

IN THE MIDDLE: Do we always need the biggest and best?

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Published: May 7, 2015

How many teenagers have you seen who don't have an iPhone? Not many. Why is an iPhone so "in"? Isn't it just as much of a phone as the next company



offers? Sometimes, this generation's children seem to be convinced and hypnotized into getting only the best of the best.

Advertisers can affect kids' behaviors. For instance, a little kid sees a new Dora the Explorer doll. She instantly falls in love with it. But, her parents say "no" to buying the new doll,

because she recently received another kind of Dora the Explorer doll. So maybe the child throws a tantrum and complains that the doll that she owns is not 'in' anymore. The parents might give in to make their child stop screaming.

Another strategy that kids use is the "nagging factor." How it works: The child wants something. They ask their parents, who say the word that every kid dreads: "no." The child becomes so obsessed with getting this product that they continue to ask their parents until they say "yes".

Experts say that media and television have a lot to do with kids' emotions. For example, even if you don't watch it, everyone knows the hit show "Hannah Montana". In one episode, Lily, Rico and Oliver are all

sitting on some beach chairs, talking about how you're not cool unless you have the top brand.

According to a documentary we watched in English class called "Consuming Kids," television scenes like this can easily be injected into kids' brains, making them believe that they need the best of the best to be successful in life. In the Disney Channel original "High School Musical," there's even a song about wanting the best. It pokes fun at the idea that kids only want high-priced items, but some kids might not get it that the over-the-top lyrics are not really something you should believe.

This generation is growing up at a rapid pace. According to an article from USA Today, "Marketing to Kids Gets More Savvy with New Technologies," girls between the ages of 4 and 6 are feeling more insecure about themselves. Maybe this is because some R-rated movies are being changed to PG-13, like "Meet the Fockers". Young boys are being introduced to violent video games like Call of Duty and Grand Theft Auto, which change and affect their behavior.

Something has to give. Parents can help put an end to this by saying "no" and sticking with it, and by asking marketing companies to stop targeting kids and teens. If companies start realizing they are in the wrong, they might just make a change.

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