

# “Hip Hop Lost Its Soul”

What voice has captured the attention of our youth today? In seventies and the eighties we jammed to the sounds R & B, Soul, Funk Jazz and Gospel. There was a cross section of music from Motown to Mozart. Each influenced that generation. Whether it was James Brown or James Cleveland, the beat of the music caused us to tap and move our feet. We listened to cutting sounds on our LPs, eight track players and cassette tapes. Music that all ages could listen to without having to cut the sound down. Lyrics that we could sing to and melodies that would play in your head all day. But today the voices we listen to have been replaced by a sound that has been around for twenty five years. A sound without melodic melodies but with poetic raps that pace itself to simple or a complex beat. A message of not just of love and having a good time, but a message of truism. A message that does not hide truth, but exposes it for all the world to see. A message like an open sore, exposing many to see the pain, exuberance, foolishness and sometimes stupidity performed by some. Yes, this generation is partying like it is 1999 with no consequences and no regrets. Simply “telling like it is” even if the world is in denial. But what is the price we have paid for this vocal medium of transparency? Has hip hop lost its soul or have we lost ours?

The world has to now try to answer this burning question. This jargon of poetic masterpieces or foul nonsense have become the method today many young adults and kids use to communicate with each other. This tree of Good and Evil has truly engulfed the world with a platform that allows the dissemination to personal emotions and experiences. But I ask again at what cost. What should we do with hip hop? Who has the answers?

In January we will be exploring the impact of Hip Hop on our souls. Uncovering the underlying motives and impact of this

medium. The young people of the community have been invited to attend this open forum on January 28<sup>th</sup>. This event is being sponsored by the Jackson Project along with Focus for Youth. It will be held at the Water Tower in Whitman Square. We hope this engaging dialog will shed light on this important topic and other issues challenging many youth today.