

# EAST of the RIVER

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## IF YOU DON'T KNOW ... ASK!

The Youth Leadership Task Force of DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy invites you to send in your questions for its monthly Adults Only advice column. Please send your questions to [jfourth@teenpregnancydc.org](mailto:jfourth@teenpregnancydc.org). In the subject line, please put Advice Column.

**Q:** I am a high school teacher in the District and I would like to know why teenagers wear baggy clothes and expensive athletic shoes?

**A:** The answer is simple. We wear baggy clothes because they are comfortable and because everyone else is wearing them. We also like to dress like our favorite rap and hip hop artist. But we do have other clothes that we wear to places like church and on job interviews.

Whenever pros like Michael Jordan, Tracy McGrady, Allen Iverson, Dwayne Wade and Shaquille O'Neal put their names on tennis shoes, everyone wants them, and wants to be the first to get them. Getting these kinds of tennis shoes means that you belong or you are a part of a group. We do have regular shoes we wear when we go to other places.

**Q:** I am in my mid-forties, and I don't understand rap music. Can you help me?

**A:** Rap is like a poem that is put to music. Sometimes it rhymes and sometimes it doesn't. Most rappers rap to express themselves. Rappers usually have a lot they want to talk about and express to others. A lot of times, rap it is about the neighborhoods where we live, and the things that happen in our neighborhoods like drug dealings, shootings, teen pregnancies, fights, and relationships between boys and girls. It is a way to express what we see everyday.

If you have a teenage son or daughter or are close to a teen, listen to some rap music with them and have them to tell you what the rapper is saying. Then maybe you can share with them some of the songs you like.

*If you know a teen who would benefit from the Youth Leadership Task Force experience, please go to [www.teenpregnancydc.org](http://www.teenpregnancydc.org) and download an application.*