**Cliques in Schools**

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Growing up with [peer pressure](http://teens.lovetoknow.com/Statistics_on_Peer_Pressure) and everything else going on in the world can be difficult enough for a teen without cliques in schools playing a factor. But every high school across America still features groups of teenagers, also known as cliques, in different variations. Some cliques, like the girls in the film *Mean Girls*, are rude, offensive, and give all social groups a bad name. It can sometimes be difficult to deal with cliques. However, there are a few simple tips to prevent cliques from ruling your life. In fact, not all cliques are bad. Keep reading for more information about that myths of cliques in schools and general information about them.

What Is A Clique?

Generally speaking, the term "clique" has gotten a bad connotation over the years. This is in part because many cliques have an exclusive nature that can lead to hurt feelings in those not included. Most of the time, the mass media only portrays cliques that are negative. However, being mean isn't a requirement of being a clique. Technically speaking, any group of friends or after school club can be considered a clique if it doesn't include all students.

Dealing With Cliques

Because of the exclusivity of these groups, some teens may feel like cliques are controlling their lives. If you've been having trouble with the cliques in your school, here are a few tips to make your life easier:

* Stay calm. Getting upset will only make things worse.
* Ignore them. While it might be difficult, cliques will only get worse if you pay attention to them.
* Creating a group of your own friends to help you through.
* If things are really bad, speak to a counselor at your school.
* Cliques can be involved in bullying, a serious problem in many schools. If you feel bullying is an issue with a clique, contact a teacher or principal right away.
* Be a part of the solution: help other teens who you see struggling due to the cliques at your school.

Negative Qualities of Cliques

There are also numerous cons to being a part of a clique (or being around a clique), such as the following:

* Feeling hurt or excluded from the group
* Feeling like you are not enough on your own
* Feeling like you are pressured to do things you do not want to do in order to stay in the group
* Feeling controlled by the group as a whole
* Not feeling comfortable being alone
* Increased distrust of others
* Feeling intimidated by others and their actions

Positive Aspects of Cliques

While cliques can share negative qualities, they can also share positive traits. Some of the pros include the following:

* Increased social structure and awareness of social norms
* Increased comfort with being around your peers
* The comfort of knowing you belong as a part of a group

Clique Myths

Like other parts of the high school experience, there are numerous myths out there related to cliques in schools. Some of these myths include the following.

Myth: Exclusive Cliques Are a Fact of Life

Fact: If you feel you're being bullied or victimized by a social group, you can do something about it. Talk to a counselor, teacher, or other education professional you trust. You can take control of the situation with help.

Myth: Cliques Are Always Negative

Fact: Cliques are not always a bad thing. In fact, some cliques can provide positive and uplifting experiences. Think of your close group of friends and how much fun you have with them.

Myth: Cliques Are Always Superficial

Fact: While some participants in cliques might be concerned primarily with superficial things like make-up or movies, that doesn't define the clique nor it's individuals as a whole. Different people like different things.

Myth: You Only Have Cliques In High School

Fact: Since a clique is defined as a group of people with shared interests, a clique can last and exist long after high school. Many workplaces or [club affiliations](http://teens.lovetoknow.com/Social_Clubs) can be considered a clique.

The Big Picture

While there are a lot of high school stereotypes out there about cliques, there is more to the story than frequently meets the eye. It's good to understand the big picture about these social groups, and it's important to do something if you feel you are being intimidated or bullied by cliques in your school.