

By Tatianna Mosley  
Voice Contributor

We are all familiar with the new hit single, "Whip My Hair" and of course the 10-year-old Diva who sings it, Willow Smith. Her outrageous style that seems to be a mixture of a cute ten-year-old and a full-fledge punk rocker has propelled her popularity forward in the world of pop music and in the hearts of millions around the world.

When I think of the word exploited, I don't think our little pop princess fits the bill.

Obviously at the tender age of ten she does not control her own career, but from the family she comes from and the foundation from which she was raised, can we really say that this young lady is being exploited?

If we went back in time and looked at of Willow's accomplishments that have led to her recent fame as a pop songstress, as well as the family and moral grounds from which she was brought up on then we could truly see that this talented young lady is doing nothing short of what her parents have done which is make a name for herself in movie and music industry.

Willow made her first appearance as an actress at age 7 in the 2007 film "I Am Legend," alongside her father, Will Smith. She continued over the next three years with movie roles in "Kit Kittredge: an American Girl," "Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa," and "Merry Madagascar."

After her time in the world of cinema, she turned her attention toward her music career releasing her hit single, "Whip My Hair" which has been climbing the charts since its debut in September.

In an industry where artists have gone as swiftly as they came, it is not exactly uncommon for a new artist (especially the younger ones) to be used as a quick way of getting money, but not our dear Willow.

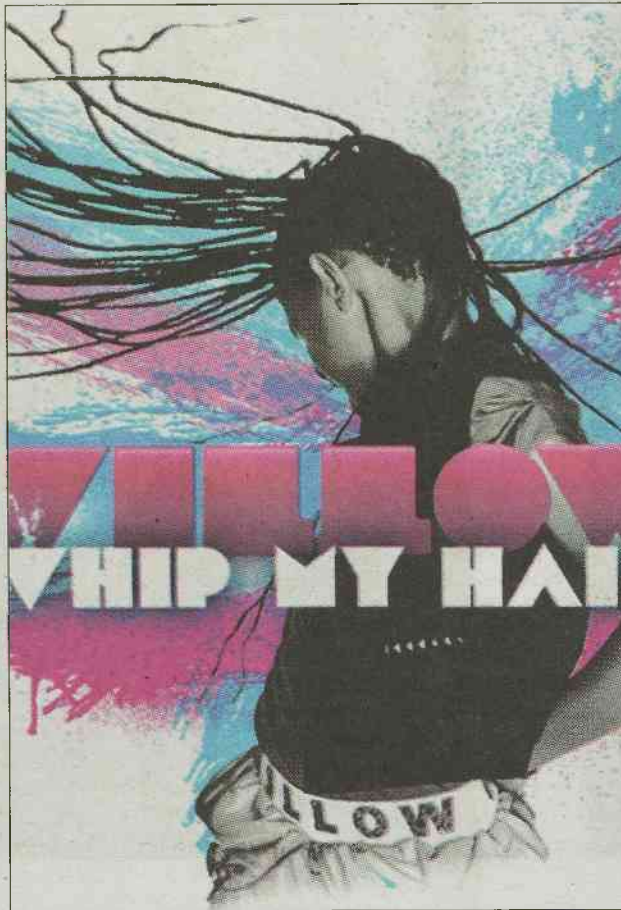
She has been building her career since her 2007 acting debut. She has already begun forming her resume in the world of acting and now has ventured into the realm of music.

And with a family familiar to both industries, Willow is not doing this on her own. Her mom, Jada Pinkett Smith, has been in movies since the mid '90s, and also has a heavy metal rock band called "Wicked Wisdom." We cannot leave out Will who has had a stellar singing and acting career since the mid 90's as well. It has been reported that both parents are extremely protective of their children and stress the values that a family unit should have as well as the importance of community service. It just doesn't seem like a plausible argument that two parents who have successful careers and care about their family would just hand over their 10-year old daughter to the sharks of the music industry.

