



# The Western Breeze

## Students' Mental Health Needs Attention

By Ke'Orland Harrison, '23

Mental health refers to a person's psychological, emotional, and social well-being; it influences what we feel and how we think, and behave. The state of cognitive and behavioral well-being is referred to as mental health. Mental health is essential throughout childhood, teenage years to adulthood. Even though mental health is a highly personal thing, what affects one person may or may not necessarily affect the other person; however, some significant factors contribute to the effects of mental health, which still have an active occurrence.

Recently, mental health has been on the rise as people struggle to find different ways to cope with stress. Others would agree that the covid-19 pandemic affected their mental health. Others would say mental health increased prior to the pandemic. According to the World's Health Organization, "plenty of us became more anxious; but for some COVID-19 has

sparked or amplified much more serious mental health problems". In general, it is obvious that the pandemic had a significant impact on our lives, but is the pandemic really to blame? For obvious reasons, you could argue that the pandemic made the circumstances

worse, but you cannot deny the fact that mental health was a constant issue in the world. The topic of mental health has gone unheard of for far too long. Our generation has somewhat caught the rough end of depression, anxiety, and mental illness. Furthermore, the



(Photo courtesy of <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/the-mental-health-crisis-among-children-and-teens-how-parents-can-help-202203082700>)

article, "Life Stance Health" states "In 2020, the APA found that teenagers and young adults (up to the age of 23) were the country's most stressed age demographic. And they are all in Gen Z".

In addition to this, UC college student Zakiyah Willis states "the fact of not being where they want to be in life could very well be one of the main causes for severe depression".

Our generation has been put under all sorts of pressure from our older counterparts. The fear of not accomplishing all of our goals. The fear of not fitting in with the ideal standards society has placed for us. The fear of not being enough for our parents.

Hence, Willis adds "Mental health means a lot, especially being in college, you have to take it seriously. You need to take breaks and know your limits when it comes to stress. Know your body."

In conclusion, we as teens have to remember the importance of mental health, especially in the world today where the topic of health in general has only recently been discussed.

## Queen Elizabeth's Death Affects All

By Breanna Hillman, '23

Queen Elizabeth II was born to Albert Frederick Arthur George Windsor and Queen Elizabeth I on April 21st, 1926. She celebrated two birthdays, had a personal fashion designer, and never needed a passport or driver's license. The Queen's birthday is April 21, but the country doesn't officially celebrate until June 11. She was said to have had a reasonably happy childhood until a shocking decision by her uncle, King Edward VIII, to renounce the throne brought her happy youth to a crashing halt when she was just ten years old. She never went to school because she was home-schooled her whole life.

On September 8th, the very late queen took her final breath. It was a day filled with grief for many people. She was 96 when she passed, leading the united kingdom for 70 years and 214 days. She reined longer than any British monarch and had the longest verified reign of any female sovereign in history. One of the jewels from her crown was from India. Also, her late husband, prince Philip, was a relative of hers, her third cousin.

Many people discovered the unexpected death through social media and the news. The news and social apps contain much infor-

mation about what's going on globally, so it's not unusual to hear these responses.

Western Hills history teacher Jennifer Lewis-Thornton said, "Many were sad because she's been their



(Photo courtesy of <https://headtopics.com/us/queen-elizabeth-ii-what-to-know-about-the-british-monarch-s-health-and-royal-lines-of-succession-29663292>)

monarch for most of their lives. Others cheered because they wanted freedom from British colonial rule."

As you can see, there are mixed emotions about the queen's death, some grieving and some relieved.

A science teacher here at West High, Liah Wade said, "I think many were very sad. Queen Elizabeth had been Queen for most of everyone's life. However, some people don't believe in monarchy, so they were unboth-

ered." The queen was around for a long time, long enough to have reigned for some people's whole lives.

One of the math teachers here at West High, Daniel Caproni said, "Sadness. Loss of an icon".

The teachers share similar thoughts

zens could care less because they were not under her rule, but others cared as if she was their Queen too.

Not many people were shocked about her passing because she was in her 90s and was queen since she was in her 20s. That's a very long time and a very stressful job. She had to take care of and provide for an entire country.

Lewis Thornton said, "She promised her entire life for her country, and she fulfilled her promise."

Even though the queen passed doesn't mean England will go without a ruler. Prince Charles, Queen Elizabeth's son, is next in line for the throne.

There are very mixed opinions around the world about if having royalty is as relevant today as it was in the past.

Lewis-Thornton said, "They serve no purpose except as figure heads-symbols of wealth & prestige. In the United Kingdom, they had no power but great influence".

Wade thinks it's irrelevant because "many people in England don't even engage with the royal family."

Caproni said, "Their culture is different than ours. Royalty plays a role in their life."

Do you think having royalty is as relevant today as it was in the past?

# OPINIONS

## Police Relations in the Community

By Ke'Orland Harrison, '23

Recently, there was an incident involving Cincinnati police officer, Rose Valentino was suspended a few weeks ago for using a racial slur. The incident was caught on the dashcam of her police cruiser. The incident occurred back in April directly outside district three. According to city officials, this is not Valentino's first occurrence. In 2020, Valentino was charged with domestic violence and criminal damaging following a fight with her sister. As a result, her policing authorities were suspended, and she was assigned to an administrative assignment.

