



# This is what happens to the 'cool kids' after school

Posted Monday 30 October 2017 09:15 by [Mimi Launder](#) in [offbeat](#)



Picture: MovieClips/YouTube screengrab

**They may have ruled the school, but cool kids do not tend to make successful adults.**

Either they plagued your teenage years with envy or you languished at the top of the social hierarchy alongside them.

But teenagers who try to 'act cool' in early adolescence struggle in adulthood, according to [research](#).

There are a few universal 'cool kid' characteristics: smoking, drinking and breaking the law; getting into romantic relationships early; and being constantly enveloped by a cool crowd.

## Revenge of the nerd



> But by the age of 22, nerds get their revenge as ex-cool-kids are more likely to be rated as less socially competent than their peers.

They were also more likely to have substance abuse problems and to engage in criminality.

Participants all attended United States public schools and were from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds.

However, the study had a relatively small sample size, following 183 teens from the age of 13 to the age of 23.

Professor Joseph P. Allen, the University of Virginia and the study's lead author, said:

**“ It appears that while so-called ‘cool’ teens’ behaviour might have been linked to early popularity, over time, these teens needed more and more extreme behaviours to try to appear cool, at least to a subgroup of other teens.**

**So they became involved in more serious criminal behaviour and alcohol and drug use as adolescence progressed.**

**These previously cool teens appeared less competent – socially and otherwise – than their less-cool peers by the time they reached young adulthood.”**



## HT Spring

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