of 300 juvenile delinquents for my doctoral thesis and found that 99 percent suffered from some kind of emotional disturbance. The reason these teen-agers roamed the streets was that they were running away from frustrating home situations.

To impose a curfew and forcibly return them to the misery which they were escaping often will aggravate the problem so that some may give vent to their hostility by committing more serious anti-social acts ranging up to murder. Or they may suffer complete emotional or mental breakdowns.

The way to treat these teen-agers is to try to help with their problems. In short, we need fewer curfews and other punitive measures and more psychiatric and guidance clinics for anti-social juveniles and their families. *Rabbi Avery J. Grossfield, Florence, S. C.*

Good or Bad?

I'm all for curfews. Even good parents need some help in raising children these days. Once our 12-year-old son hounded us into letting him drive our car. We were stopped by police. Dad got a \$14 fine, and my boy a \$7 fine. It reminded us we must observe the rules of good sense. Curfews would do the same when parents forget themselves and become too lenient. *Mrs. L. J., Sioux City, Ia.*

Society has created a "stay-up-late" situation with its late movies, roller rinks, sweet shops, and other amusements. It has set up scores of lures to keep teen-agers out late, yet society complains when the kids do just that.

If a community is sincere about curbing the juveniles' night life, it should help parents combat the influences of night recreation. A curfew would do this. It would tell all teen-agers to get off the street, and save those under parental curfews from being called "chicken."

I scoff at reasoning which says parents should establish curfews but the law should undertake recreation. It's the other way around. First let the community enforce a curfew, so the parents can supply the recreation. *Mrs. M. S., Dubuque, Ia.*

Every town has its teen-age leaders and teen-age gangs. Usually the leader is the toughest and most delinquent of the group. He forces the young, impressionable juveniles to follow his bad examples. How? By the age-old method of calling them "sissy" if they don't follow.

Take this boy off the street with a curfew, and you will free the ordinarily good boys and girls from his evil proddings. The regular kids won't mind because they would go home anyway if they knew it was acceptable in their "teen-age code." *Elliott Rosenholz, North Brunswick, N. J.*

Six years ago, our community adopted a curfew as a minor aspect of an overall program to help our juveniles. It has been effective only because it is part of the larger program which proves to teen-agers that their community is interested in them and is trying to help them. When I hear the siren at curfew, I don't think of it as a restriction but a symbol that our community cares about its young people. *Pastor D. H. Peniston, Cottage Grove, Ore.*

As an ex-policeman I know about curfews. The trouble with them is that they stop where the law should begin—at the door of the teen-ager's home. I've brought kids to homes where parents were too busy with their jobs and

pleasures to care about the family. I've talked to boys and girls who were ashamed for me to see the flophouses their parents called "home." Why should I help punish the child? The trouble was in their homes—where a curfew carries no authority. *W. S., Ridgefarm, Ill.*

The curfew idea stinks! We teens in Indiana are supposed to be home by 11 p.m., but last Summer I was out every night without getting caught. Once the cops curbed a carful of us teen-agers and asked what we were doing. I said we were going to get cigarettes and what were they going to do about it. They took us as far as a gas station, then turned us loose. They said we should go home and if they caught us again they'd jail us. I don't think I would disregard the curfew if I really had to go to jail, but not even the cops pay any attention to it, so why bother? *S. R., Muncie, Ind.*

Teen-age curfews? Mark down a giant-size NO for this editor of a small-town weekly! Enforced curfews would eliminate 25 percent of the really newsworthy articles on the front page of my newspaper. What would I use to fill the space I now devote to the increasing number of youthful offenders? I would have to report honor-roll scholars, teen-age athletes, and high-school music and drama students. Who wants to read about them? *A Weekly Editor Western New York*

There is no need for a curfew if we teen-agers have good parental guidance. Many parents today are too busy making money to take an interest in their children and what they are doing. I think if more mothers were at home instead of at work or at club meetings they would know what was bothering their children and help them solve it without going out on the street. A child whose parents understand him needs no curfew. He wants to be at home. *Maureen Adams, Savanna, Ill.*

I am a teen-ager, and I like curfews. We have to be in by 10 o'clock, and my parents see that I am. I think it is nice for the people of my home town and my parents to think enough of us to go to all that trouble. Some parents I know, though, don't seem to care if their boys and girls are out or not. I'm glad my parents aren't like that. I have found I can go on a date and have fun and still get in by 10. *B. F., Huntsville, Ala.*