Despite the negative condensation law enforcement officers may receive, I have reasons to believe that the Cincinnati Police Department is different. For the past two summers, I've worked directly with police officers within the city as a cadet. This two-month summer experience is for fifteen through eighteen year olds where you have the opportunity to build a connection with your community

police officers and learn more about policing duties.

Prior to the program, like others,



had a negative perception of law enforcement officers and my main objective in joining this summer program was to gain my own knowledge about law enforcement and what they experience.

Since 2021, the Cincinnati Police Department has become my family, specifically the Youth Services Unit. The Youth Services Unit is

where I call home. A piece of my heart. These officers have taught me so much in such a short time

period.

For example, we were put in real-life scenarios to experience the trauma and pressure our officers are faced with daily. Honestly, this has shown me that when we - citizens- criticize law enforcement officers, we are not physically in the predicament nor are we automatically viewed negatively de-

spite their initial purpose, actions or mindset prior to the altercation. No matter the circumstances, law enforcement officers, good or bad, will continue to be viewed in a negative perception despite their meaning of policing.

Cincinnati Police Officer Carrie Hollyfield, stated that "by establishing relationships with the community and opening up the lines of communication will it increase the public's trust level with law enforcement." She believes that actively engaging with the community will increase the possibility of building a connection between residents and law enforcement.

She echoed the importance behind community policing by explaining that, "Cincinnati Police practices many different community policing avenues. But community involvement to me is, getting to know the people who live in the neighborhood, attend community meetings, and participate in activities within the community."

### Let us hear YOUR OPINION!

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(Letters may be edited for clarity, taste, and length.)

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The Western Breeze is an open forum for student expression produced and for students of Western Hills High School, 2144 Ferguson Road, Cincinnati, OH 45238.

## School Experiences Differ

By Christian Cohen, '24

Have you ever wondered what your child is learning in class or if they are taught the right subjects? For the future years of their life. Well, in this article, we shall find out.

What they regard are on the matter, lots of problems have been rising in school. Teenagers trying to find their way to class, and their classes are a mismatch. many new students. All in the same building.

Mrs. Schwarz is a teacher at Western Hills High School. I asked for her thoughts on the subject "I feel like West High is teaching students how to prepare for the majority of 3E pathways. The school is teaching students how to be responsible, respectful, prepared, and on time," saying schools are here to prepare us for the real-life trails.

Another one of my peers named Michael Guillermo, who attends Western Hills High School, would like to state his opinion on the matter.

"I think school is teaching me to be smart and to have a good job in the future," says Guillermo.

Guillermo enjoys the experience and knowledge he obtains from his classes, leaving from that most of what school is teaching you to be ready for the real world.

Things like social skills, problem-solving, following directions, and independent thinking are all critical in the real-life world and its hardships. but some subjects, in my opinion, don't have much usefulness to the real world.

For example, history is a subject that doesn't help the real-life world. Mostly because its lessons knowledge comes from the past and not the present.

Instead of history, I think people should include the subject of geography in their classes or an economy class. That way they know more about the present state of the world, not how it used to be.

Schwarz says, "The school system needs to teach students how to be active members of their community, how to take responsibility for their learning and actions, and how to use each student's interests or talents to further their education and future plans"



# OPINIONS

## IS RELATIONSHIP CHEATING GETTING WORSE?

By Sheree Hill, '23

Cheating in relationships is at an all time high in society. Social media and other forms of technology have huge influences on the subject. Cheaters hide behind social media to cover up their devious scandals. "There is no such thing as an affair that doesn't mean anything," says Amanda Robson. Should people be more forgiving when their partner cheats? I interviewed three men on the subject and here are their responses.

Mr. Herring (BA in Mass Communication, MED in Sports Administration, Masters in School Counseling, and earning a MA in Clinical Mental Health in Counseling) has been happily married for thirteen years to his wife. "I blindly trust my significant other," says Herring. He admitted to cheating multiple times in his younger days. "I was an immature teenager." Also having been cheated on multiple times left him feeling confused and sad.

Mr. Herring does not believe that cheating is getting any worse. "It depends on the individuals involved and their level of maturity." He is now happily married to the love of his life. My question to

you is if him being an immature teenager and inexperienced in relationships is just an excuse for him to justify his previous cheating?

Mr. Caproni (MA in Theoretical Math & Stat, BA in High School Education, and B.S in Scientific Math & Stat) met the love of his life his freshman year of high school. He completely trusts his wife and has never cheated in his entire life. He does admit to have been cheated on (not by his wife) and felt as if he wasn't enough. "Yes social media or other tech has made it easier for people to have conversations that should not be happening that can lead to poor choices. I have also seen a huge uptake in cheating going both ways instead of just boy to girl," says Caproni. Caproni's high school love story is one in which we all dream of having, to marry your high school sweetheart.

Ashton Ledbetter (Bachelors in Sociology) is currently in an ongoing nine month relationship. He trusts his significant other and claims to not have cheated nor have been cheated on. When asked if cheating is getting any worse he responds with "Yes, we entertain shallow pleasures versus putting time and effort into building something great. I like to hope that with time we will want true companionship, thus cheating will get better. But if we are selfish/self-centered then cheating will get worse." With hope that love will overcome the dreadful actions of cheating someday.

