

## Pros and Cons of School Uniforms

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We have worked with schools across the United States, and believe us, you are not the only person asking this question! The answers that we have heard from our customers are as varied as our customers are. The debate over school uniforms is complicated, so we've included highlights from both sides for you to consider:



### **Professional:**

Some say that a child in a school uniform is more likely to take school seriously. Putting on the school uniform signals he or she is going to school just like dad dresses up to go to work. Schools report that when students dress in "work clothes" rather than "play clothes" they take a more serious approach to their studies.

### **Promotes Good Discipline:**

Many think that school uniforms help maintain school discipline, decreasing the amount of discipline problems. The argument is that children today are lacking in self-discipline because parents refuse to discipline them. This makes it more difficult on the teacher who has to deal with classes of 25-30 students at a time.

### **Reduces Fighting and Violence:**

Schools report that school uniforms decrease fighting and violence that arise out of arguments over fashionable clothes. Children invariably tease those who do not have trendy clothes. Those who can't afford name brand clothes are often sensitive about their clothing. Schools struggling with gang problems report that school uniforms help ease tensions.

### **Distractions:**

Many parents believe that students wearing school uniforms look nicer and that a school uniform policy ensures that children will come to school in appropriate clothing, avoiding distractions such as fads considered to be outlandish or overly revealing. Some students have turned school into an unending fashion show. This distracts from learning, as some kids spend more time focused on their clothes than on homework.

### **Values:**

School uniforms stress that individuality and self-expression are not determined by designer clothing or the latest fashion fad.

### **Low Cost:**

School uniforms are a bargain. They are becoming far less expensive than many other clothes. Schools argue that school uniforms are economical, especially compared to designer clothing, and parents agree given school uniform durability. They say school uniforms last longer because they are made for repeated wash and wear. Many schools capitalize on this by starting used school uniform stores or swap meets. Parents can get used school uniforms at discount prices, or just use them as hand-me-downs between siblings.

### **School Spirit:**

Some feel wearing a school uniform helps build school spirit. It instills a feeling of belonging. As the Beach Boys

said, "Be true to your school." Schools report an increase in school pride.

### **Individuality:**

Supressing individuality is the most commonly cited objection to school uniforms. Educators argue that an academic program encouraging students to pursue individual thought is much more important than what they wear. They inhibit creativity and self-expression, forcing students to conform.

### **Causes Discipline Problems:**

Some students reject any rules. Forcing them to wear school uniforms only aggravates their rebellious spirit. They alter their school uniform by tightening, widening, shortening, or lengthening them, and teachers are given the impossible task of policing the students on a daily basis.

### **Little or No Relationship to Academics:**

Opponents insist that their is no credible evidence that school uniforms improve school discipline or promote higher academic acheivement. The principal argument is that some great students are terrible dressers. Dress does not necessarily improve learning.

### **Short note about the author**

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