Teen-agers wouldn't need a curfew if their families provided fun at home. Our basement is always open for dances, record parties, and school get-togethers. We not only share our home with the children, but our own lives, planning things with them and taking part in their activities. If our daughter has a problem, she knows she can come to us. Yes, we are strict about hours and behavior, but we've never had to depend on curfews to keep her out of trouble. *Mrs. H. E. Waldrop, Canton, O.*

For ten years I have run a pool hall—and enforced a curfew. The only time I stay open after 10 p.m. is when the boys win a week-

end basketball or football game. The kids use my place to play games, watch TV, drink soft drinks, and just talk things over. They are never troublesome and the phone is always nearby for parents to call them if needed. I know curfews are good for businessmen, police, and teen-agers, but the boys should be given a good time before they have to go home. More than 500 boys have grown up in my pool hall. I haven't had any murderers or such, but five priests, three ministers, 15 engineers, about 15 high-school teachers, and plenty of good husbands and fathers have had fun in my place. *Lewis Nehno, West Hazelton, Pa.*

I'm a teen-ager and on probation for going on a three-week "crime spree." I still don't know what happened because we were drinking "hopped-up" soft drinks most of the time. Now I'm going to school and working part time to pay off \$900 in damages. Would a curfew have helped me? No, because my parents told me over and over to come home and stay out of trouble. But I didn't listen and I certainly wouldn't have listened to anybody else.

So what do I suggest? Well, parents should get tougher, really lay down the law. My folks are doing that with my younger brothers, and they won't need a curfew to stay out of trouble.

Another thing would have helped me. A teen-ager needs money today, a lot more than his parents did. My parents couldn't give me much money, but I was willing to work for it. But you'd be surprised how few part-time jobs there are for a teen-ager. With no money, you can't do much, so you go looking for trouble. Or at least, I did. *C. B., Grand Rapids, Mich.*

As a county attorney, I find juveniles one of my greatest headaches. I don't believe curfews are the complete answer, but they are a partial answer. No single criminal law is the answer to all crime, yet no one advocates eliminating them. Each does some good in protecting the people, and so does a curfew. Many restrictive laws have been passed to protect minors—labor and liquor regulations, to name two. Curfews, too, protect youths by restricting them in a dangerous area. *William H. Earney, Marfa, Tex.*

A curfew could serve a real purpose in some communities if it were to come from the teen-agers themselves. Many universities have proved the usefulness of an honor system which originates with the students. To me, this is the thinking necessary behind successful youth work. Let local youth councils, not adults, determine curfew needs. Youth has a keen sense of values and expects restrictions. But the restrictions must be understood by the youths, and they must be permitted to cooperate in handling their problems. *Charles S. Downes, Carmel, Calif.*

We wouldn't need curfews if we gave teen-agers definite responsibilities and demanded that they earn at least part of their keep. I am thankful that I have worked since I was 12 years old. Today our government prohibits youngsters from working and indulgent parents support juveniles many years more than they should. The youths would not be getting into trouble if they were learning what it takes to be a good citizen. *A. B. Gosselin, Lawton, Okla.*



New kind of breakfast and timely new recipe enriched with Quaker Oats



SWEET-BLENDED OATMEAL

Here's a brand new kind of oatmeal! And a new taste delight! It's an intriguing new way for youngsters (and grown-ups) to get the high-protein benefits of good hot oatmeal. The flavor of cinnamon hearts or other confections blended into the oatmeal during the cooking—deliciously flavors every spoonful of creamy oatmeal. Try it!

Follow oatmeal recipe on package for 4 to 6 servings. During cooking, stir in 1/4 cup cinnamon hearts. Cover and let stand as directed. Garnish with additional cinnamon hearts if desired. Serve with milk or cream.

"TO MY VALENTINE" OATMEAL COOKIES

High-protein Quaker Oats adds nourishment and nut-like flavor to cookies.

2 1/2 cups sifted flour	2 Tbsp. milk
1 tsp. baking powder	1 egg
1/2 tsp. salt	1 tsp. vanilla
1/4 cup butter or margarine, soft	1 cup Quaker Oats (quick or old fashioned, uncooked)
1/4 cup sugar	

Sift flour, baking powder and salt into bowl. Add butter, sugar, milk, egg and vanilla. Beat until well blended, about 2 minutes. Stir in rolled oats. Roll out on lightly floured board or canvas to 1/4-inch thickness. Cut into heart shapes. Bake on greased cookie sheets in moderate oven (375°F.) about 15 minutes. Decorate with tinted confectioners' sugar frosting. Makes 3 1/2 dozen.