## Abortion: A Complicated Issue

By Breanna Hillman, '23

In 1973 women were given the right to an abortion, but on June 24th, 2022 those rights were taken away. Almost 50 years of progress was lost that day. Most of America was furious, but some people celebrated. The supreme court left it to the states to decide whether or not women had the right to an abortion. Some women and even children have gone out of state for a legal abortion because they don't have the option to do so in their state. I remember watching TikTok and hearing about a 12 year old girl who got denied an abortion after being raped. She went out of state to get an abortion and later faced lawful consequences.

When talking to Victoria Perkins, she said "Its a complicated topic, I am very upset to see it, it should be a woman's choice and they should be supported no matter the circumstance."

A lot of people in America are pro choice, but that wasn't enough to keep Roe V Wade from being overturned. On July 9th, 2022, many citizens marched to the White House to protest the new abortion laws. They were livid.

BBC news says that "Thousands gathered in the US capital on Saturday, marching through pouring rain and risking arrest to protest over the reversal of abortion rights."

You can tell how much this means to them if they were willing to protest in the pouring, freezing rain.

When I asked a student at West High about their thoughts on abortion they said "I really don't know much about it, but I feel like if you are not ready then be careful with your choices".

Some people think that if you don't use protection during sex then you should be liable to face the consequence. While others, on the other hand, think that protection or not, a woman can do whatever she chooses.

The Pew Research Center says "Relatively few Americans take an absolutist view on the legality of abortion – either supporting or opposing it at all times, regardless of circumstances."

In my personal opinion I think every woman should have the right to an abortion no matter the circumstance. It doesn't matter if it was rape, accidental, intoxication, etc. Though, if it was a rape, most girls usually start their period around the age of twelve. Sometimes girls have been younger. If a twelve year old girl was raped and forced to give birth she could possibly lose her life. She would be forced to make a sacrifice she most likely never wanted to make all because she couldn't get an abortion. I've seen many cases like this before, the youngest being 9 years old. So my concluding question is, what are your thoughts on abortion?

## Does Hard Work Out Weigh Talent?

By Devon Bedford, '24

"Hard work beats talent if talent doesn't work hard". (Tim Notke, a basketball coach).

I believe in that quote because I've seen it.

My opinion on hard work vs talent is that hard work is more important than talent. Some people can be born with talent but never did the hard work to earn it. No matter what, if you do hard work, you'll always get somewhere you want to be. People who are born with talent don't know the struggles others have done to get somewhere.

If you work hard even if you are at the point where you want to give up, you will always get somewhere.

Shaun Bedford, believes hard work is more important than talent because "Hard work will always

lead you somewhere while talent is like a skill, you can use it or not use it."

I believe in that little quote because I believe without any hard work, there's no real talent.

Talent is a choice. It's something you can turn off and on. Without hard work, talent can get out-worked.

"Hard work is when you spend your own time to fulfill something," said West High senior Nathaniel Bedford.

I also believe in that quote because talent is just something you can do on command while hard work is something only you can do. Without hard work there will be no success in life.

Michael Jordan can be an example of how he achieved his goals and where he is at today by doing hard work because he worked hard after not

making his high school tryouts the first time around. Now he is the greatest player to ever play the sport.. Michael Jackson was sort of born with talent. He knew how to sing when he was young and kept on until he eventually passed. I don't believe he really did hard work to become the person he was.

I believe the only way to really achieve goals are from hard work. It's possible to achieve goals from talent but hard work is more important. A quote from Arthur Schopenhauer, "The artist is nothing without the gift, but the gift is nothing without work."

That's a really special quote because it's very true. It means there can't be real talent without hard work. Hard work will be the main cause that got you where you are .

## Some Seniors Struggle in Final Year

By Walter Womack, '23

Why is it that senior year seems broken almost as if it's by design? From the same schedule since the start of high school with very little variation seniors struggle in their final year. As our high school journey begins to end, fear of after high school makes us question if we're ready.

As I dived into the topic of senioritis I wanted two perspectives. The first senior I interviewed was a Football player of Western Hills Javontie Thomas. I asked him a variety of questions on how it felt to be a senior and one of those questions was "what is the hardest part about being a senior?"; Thomas replies with a state-

ment "motivation & time, you have so much to do, with little time" Thomas described how it didn't even seem like he was a senior and describes it as having time to waste. Although he struggles with reality Javontie believes he will be able to pull through.

Similarly, I asked a fellow senior Alicia Harris what the pressure of being a senior. Harris states that it was a lot of pressure for her to go to college and that if she didn't proceed in the dream of her parents and others she would be nothing and have nothing bringing worry and stress to Harris, "especially when having unnecessary classes". she described the classes the school would put her in so she would have a full schedule as unhelpful.

Furthermore, Western Hills junior/senior counselor Mr.Mac said senior year was a big year because students would be stepping into adulthood. Mr.Mac described himself as a senior and stated "I didn't take high school seriously and cared more about sports" although he didn't care much about High School Mr.Mac gave some words of advice for seniors and the upcoming juniors and that was to embrace failure because it was life greatest teacher before elaborating on the topic by pointing to a poster with a Michael Jordan quote on how his failure and willingness to try is the reason he is successful.

