



## TEENEGERS FREE TIME

For young people, free time is one of the experiences on which they focus most of their expectations of realization. With a labor market that is substantially blocked and in any case unpredictable, a school unable not only to prepare for tomorrow, but also to interpret the present, we understand why young people only have free time. Thus motorbike or car rides, the Saturday evening pilgrimage between bars, game rooms and discos become the new "sanctuaries" where to celebrate the rites of being young and where to be realized. It is symptomatic to see them gather in a group in front of these "sanctuaries", melt, reappear and then disappear completely.

Adults, especially parents or educators, wonder with dismay: where do the boys go, what do they do, what do they think, what do they plot, what do they want? Faced with the news of the Saturday night massacres, possible meetings with the drugs are in alarm for the situations in which the boy can be driven out without control. They think that teenagers in their spare time are literally dragged along to do "things that are not good" by bad companions.



The Cospes research on leisure time  
Are these concerns justified?

A recent survey of 5000 adolescents from all over Italy promoted by the Salesians of the Cospes allowed us to understand how adolescents place themselves in regards to free time and what expectations they have.

Teenagers, even if they are happy to be in the family, can't wait to get out of the home to expand into the world of their peers. They leave home as soon as they can and go to the "conquest" of

streets, squares and gardens ...

What do they do at this time?

The answers indicate that the most frequent activities are:

- \* meeting friends: 94% is the alternative "place" par excellence for staying at home and the fundamental purpose of going out;
- \* in the second place comes the desire to be in a group to confront and evaluate oneself with others: to meet one's own group: 81%;
- \* as a third choice there is wandering around the shops (or looking at the windows), where to design or make small personal purchases: 65%, with a noticeable difference between boys (49%) and girls (80%);
- \* attend bars, pizzerias, pubs, sandwich bars etc.: 64%, probably not alone but still with friends;
- \* practicing sports: 62%, with a notable difference between males (75%) and females (49%);
- \* attend cinemas, theaters, culture halls or concerts: 62%, more girls (64%) than boys (59%);
- \* getting around by motorbike, car (for the 18 year olds of course), bicycle etc.: 54%, with a significant advantage for males (63%) compared to females (46%);
- \* going out with parents: 48%, with a noticeable difference between boys (40%) and girls (57%). This trait denotes again the adolescent's ambivalence towards their infantile status that they still struggle to leave;
- \* to attend oratories, youth centers assigned to this: 38%, without differences between males and females;
- \* going to the disco: 34%, with a significant difference between males (38%) and females (30). The stretch is progressively increasing from 14 to 19 years;
- \* going out with your girlfriend: 30%, by far, but 56% of males;
- \* going out with your boyfriend: 27%, by far, but 50% of the females;
- \* go to the gaming rooms: 26%, with a significant difference between males (40%) and females (11%);

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