

Young people who frequently argue with their parents are better citizens, research finds

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Teenagers who regularly clash with their parents are more likely to have given time to a charity or humanitarian cause, a study has shown.

The survey of 13 and 14 year-olds carried out by academics at Cardiff University, showed those who argued "a lot" with their mother and father, compared to those who "never" argued, were also more likely to have been involved with a human rights organisation in the past 12 months and to have contacted a politician or signed a petition.

Professor Sally Power, of the Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD), who led on the study, said: "Traditionally, rows between teenagers and their parents have been seen as an unwelcome and stressful part of growing up.

"In actual fact, our research indicates arguments may be one route through which [young people](#) acquire skills of debate that enable them to have [higher levels](#) of [civic engagement](#)."

The research also revealed:

- Girls are nearly twice as likely to have arguments with both their mother and father over their clothes;
- Girls are more likely to have arguments with their mother over household chores;
- Boys were twice as likely to argue with their [mothers](#) (but not their [fathers](#)) about politics;
- Boys were also more likely to have arguments with their mothers over homework.

When focusing on the ethnicity of respondents, the research revealed white teenagers were more likely than those from BAME backgrounds to argue about chores and money. The analysis also showed BAME (black, Asian and minority ethnic) respondents were seven times more likely to argue about religion.

Mothers were more likely to argue with their children than fathers,

according to the survey. Nearly 83 percent of teenagers questioned said they never argued with grandparents.

Professor Power said: "Our research reveals some interesting discrepancies between males and females, as well as a difference between white and BAME families. We need to delve deeper to investigate why this is the case and what effect it has on children as they grow."

The research is from the Civil Society centre research project "The intergenerational transmission of 'civic virtues': the role of the family in civil society engagement." The findings stem from a survey of 976 13-14 year olds in Wales which was carried out between October 2016 – March 2017.

More information: The intergenerational transmission of 'civic virtues': the role of the family in civil society engagement.

[wiserd.ac.uk/research/research ... family-civil-society](https://wiserd.ac.uk/research/research...family-civil-society)

Provided by Cardiff University

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