

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Twenty six is the age of independence, according to research.

More than half of the 2,000 adults over the age of 25 polled believe it is harder than ever for young people to grow up and fend for themselves.

In contrast, in the eighties children were cooking family meals and helping out around the house long before they became teenagers.

The survey also reveals the top 50 signs 'Independence Day' has been reached – which includes being able to budget efficiently, being financially independent from mum and dad, and paying your own bills.

17 year old Nuala McNally, who sits on the National Youth Board for the National Citizen Service (NCS), a programme that helps 16-17 year olds build confidence, independence and learn essential life skills, said: "There are a number of factors which may contribute to young people finding independence later now than ever before.

"It's much harder for us to leave our parents' and guardians' homes for the first time, meaning less opportunity to use practical skills such as budgeting.

"In addition, a lot of us are choosing to stay in education longer, which is great as more people are academically investing in their future. However, it means we have less 'real world' experience."

The survey shows independence has arrived once you take care of washing your own clothes, spend money on household goods and are self-motivated.

Booking your own doctors and dentist appointments, being comfortable talking to people and not having a curfew are also signs of reaching real adulthood.

While others claim independence is when you have a credit card, are able to navigate public transport alone, are comfortable hosting dinner parties, and know how to take a meter reading.

Mowing the lawn, having sex and buying your own toilet paper are among the more obscure inclusions in the top 50 list.

However, despite the legal age of adulthood now being 18 in the UK, a resounding six in 10 adults don't believe this reflects the real age people become independent.

And while 75 per cent of adults do think parents should play the biggest role in teaching a young person everything they need to know for adulthood, a fifth think some of these learnings should come from teachers.

Even those adults who claim to have reached independence already admit they've had to borrow almost £400 from family or friends in the last 12 months.

And 38 per cent admit they still rely on their parents or guardians emotionally or physically.

Jermain Jackman, youth advisor to the NCS Trust Board, said: "The age of independence is real and every young people experiences it, however different people go through it at different times.

“Care leavers for example, are placed in adult-like situations where they’ll be living on their own and having to manage their own bills and then you have, on the other end of the spectrum, 30+ year olds still living with their parents at home.

“So I don’t think we can set an actual age of independence but what we can do is prepare for that age. That’s why organisations like NCS are so important by equipping young people with those practical skills such as managing household budgets and cooking, these skills become tools when reaching that age of independence.”

The NCS programme is proven to boost young people’s confidence and ability to respond to challenging situations - both of which are key attributes to help build independence. To find out more visit NCSyes.co.uk.

TOP 50 SIGNS OF INDEPENDENCE

1. Being financially independent from your parents/guardians
2. Moving out of your parents'/guardians' home
3. Manage your own bills/outgoings
4. Buying your own property
5. Having a job
6. Budgeting
7. Having control of your own bank account
8. Paying rent
9. Having savings
10. Paying your own mobile phone bill
11. Planning and going to do your weekly food shop
12. Do your own clothes washing
13. Spending your money on household goods e.g. Hoover, mattress
14. Book your own doctors/dentist appointment
15. You’re self-motivated
16. Owning your own car
17. You buy your own clothes
18. Going on holiday without your parents/guardians
19. Make your own dinner
20. Voting
21. You’re confident at taking on any task without help
22. Sort out your own car problems
23. Travelling alone to a foreign country
24. Passing your driving test
25. Having a baby
26. You have no problem saying ‘no’ to people
27. Buying your own towels and bedding
28. Comfortable challenging other people’s opinions
29. Confident talking to new people
30. You can navigate public transport alone
31. You have life insurance
32. Not having a curfew
33. Know how to do a meter reading
34. Can confidently cook a roast dinner
35. Having a credit card

36. You can change a light bulb by yourself
37. Happy to go out for a meal alone
38. Family and friends come to you for advice
39. Getting a pet without asking anyone's permission
40. Being able to buy alcohol
41. Dress weather-appropriately without anyone telling you to
42. Volunteering by myself
43. You can mow the lawn on your own
44. Buying toilet paper
45. Having sex
46. Owning a host of cleaning products
47. Host dinner parties
48. You can bake a basic cake without looking at a recipe
49. Putting up a tent by yourself
50. Having your own social media accounts

ENDS

About NCS

NCS is a government backed programme established in 2011 to help build a more cohesive, mobile and engaged society. By bringing together young people from different backgrounds for a unique shared experience, NCS helps them to become better individuals, and in turn better citizens.

NCS is open to 16 and 17 year-olds across England and Northern Ireland. The two to four week programme, which takes place in school holidays, includes outdoor team-building exercises, a residential for participants to learn 'life skills', a community-based social action project and an end of programme celebration event.

To date:

- Almost 500,000 young people have taken part
- Twelve and a half million hours of community action have been completed
- For every £1 spent, NCS' 2016 summer programme delivered between £1.15 and £2.42 of benefits back to society

It costs participants just £50 or less to take part in NCS and bursaries are available on a case by case basis. Support is provided for young people with additional needs.

To find out more visit NCSyes.co.uk.

Visit NCS social media platforms on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)

About NCS Trust

National Citizen Service Trust is a not-for-profit organisation incorporated by Royal Charter and established to shape, support, champion and lead a thriving National Citizen Service.

National Citizen Service Trust is registered in England and Wales with Royal Charter Body number RC000894. Our registered office is at The Pembroke Building, Kensington Village, Avonmore Road, London, W14 8DG.

To learn more about NCS Trust visit them on [LinkedIn](#)