Moreover, senior English teacher Elizabeth Thole characterizes her senior stu-

dents as hard-working at first and steps up as seniors from previous years. Thole describes senioritis as a combination of things including fear of life after high school. Thole also stated when she was a senior she struggled with deciding on what college she would attend and what made it even more difficult was that she had been declined by the college she did want to attend. Thole couldn't stress enough that seniors should be open to opportunities especially when things don't work out the way they are supposed to.

In short, senior year can be scary and a bit much but it is the end of a chapter and a major step into adulthood. As a senior enjoying yourself is key.

# FEATURES

## Releasing Negative Energy

By Orlando Williams, '23

With school starting up there are lots of things that can bother students such as classes being so overwhelming, not fitting in with others, and some students just don't know what to do with their future.

If this sounds like something that you personally are struggling with, I'm genuinely sorry but there are some things you can do to feel a little better. Whenever you start to feel like this, your positive energy is starting to become plagued with negative energy.

Negative energy is a common thing, some people are affected by it a lot while others don't even know what it

is. The effects negative energy can bring on quite literally can only be negative.

Now you might be wondering well what should I do in these kinds of instances when I feel negative energy building up? For starters, the most basic thing anyone can do is meditate.

Meditation is a practice in which a person uses techniques to train attention and awareness and to achieve a mentally clear, emotionally calm, and stable state such as mindfulness, or awareness of a particular object, idea, or activity to focus on. Meditation is practiced in many religious traditions. Usually, whenever I meditate I'll turn on the sounds of a campfire and I'll envision myself in my cabin and just enjoying nature.

Another method you can use is crystal healing. There are various kinds of crystals

on earth, and some of them are easy to find while others are extremely rare. Crystals in the ancient world were used because they were known to have some healing effects and properties.

Annabelle Blasingame, senior at Western Hills, says "Whenever she gets the chance she'll try and meditate".

For me, meditation is probably the most calming and relaxing way to release energy and focus on the things I need to.

Another thing I can always suggest to people whenever you feel negative energy seeping into your system, just talk to someone. Tell them what's wrong, get all of your emotions and feeling out of your head and hopefully that feeling will go away.

Usually, whenever I would rant to a

person I'd find out what the main issue of the day was. Did you feel like you didn't complete something to its fullest, did you feel like you messed something up, or maybe you just feel tired?

Expressing how you truly felt or feel in a situation is a relief so much of the negative feelings that you may be experiencing. Remember even if you might be in the wrong for a situation it's never wrong to say how you feel.

To wrap things up, negative energy is something that can affect your life in massive ways. If you're experiencing something like this you can simply meditate, cleanse yourself with crystals, or even better just simply speak to someone about what's going on in the moment. Remember that you are important, valued, strong, and you can push yourself to do so many things.

## Babysitting is a Good Job for Teens

By Carmen Williams, '25

Babysitting is a fun job to have as a teenager to make some money! Some people like babysitting without earning money for enjoyment. But it's nice to have a job that you like, rather than a job you hate where you don't want to work. As for babysitting you can watch family members or other people's children.

Babysitting can be lots of fun, earning money easily by the hour by not getting mad because it's something you like to do! I think babysitting would be a good job for most teenagers who don't like working with others! Nowadays, you can apply on an app and babysit for families or in your neighborhood on days you're available. In fact, you can help out around the house and get extra money.

As a babysitter, you get paid less but paid right up front no waiting two weeks to get paid. It depends on the family how much they pay you. Some charge a lot and some don't. It really depends on how many hours you are babysitting. Most likely you will get a good amount of money from this job. Emir Williams, a sophomore who attends Western Hills University High School says, "I prefer ages 3-5 because they are easier than newborns or unless they are just now well-



behaved children."

Melaysia Riley also attends Western Hills and says, "Keep the child entertained and keep them fed as well."

Riley also says, "Apply online or you can ask around even if some people can offer you the job."

Babysitting is for children of all

ages. Babysitters provide with them play and feed them, and also do activities with them. You're also responsible. Some sitters like to prepare with kids and what they like to do and what they don't do. Activities can already be planned.

Some work right after school or on weekends. You have to be ready to get them snacks, make them food, and provide drinks when they ask. Some sitters are allowed by the parents to pick them up from school and take them places they wish to go. Most sitters like to help out around the house like clean up around and be heard n They have pets to take care of them and clean their messes.

As a babysitter, you should always be prepared or share what might happen, and keep children safe. Babysitting is important because it teaches you skills in childcare needs. Also helps with growing and helps with the experience.

To sum all this up, babysitting is a great teen job to have and it's fun as well! You're not complaining as much as you would at other jobs. It's a great experience and nice to get money upfront and not wait. You don't have to do a lot except provide for the children and that's pretty much it. It's not a lot of work just watching a child or more.

## Girls to Women is a Sisterhood

Nency Patel, '24

Girls to Women is an organization, where young girls learn proper manners, importance of themselves, and to ensure that the goals of each young candidate are attained to their highest potential. Girls to Women is like a sisterhood.

Mrs. Lewis-Thornton is the adviser of Girls to Women organization in Western Hills high school, also a history teacher. She has been adviser of Girls to Women organization for seven years.

She wants her girls to know that "they deserve 'a seat at the table' and for them to know how to behave when they get there".

