

Teen-Uprising

"Older men simply do not want young girls to take a stand."



Sweetheart... Alexandra Dahlström is silenced by Loa Falkman at the Guldbagge Awards

Photo: Niclas Hammarström

Do not demean me!

The actress Alexandra Dahlström, 15, fought back when Loa Falkman interrupted her at the Guldbagge Awards.

Now Alexandra has given empowerment to other girls in the country.

Malin, Kornelia, Ellinor, Johanna and Santhi, all 14, have grown tired of being "little adults", but still not being taken seriously.

When Alexandra Dahlström wanted to talk about the fixation on appearance and sexism during her Guldbagge acceptance speech, she was silenced by Loa Falkman with the word "sweetheart."

Being demeaned or silenced with a pat on the head is something young girls know all too well.

"They let Lukas Moodysson talk about not as important things"

In the group room at Björkhagen school in Stockholm sits a group of 14-year-old girls from 8th grade who are angry about what Loa Falkman did to Alexandra Dahlström at the Guldbagge Awards.



"Take us seriously," says 14-year-old Malin Sund, Kornelia Vetter Vall, Ellinor Sundell, Johanna Olsson and Santhi Fälldin.

Photo: Per Björn

"We all wanted to hear what Alexandra had to say. She is a role model for us. They let Lukas Moodysson talk about not as important things. I thought what Alexandra wanted to talk about was important," says Johanna.

At an event like that it shows how important is it to be strong and earn respect. Alexandra Dahlström speaks to that. For adults, they are bad at listening to teens express their opinions.

"As a girl you have to be really good and well formulated to make them listen. You have to constantly think about what to say to be serious," said Ellinor.

"To be happy, wishy-washy, and also have a low-cut dress doesn't work so well," she believes.

"There are so many ideas about how girls should be. From how they dress, to the number of boyfriends and if you should drink alcohol."

"I would be angry if someone called me 'sweetheart' like that. Girls must learn to speak up and demand respect. Not just giggle with embarrassment and worry about clothes. I cannot believe how some girls take condescending comments or let guys paw at them," says Kornelia.

"When a teacher laughs at you, it takes away your confidence."

But it's not always easy to be tough.

"If a person I respect and look up to pats me on the head, it's hard. It makes you feel stupid and small. It also happens when a teacher or coach laughs at you when you're doing something wrong. It takes away your confidence," says Santhi.

"I think older men are so used to getting respect, they probably think they are actually smarter and do not like strong women. They simply do not want the young girls to take a stand," says Ellinor.

Sometimes she thinks it's hard having to scream just so girls can make their voices heard.

"The guys think 'oh well, you're one of those...'"

All agreed that girls need support to be able to stand out among the pesky, loud teenage boys.

It seems to be easier for guys to gain acceptance and respect.

"It's so typical. When I go into a store, they let us girls run all the errands just because we were nice and did what they said, while the guys stood around learning against a wall," says Malin.

Do not be demeaned!

- Speak out directly instead of laughing it off.
- Make adults listen - everyone has the right to express their opinions.
- Older people may be used to getting respect, but you are also worthy of respect.
- Listen to female teachers who support you and want to convey girl power.

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