

Adolescent Interview

Lidya is 15 years old, in the 10th grade, and go to Marlborough School in Hancock Park. She lives in Santa Monica in a 3-bedroom apartment with her father, Dementis, her mother Aster, her 13-year-old sister Leah in 8th grade, and a puppy her Meelo. Lidya's hobbies are soccer, swimming, kickboxing, reading, writing, and debate. She is 5'5" tall and 110 pounds. Lidya's mother Aster is my long time best friend.

1 How immersed are you in technology and social media, and how does it impact your life?

It's fair to say that I use technology significantly, both academically and recreationally. For example, my school has implemented a laptop system where each student must bring their own personal laptop to school for class (for online textbooks or lessons) and at home, one of the many ways I communicate and interact with my friends and peers is through text messages and social media (primarily Instagram and Snapchat).

2. When you are faced with challenges or difficulties (i.e. academically, socially, etc.), how do you handle it? Describe your network of support in challenging situations.

When facing challenges and difficulties, I tend to think of the worst possible scenario, which usually increases my stress and worries about whatever is bothering me. Luckily, I have an incredible family that cares for my well-being and I have no problem voicing my personal concerns with any of my family members. Aside from that, I also go to a rigorous, private all-girls school in which most of my peers are going through similar situations, academically and socially, and it is easy to confide in my friends and, when needed, my teachers as well.

3. How would you describe your relationship with your family members?

As I stated earlier, my family is close-knit and I am able to easily and openly discuss anything with them. My parents understand both my sister and me and are not overbearing, but at the same time, are invested in our future. My sister and I are best friends more than we are sisters and by that I mean that I can spend lots of time with her without getting bored or annoyed because I truly enjoy her companionship.

4. On a scale of 1-10 (10 being really ready), how ready do you feel you are to become an adult and why?

I would say that I feel ready at average 8.5/9. Emotionally, I do feel like a 10. I have matured and am at peace with myself and I do feel as if I could handle even the worst of situations because I know I can rely on my own instincts. Academically, I feel as if I am at an 8. I only say this because I am in the 10th grade and still have much to learn before I graduate high school, let alone college. My family and my school have both prepared me to soon become an adult so I am not worried at all.

5. Where do you see yourself in five years?

In five years, I see myself in college (probably on the east coast) preparing to enroll into law school. I've always wanted to live in the east coast and have dreamed of going to college in either New York or Massachusetts. As for law school, I don't know what type of lawyer I would like to be yet, but I've been fascinated by court hearings and cases for a long time, hence my participation in debate.

6. What are your favorite and least favorite things about being a teenager?

My favorite things about being a teenager are probably all of the fun activities (going to hang out with friends and going shopping without a parent chaperone) I can do. I'm young

enough to act like a child but too old to be treated like one, which is one the benefits of being 15. What I don't like about being a teenager is, all the negative stigma that comes with being young. Older generations look down to us like we are spoiled brats even though they don't realize how hard it can be to be in our shoes. Time has changed, I'll admit, but it could be argued that times are harder now than they were before. For instance, my college preparations started last summer, which is way earlier than the average teen would have started preparing for college 20 years ago. Also, the idea that since we don't have jobs, we are all "free-loaders" is completely wrong. I wish I could have the fun summer job; I just don't have time for it with the pile and piles of homework I'm assigned at the end of the year. The pressure is also a lot higher now that it was a few decades ago, and I think that these are just some of the few things that aren't taken into consideration enough.

The interview with Lidya went as I expected. I have known her since she was five years old and it felt awkward to interview her without talking to her normally. I also felt like since I am her mother's friend she might not be open and share her feelings as she would with her friends. Sometimes, I know her dad wanted her to go to church on Sundays and they did argue a lot before. Now it's not a problem because she is really busy with schoolwork along with traveling for her debate every two weeks nation wide. It is very fascinating to me to hear a fifteen years old plan for college or university. The time and place that I was raised didn't prepare me for a higher education. Times were much slower and less pressure in school, as contrary, adolescence has faster pace nowadays especially, if the teen has a higher goal in education. Therefore; it is great to see a young girl from Ethiopia choosing and preparing for higher academic to get a better life than her parents. The parent's time and effort will pay to see the child successes in her academically.