Emilie Diop, one of the members of this organization said "I joined because I was recommended. At first I didn't know what this organization was about but I thought I would just try something new." She has been in the organization for 2 years, now she is senior and she hopes she gets confident, and will be more mature and independent after she graduates. She also feels this organization is different from other

clubs/organizations because it's only for girls and you can learn what kind of manners you need at the dinner table or if you go to a business interview or some kind of important dinner. How to dress for particular events like an interview or business party, or a meeting.

In Girls to Women they organize events, campaigns, raise funding, do presentations and go on field trips. They find ways to contribute to our environment and community.

"I feel like I'm giving back to the world", states Samya Mitchell, member of the Girls to Women. She joined the

Girls to Women to remind herself that small actions matter. She also has been in Girls to Women for 2 years and now is a junior. Once she graduates, she hopes to get a sense of gratefulness that she was able to be apart of a sisterhood.

Girls to Women organization seems to be a fun, skills and manner learning organization, and young girls should try this organization. Maybe they will find something they never knew they had in them or could have done it.

# FEATURES

## Gender Equality: A Fundamental Human Right

By Lydia Sharp, '23

Gender equality- one of the world's long-standing fundamental human rights, that has been constantly challenged and debated for decades about its importance. Today in 2022, decades after the topic of gender equality was first brought to the public's attention, the question is, has gender equality improved very much from the past to now?

One of my fellow Seniors, Na'Zia Dyer, states, "It has improved a significant amount. Women can now vote, have jobs, participate in the government, etc."

She provides a positive perspective on the evolution of gender equality, how it is better today, and the freedoms/opportunities that women have been granted.

However, Michelle Sharp, my mother and a Oyler staff member says that, "No, not really, There's more talk about it, but there's not enough education for females to become effective negotiators; in many jobs/careers there isn't enough transparency with regard

to pay bands and salaries."

Her perspective differs from Dyer's, partly because of her extensive experience in the world and in different workplaces.

still people who believe that opportunities in our world and even in our workplaces shouldn't be given equally, no matter what gender you identify as.

**"It has improved a significant amount. Women can now vote, have jobs, participate in the government, etc."—Na'Zia Dyer, Senior**

Dyer believes that, "There have been more equal opportunities, but it can always improve. Men are still more likely to get promoted than women, but there have been a lot more opportunities in other areas."

Even in today's society, there are

According to the History, Art & Archives website, "The first attempt to organize a national movement for women's rights occurred in Seneca Falls, New York, in July 1848. Led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a young mother from upstate New York, and the Quaker aboli-

tionist Lucretia Mott, about 300 people— most of whom were women—attended the Seneca Falls convention to outline a direction for the women's rights movement."

Many years later, during the 20th century, women began to gain positions in the workforce, instead of only having work to do at home. In the essay *The History of Women's Work And Wages and How It Has Created Success For All* by Janet L. Yellen, "By 1970, 50 percent of single women and 40 percent of married women were participating in the labor force. Several factors contributed to this rise. First, with the advent of mass high school education, graduation rates rose substantially. At the same time, new technologies contributed to an increased demand for clerical workers, and these jobs were increasingly taken on by women." Although we still have a long way to go, compared to the past, we have come a long way. Having hope for the future shouldn't be considered overly optimistic, and instead should be considered to be the mindset of not losing faith in the generations to come.

## Mustangs are Victorious

By Samya Mitchell, '24

Jake Olson, Paolo Maldini, and Calvin Jones. All men who lead their teams to victory. VICTORY is the overcoming of an enemy, or antagonist. BUT VICTORIOUS is having won a victory; triumphant. Our Football team is Victorious

If you don't know our football team is on a winning streak. They have used teamwork, intelligence and our mustang power to achieve victory, But have you ever wondered what really goes on inside of their head? I've asked three Athletes the same questions but their personalities played a big part in them answering the questions, and what they contribute to the Mustangs

PJ, or Pierce J. Ward was the first person that I've talked to. A 16 year old with dreams of going pro, He was very honest and genuine with his interview more than the others believe it or not. He takes football so seriously that he does regular proper diets, along with ice baths to prepare for the upcoming games.

Let's be honest here, everyone has those days where they don't feel like they are ready to face the day and sadly, some submit to the feeling of depression and loneliness.

But Ward on the other hand uses his dreams and ambitions to over-



(Featured: Malachai Clark, Pierce Ward, Mac'Marqo Zanders)

come this dreadful feeling. During our discussion about this question Ward states, "Yes, I bring myself outta those moods by remembering why, and who I play for."

He made a commitment to himself, and his team that he'd give his all and do his best on "Their Touchdown To Victory."

But he's not the only one that

made that commitment. Introducing the most in tuned football player I interviewed, Malachi Clark, he is so connected with his commitment to football that when they lose he feels so bad that he ends up shedding a few tears. His emotions lead him to the dedicated team player that he is today. He has grown the past year to become a better player for his team and his school

And last but not least, Macmarq'o Zanders. He was the opposite of the both boys last interviewed but they all three have the same goal in the...NFL. Knowing his ability and Dedication, and what he brings on board to his team, everyday he is dedicated to become a better him, and a better Mustang. I've never seen them play before but based on Macmarq'o's recent statement, "Don't let your emotions damage the team" he is making sure he does his best in the field, and puts everything behind him.

