The Hitler Youth

"My program for educating youth is hard. Weakness must be hammered away. In my castles of the Teutonic Order a youth will grow up before which the world will tremble. I want a brutal, domineering, fearless, cruel youth. Youth must be all that. It must bear pain. There must be nothing weak and gentle about it. The free, splendid beast of prey must once again flash from its eyes... That is how I will eradicate thousands of years of human domestication... That is how I will create the New Order." – Adolf Hitler, 1933

'Veyouth step happily forward facing the sun... With our faith we drive the devil from the land.'

1936

- membership is mandatory for eligible boys and girls 10-18yrs
- younger children learned the same principles in school
By 1939

- Those who refuse are punished
- 97% compliance
- all other groups and clubs are banned

Boys

- 10-14 yrs Jungvolk
- 14-18yrs eligible for promotion to HJ, including elite groups such as Air HJ, Navy, secret police force
The summer solstice is celebrated with HJ members leaping over the _Sonnenwendfeuer_.

Adolf Hitler addresses Hitlerjugend (Hitler Youth) at a Nuremberg Nazi Party Day rally.

_The Führer’s Youth_ by Elwira Bauer

The boys who are true Germans: To Hitler’s Youth belong. They want to live for their Führer. Their eyes are fixed on the future. Bigger and stronger they have become. The German Heritage is theirs. The great and sacred Fatherland Stands today as it ever stood. From this picture may be seen, Hitler Youth in splendid mien. From smallest to the biggest boy. All are husky, tough, and strong. They love their German Führer And God in Heaven they fear. But the Jews they must despise! They’re not like these boys, So Jews must just give way!
This elite group was made up of gorgeous Aryan types, age 17 to about 28, who were supposed to meet weekly, wear glamorous outfits and look forward to bearing gorgeous Aryan children to S.S. leaders.

3 mainstays of German womanhood, "Kinder, Kirche, Kuche" or 'Children (raising and nurturing), Church and Kitchen'
Members of the BDM (Bund deutscher Maedels) stand in formation in the bleachers of the Berlin stadium to spell out “Wir gehoeren dir!” [We belong to you] while Adolf Hitler delivers an address at a rally held on the National Day of the German People (May Day).

Hitler Youth membership certificate. The text states, “I promise to always do my duty with love and loyalty to our Fuehrer and our flag.” New members in the League of German Girls received this certificate after being sworn in during one of the official membership ceremonies, which were held once a year on April 20th, Hitler’s birthday.

**Standards for Youth**
- Racially Pure (no Jewish ancestry)
- No hereditary diseases in the family
- No objectionable political attitude (no communism or socialism)
- physically fit

**Expectations for Youth**
- Boys needed to march 13 miles carrying an 11lb knapsack
- Girls were expected to have children, and were told it was better to have a child out of wedlock than to be childless
Training pamphlet for Hitler Youth Leadership
“He who wants to live Fights”

“WE destroy the world enemy”
Conflicts of Hitler Youth

• Parents: it was illegal to prohibit a child from joining
• School: no time for homework
• Church Sunday activities
• 1933 Church agreement left 2 afternoons a week for church activities

How devoted were they?

HJ boys clean up the rubble after yet another air raid.

Decorated HJ flak helpers are seen during a war rally held amid Germany's declining fortunes.

Resistance

• Edelweiss Pirates—HJ members who rebelled
• listened to American music— not approved by Nazi
• Swing Youth
- illegal youth group allowed Jews
- Himmler later sent them to concentration camps
More Resistance

- White Rose Society
- Students at Munich University
- wrote pamphlets asking for peaceful resistance
- member caught and executed or given jail terms

Aftermath After the War

- HJ guarded Hitler’s bunker
- 5000 HJ involved - 500 survive
- Many feel betrayed and realize they were brainwashed
- Some still support Nazism