

Youth Culture Lesson
Finding Teachable Moments in Culture
From *YouthWorker Journal* and youthworker.com

Dress for Success?

School Has Rules for What Not To Wear

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Posted: Aug. 4, 2009

What Happened:

A high school in Richmond, Ind., recently installed a new dress code, trying to correct one that was deemed “unenforceable” from the previous school year.

Students this year were forbidden from wearing:

Baggy clothes;

Tight clothes;

Clothes with logos;

Clothes with stripes;

Clothes with plaid; and

Clothes with floral patterns.

On the first day of class, 169 Richmond High School students (out of a population of about 1,900) were suspended for violating the new dress code.

The next day, while another 50 students were suspended, about 150 teens and parents protested the dress code outside the school, marching, chanting and holding signs that said things such as, “Educate their minds. Forget fashion.”

Richmond High School is not alone. Many schools, worried that fashion might be, at best, a distraction for students (and at worst can sometimes indicate an affiliation with a gang), are struggling over dress codes. Some are requiring students to dress in school uniforms.

Talk About It:

Do you have a dress code at school? What do you have to wear? Do you think it’s fair?

Do you think that Richmond High School’s dress code is too extreme? If you went there, would you have obeyed? Would you have protested?

Does how you dress say something about who you are? What does what you're wearing right now say about you? What kind of judgments do you make about people by how they dress?

Do you think we pay too much attention to how people dress? Has anyone ever made fun of you because of what you were wearing?

What the Bible Says:

“Let one who boasts, boast in the Lord” (1 Cor. 1:31).

“Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith” (Rom. 3:27).