While interviewing the "Potential Future NFL players", I began to wonder, who were we to think for the wins? They've said The star MVP's who help maneuver their team to victory are: Macmarq'o, Omar, Ant, Rail, Rahson, and Camp. I think what really makes the interviewed boys so special, is they see what they do wrong and they work everyday to make it go away. Go Mustangs!

# MUSTANG VIEW POINTS

## WOMEN BEHIND THE CAMERA

By **Huong Leiu, '23**

Women's participation in movies and how they are represented depends on their roles that they have behind the camera. Women in film, books and the media are just a reflection of how we as a society see women, putting women who are represented as strong and a leader would put a stop to the usual "submissive" women on screen.

Eric Vincent, a Spanish teacher at the Western Hills University High school says "Some movies and TV shows still portray girls/women as 'damsels in distress' in need of being saved."

In the film Stars Wars, The Force Awakens shows Princess Leia wearing a very provocative costume after

she was "enslaved", this sparked heavy controversy on how sexualized princess Leia was. This also motivated many women to participate more in behind the scenes of filmmaking like directing or screenwriting.

William Macaleenan, the Junior and Senior counselor states that in order to change how women are represented in films and shows is for women to be heads of fortune 500 companies.

He says, "It is a male minded society, has been since the creation of the United States, eighty five percent of Fortune 500 companies are ran by males," and he continues saying "women as heads of production companies, like Kathleen Kennedy."

Kathleen Kennedy is the president of Lucas Film and is an American Film producer. Kathleen Kennedy

was the executive producer for three films in the Star Wars sequel trilogy and also the Star Wars Anthology series. Kathleen Kennedy is an inspiration to many girls who hoped to one day be a film director and help stop the gender gap in the film industry because more girls would be encouraged to be in top film offices and so much more.

When asked about if Women are accurately represented in films, Macaleenan says, "No, in the past, women had less choice on how they were portrayed but now women have more choices to choose how they want to be portrayed."

Another opinion on this topic is from Tiara Goodloe, a senior at the Western Hills University says "No, I think it puts a heavy pressure on

women and young girls to act a certain way based on the media they see."

Women back then were represented as damsels in distress, needing saving and always seem to be dependent on men. This would lead women to usually be pressured to keep up the image of needing help in order to be able to be in films.

But things have changed through the years, the gap between men and women in producing films is slowly closing and women are now in charge and head of big companies and it seems that women in high positions are increasing.

Macaleenan says, "It is progress for equal opportunities."

## One Woman's View on Birth Control

By **Gabrielle Truesdell, '26**

Birth control pills are contraceptives that are taken in order to prevent conception. Many women and teens use them, especially since they can usually be bought over the counter. Though, birth control pills are still drugs and can have many side effects. Which makes people wonder if they should be available to teenage girls without a prescription.

Many teenage girls are simply taking birth control without knowing the side effects. Most don't talk to medical professionals and don't understand the changes their body will go through. Some people recommend teens visit a medical professional before taking birth control.

Lindsay La Roche, a ninth grade history teacher at Western Hills High School, says, "I think teenagers should have access to them (birth control pills), but I also think it's important to talk to a medical professional about them to make sure to know how to take them the correct way." La Roche continues, "Birth control can have some bad side effects so I think it would be best to have some guidance from a doctor."

If not a prescription from a doctor, then what about a signature from a parent/guardian?

Most prescription drugs require a parent/guardian to sign a waiver stating they consent for their child to take said drug. Should birth control require the same? Others believe that sex life is too personal, arguing that sex is a sensitive topic and teens may not feel comfortable talking with a parent/guardian.

Ashanti Booker, a freshman at Western Hills high school, shares her opinion regarding parental consent on birth control. "Absolutely NOT!", she exclaims, "Teenagers sex life should be something they can keep to themselves, especially if using protection and taking birth control."

If all birth control suddenly requires a prescription will teen pregnancies stop? If birth control becomes unavailable will teens stop having sex due to not having access to protection? Most people, including my interviewees, say no. They say teens won't stop having sex and without proper protection pregnancies will continue

to rise.

Birth control can be very dangerous. There are a lot of side effects and they vary from person to person. Some might say it's too dangerous for teenage girls to have such easy access to such a dangerous drug. However, others say it's responsible and that not every teen will experience horrible side effects.

Meg Groat, an English teacher at Western Hills High school, says, "No. Do teenagers ask their parent/guardian for permission to be sexually active? This will not limit sexual activity. It will only limit the control young girls have over their own bodies."

To summarize, I believe birth control pills do not need a prescription. Keeping it as an over the counter drug is safer for teenage girls. Most believe that there should be more education around the side effects, but because side effects aren't universally bad then teens can use them without a prescription. Since teenagers will have sex regardless, it's better to be safe then sorry.