Most exploited child seem to be those with troubled pasts and seek the world of fame and stardom only to find security within the business instead of themselves. They are the vulnerable sheep who can be molded into whatever "sells" and because security is unfamiliar to them, their managers can manipulate and use them until they have found the next willing.

Willow has what many young stars do not – a resume filled with experience from previous projects and refuge in a family that knows the business. To be a ground-breaking artist these days you have to push the envelope and Willow is doing just that. She has all the support she needs to remain stable and sound in a business as dirty as the music industry. Even though many have fallen before her, our dear Willow is not and will not be a victim of exploitation. Her security blanket is far too thick to let someone in who will take advantage of her.

# Willow Exploited?



Courtesy photo

## Will(NO) or Will(YES)!

By Junious Smith III  
Voice Contributor

With her single climbing the Billboard charts and a deal with a premier record company, 10-year-old Roc Nation singer Willow Smith is on the rise to be the newest pop sensation. Her song "Whip My Hair" has her receiving widespread acknowledgment from many different age demographics. From elementary schools across the nation to the colleges and clubs, people are bouncing around to her song, which is exactly what her record company was looking for.

Willow Smith is being exploited, without a doubt. With child stars like Miley Cyrus, Miranda Cosgrove, and Keke Palmer growing up, Willow seems in line to be the next child idol. With parents Will and Jada Pinkett Smith dominating the entertainment industry and brother Jaden making strides in his acting career, it's clear that the thought process was to make Willow a celebrity as well.

About two months prior to "Whip My Hair" dropping, Jada Pinkett Smith said on the late night show Lopez Tonight that her daughter would have an album coming out shortly. Without any previous song releases, it seems as though the strong family connections got Willow the opportunity to be the new face of the today's youth.

The song itself seems as if it was meant for someone older.

My first reaction to the song was "Dang, Rihanna is doing her thing on this track." The effects done to Willow's voice, Autotune being the main building block, makes her sound like an adult R&B singer. Most people probably didn't know this was a 10-year old singing until the video was released.

Now, if Willow actually wrote the lyrics (which Roc Nation claims she did), it is impressive; however, what does someone that young know about haters?

"Hop up out the bed turn my swag on Pay no attention to them haters cuz we whip em off and we ain't doing nothing wrong so don't tell me nothing, i'm just tryna have fun so keep the party jumping"

The song may rank with Kris Kross' "Jump Jump" and Lil' Bow Wow's "Bounce With Me" in child music history; however, it doesn't take away from the fact that Willow Smith is being exploited and the only party jumping is for the record company.

Lyrics from "Whip my hair"

(Chorus)

I whip my hair back and forth  
I whip my hair back and forth (just whip it)  
I whip my hair back and forth  
I whip my hair back and forth (whip it real good)  
I whip my hair back and forth  
I whip my hair back and forth  
I whip my hair back and forth  
I whip my hair back and forth

Hop up out the bed turn my swag on  
Pay no attention to them haters cuz we

whip em off  
and we ain't doing nothing wrong  
so don't tell me nothing, i'm just tryna have fun  
so keep the party jumping

so whats up (yea)  
And I'll be doing what to do  
we turn our back  
and whip our hair and just shake them off  
shake them off, shake them off,shake them off

Don't let haters keep me off my grind  
Keep my head up i know I'll be fine  
Keep fighting until i get there

When i'm down and i feel like giving up i think again

(Chorus)

I'ma get more shine than a little bit  
Soon as i hit the stage applause im hearing it  
whether its black stars black hearts im feeling it  
but can't none of them whip it like i do  
I, i gets it in mmmm yea i go hard  
when they see me pull up i whip it real hard  
i whip it real hard,real hard,i whip it real hard

Don't let haters keep me off my grind  
Keep my head up i know I'll be fine  
Keep fighting until i get there  
When i'm down and i feel like giving up i think again

(Chorus)

All my Ladies if you feel me  
do it do it whip your hair (whip your hair)  
Don't matter if its long, short (long,short)  
do it do it whip your hair (whip your hair)