Hot Topic is a misunderstood store that parents deem inappropriate due to the appearance and atmosphere. There are numerous comments and questions made about Hot Topic and its employees; some absurd and others hurtful. What people, parents especially, need to understand is that this store is not a terrible place full of dark disturbed people and merchandise. Instead, reality must be faced. Hot Topic is a store that specializes in Pop culture items from both the past and the present. People must also realize that associates who work there are just normal human beings trying to make ends meet while having fun and expressing themselves. Parents often comment about the lighting, wardrobe and the music. Keep in mind every generation has had a store that parents do not approve of. Just like back then there were misconceptions. Hot Topic has become the store with many misconceptions for this generation.

**Common Misconceptions**

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**The Feel of Unease**

Every retail establishment has an ambiance that is appropriate for what they sell. In the case of Hot Topic many complaints arise from the lighting and music choices. Many people only complain when the music is heavy, screaming metal rock bands. People often walk out upset by the mood that is established. The truth is many other stores are darker than Hot Topic and often are laced with heavy cologne that could knock someone out. This Company’s goal is to attract teenagers and young adults with a darker, different sense of style therefore, they cater to that audience. However, that does not mean the store is close minded. Hot Topic caters to many different audiences. The lighting is a marketing tool that appeals the masses they are aiming for while the music is not truly all screaming bands. The store plays many different genres and artists from Led Zeppelin to Eminem, Iggy Azalea to The Beatles. Hot Topic is not a one genre store. It is a diverse, dimly lit, oasis of great music that is attempting to bring together the past and the present.
The Importance Of Self Expression

Stores in this day and age often help support charities that benefit other people, the environment or animals. Hot topic is no exception. People wonder “what could this store possibly fund that will benefit me?” Well the answer is not how it will benefit you, but how it will benefit schools that no longer can afford music and arts programs. The HT foundation collects money and divides it amongst different schools that are in need of funding for the fine arts. Hot Topic also pairs up with other foundations that help provide afterschool music programs. Hot Topic is a store that is 100 percent supportive of kids, teens, and adults of all ages expressing themselves. This is what some parents do not understand. Freedom of expression is something that kids and even adults need. Whether it be expression through music, art or even how a person dresses, Hot Topic does not judge. They encourage self expression and gladly fund the opportunity for kids to learn how to.

Hair, Wardrobe & Body Modifications Oh my!

Dress for the job you want, in the case of Hot Topic employees, that is exactly what they do. There is no dress code. This is one of the few places that allows one to be who they want to be. “Do you have to have crazy colored hair? Are tattoos required? How many piercings do you need to work here?” The answers are simple, No, No and None. Any hair color, outfit, or body modifications are completely up to the employee. There are no requirements and little regulations. The rule is creativity. This cannot be stressed enough, they dress for the job they have, not because they are a cult. In this store in particular the expression “don’t judge a book by its cover,” is greatly appreciated. No one likes to be judged. Employees work there for the fun of being able to express who they are. Behind the tattoos and clothing choice, the employees are normal young adults with families, relationships and problems just like everyone else they just choose to express themselves in unconventional ways.

Parent and Kid Friendly

Kids, teens and adults are all fans of novelty items. Now unlike competitors, Hot Topic novelty items are kid friendly! Not just that, they have licensed toys, t-shirts and jewelry from Disney, Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon. All of your kids’ favorite shows, and even your old favorite shows, may appear in the shelves of this pop culture store. The entire front of the store is usually dedicated to super heroes, Disney characters and anime, easy access for the in and out shopping trip parents want. But also they will not have to worry about getting those “Hey dad what does that mean?” question they might get at similar, less kid friendly, stores.