## The Word on the Street: Favorite Musical Artist of 2022



"When you've heard a diverse amount of music its hard to pick a favorite. When I was growing up whatever was on the radio, was on the radio. I don't limit myself to just one type of music. Children today have a confirmation bias, which isn't bad, but they need to give other music a chance before they can decide if they like it or not". -**Social Studies teacher Mrs. Jennifer Lewis-Thornton**



"SZA, because I feel like most of her songs express how I feel sometimes, or the things that are going on around me. She is very gold hearted, she is very unique, and she is very inspiring. She had a lot of outlets when it came to how nice and respectful she is. She us not a problematic person and she's just really cool to me because I want to be cool and inspiring just like her." -**Senior Janiah Ushery**



"Rhianna, because her vocals just be so 'sexy' for real. Her voice is very calming and it puts me to sleep. She is also very pretty to me, so that's even better. She also influences young people to be, and do better." -**Senior Jamey Durham**



"Dr. Dre, because most of his music pumps me up. I like his energy." -**Senior Nate Bedford**

## FEATURES

# Is Your School Day Too Long?

By Youssouf Diallo, '25

Is your school day too long? Getting up early in the morning to go to school, and coming back home around 3 to 4 pm. For middle school students, that might be a bit easier for them because of the amount of energy they have. Now for high school students, that might be a bit harder for them. Especially those who are in the higher grades. Some people think that the school day is too short, others disagree.

What motivates students to come to school?

After kids come back from school, they've used up their energy so when they get home, all they can do is sleep, or do other activities that don't require that much energy.

The school hours being 7 hours, and that's just in the U.S. In South Africa the school hours are about 5 to 6 hours. In West Africa, the school hours are about a maximum of 6 hours.

If the school hours decrease, then students will be more motivated to go to school.

A Sophomore student at West High stated "From the time we wake up and from the time we leave school is too long," says Arianna Keinath.

Keinath indicates that "having longer school hours will impact students because, some students have jobs to provide stability, and some students work on school days."

She also adds on "working after school is very stressful."

This shows that some students think the school hours are too long.

Another sophomore acknowledges, "I think the school hours are good. I also think that 7 hours is the right amount of time it takes for students to learn what they need to know," says Faustina Ansah.

This shows that some people think 7 hours is a good amount of school hours.

In conclusion, the school day in the U.S is not too long, because some students work, and school requires too much energy mentally, and physically. In conclusion, the school hours are not too short. "Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child and one teacher can change the world." School is Important.

## Web Filter Wars

By Demetrius Thompson, '26

Schools have computers that students can take home and use for themselves. Schools also have web filters for these computers to prevent inappropriate searches, but are these filters helpful or harming student learning?

Students nowadays use technology a lot, especially when it comes to school. Students use computers as the main source when it comes to getting work done at school and at home. For safety precautions schools have web filters for these computers, but some people think that these filters are too restrictive.

Meg Groat, a teacher at Western Hills High School, says "At times, yes." She continues, "Some historical pages and educational resources are blocked." Groat expresses that the web filters are a little too restrictive. She explains that web filters prevent students from searching topics needed for school.

Azaela Slaughter, a student at Western Hills High School, is on the same page as Groat, and says, "I do think that the web filters at our school are too restrictive."

So now the question is, what should students be able to access on school computers? For example, should stu-

dents be able to access social media? My interviewees share their opinion.

Clinical Laboratory Scientist, Keisha Dobbs, responds, "Most things," she adds, "excluding social media" Groat has the same opinion as Dobbs, "Anything other than social media and sexually inappropriate content."

Students sometimes use a VPN to bypass the restrictions but if that wasn't possible would this positively or negatively affect learning? Dobbs thinks, "It can both negatively and positively affect learning." she states, "depending on the situation." Learning while using a computer is a problem. Mainly when the web filters cause problems it impacts the internet connection and can stop students from working for hours. Web filters can also negatively impact student learning at home, especially when it comes to researching or accessing the appropriate sites for materials.

As expressed, web filters can negatively impact student learning. They are also obstacles that need to be managed and programmed correctly. If web filters are changed appropriately, students can work efficiently like they used to!

# Gun Violence in Our Society

By Youssouf Diallo, '25

Gun Violence is taking a turning point. The use of guns has tremendously increased. The reason that is, is because guns are easily accessed, guns are being used for the wrong reasons, but that is not always the case. Some people purchase guns for protection, because the world we live in, you can go on a walk and get shot at for doing nothing but minding your business. So How can this problem be solved?

If guns continue to be easily accessed, then gun violence will continue to be an issue. The first few things the government could do is make guns more expensive, and change the age requirements. This would lead to fewer guns being accessed, and therefore being used. Which would also decrease crimes involving deadly weapons such as guns etc.

Which group of people does gun violence mostly impact? When asked this question in an interview, Travis Tucker, sophomore student at West High replied "Gun violence mostly impacts the black community". This furthermore indicates that gun violence mainly targets the black community.

Do you think gun violence will always be an issue, why or why not? Tucker claimed, "Yes gun violence will always be an issue as long as guns are legal", In order for gun violence to not be a conflict, guns need to be illegal.

What comes to your mind when you hear gun violence?

Tucker answered, "Guns". Roughiatou Diallo, freshman student at West High said, "Death, and chaos". Arianna Keinath, West High's sophomore student implied, "a nightmare" All these students at west high answered with an answer that relates to

violence. Which is not the positives to having guns.

Gun violence leaves a negative effect on people. When people's loved ones die, they are left to fend for their families, pay for the funeral, heartbreak, and most of all, missing them.

Some of the recent victims of Gun violence are George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and Trayvon Martin.

George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis after he repeatedly told Derek Chauvin, a 44 year old police officer he can't breathe, when the police officer continued to kneel on Floyd's neck. Floyd was pronounced dead a few minutes after being taken to a nearby hospital.

Breonna Taylor was shot in Louisville Kentucky in her apartment on march 13, 2020 when at least 7 police officers entered her apartment as a part of a drug investigation.

Ahmaud Arbery was running in Santilla Shores, when Travis McMichael shot Ahmaud 3 times with a 12 gauge shotgun. After claiming he thought Ahmaud looked like a man suspected in several break ins.

Trayvon Martin, a 17 year old coming back from a convenient store, was shot in Sanford Florida, by George Zimmerman. George is a neighborhood watch volunteer patrolling the townhouse. Zimmerman claimed he shot the 17 year old out of self defense during a physical altercation.

To some it all up, the following victims were brutally shot, and killed for doing absolutely nothing. The purchases of guns should decrease, and the way guns are being used should be changed. It's time to stand up, and fight for a change in society, safety, and gun violence.

## The Ability to Live Longer

By Eva Smith, '23

We all had thoughts of wanting to live longer, or having someone close to us to live longer. Or to even want someone who has passed to live a minute longer to be able to say our good-byes to them one last time. And this made me think about what would happen if we were able to make this a possibility. Wanting to know what would happen if humanity was able to hold this power, and what we would do with this power. Would we be greedy and make a negative impact? Or use it in a way to help others who are unfortunate to know when they will die?

The thought about the way humanity would react if we had the ability to do that. And at times I think that it would be great to have that and give people the reassurance and hope that they wouldn't die, but I also know how humanity deals with opportunities like this, they would take and not give.

Many people have different viewpoints on the thought of extending their life for example.

Mr. Kline, a English teacher here at West High, said "I've lost a lot of loved ones in my life and do sometimes wish the were still here." he goes on to also say, "On the other side, each of their losses had an impacted on my life that has made me who I am today." I agree with this, because if I didn't lost the people I lost I wouldn't be the person I am today.

But in the complete opposite direction, Ms. Perkins, another teacher here at West High said, "YES! I miss my mother, grandmother and aunts. My life was so much "richer/fuller "with them in it.". I agree with this too, as much as I grew from their deaths, I was hurting

too.

But another thing that I wasn't thinking about is how those people's health was in their life and if they would want to be alive again.

Like how Mr. Ledbetter, another teacher at West High, said, "No, those who have passed before me were afflicted with health impediments that greatly affected their quality of life in a negative manner."

If there was a possibility that we could extend our life time, would it affect humanity in a negative or a positive way? This question was the only one that they all agreed on!

Mr. Ledbetter stated that "Negative, humans cannot handle great power oftentimes, thus the power to extend a life and/or live forever would certainly have a negative impact on humanity." I agree with this statement all the way, I feel that humans are very greedy beings and we want to one up anyone and everyone. Even those who say they are giving, its just in our nature.

Mrs. Perkins said something similar, she said, "It would be negative. People would take things for granted. Love less and spend less time with family and friends if you think you have an infinite amount of time."

Showing these peoples opinions solidifies my opinion. That if humanity was giving this power of extending their life times. It will show how greedy we are, and how we are going to use this for a positive thing. And we would take this power for granted, and cause major problems in the world.

## Features

# Monkeypox: a disease worth discussing

By Christian Cohen, '24

Have you ever heard of a disease called Monkeypox? If not, will this text tell you all the information. It first appeared on May 6, 2022 in the United Kingdom, where the first cases were detected in London. One of the main reasons started in the United Kingdom was because it is a disease that can spread among humans and animals alike but primarily animals.

Now according to the Mayo Clinic news site of Mayo Clinic, "Monkeypox usually occurs in Central and West Africa. Cases outside of Africa are often due to: International travel and Imported animals. Close contact with an animal or person with Monkeypox."

Furthermore, Monkeypox has many symptoms you can detect if you're infected. According to Mayo Clinic, "Fever, Skin rash Headache Muscle aches, backaches Chills Tiredness Swollen lymph nodes are most of the effects you might experience from Monkeypox."

Now interested in the fact about where the name Monkey is oriented from, it was because according to the CDC, "Monkeypox was discovered in 1958 when two outbreaks of a pox-like disease occurred in colonies of monkeys kept for research. Despite being named "Monkeypox," the source of the disease remains un-

known.'

To get more of a perspective of the people, I interviewed three individuals and got their opinion on the matter of Monkeypox and their thoughts and concerns.

Ms. Carly Schwarz is a teacher at Western Hills High School. I received some of her opinions on Monkeypox. Schwarz' said, "Yes, before the recent outbreak I only heard of the disease when other former dead-

spread diseases were discussed such as polio."

Then there are some questions and concerns.

Schwarz also stated, "What is the likelihood of an animal-to-person (or flipped transmission? Are there discussions of a vaccine or preventative measure like there were with covid-

19?"

So some of their main concerns when it comes to Monkeypox are the concern effects that happen when someone is infected with Monkeypox and how to prevent it.

Ms. Michelle Zych, teacher at West High, said, 'The first time I heard of Monkeypox was this summer when it was going around'

Zych questioned, "what is the cure for it? Is there medi-

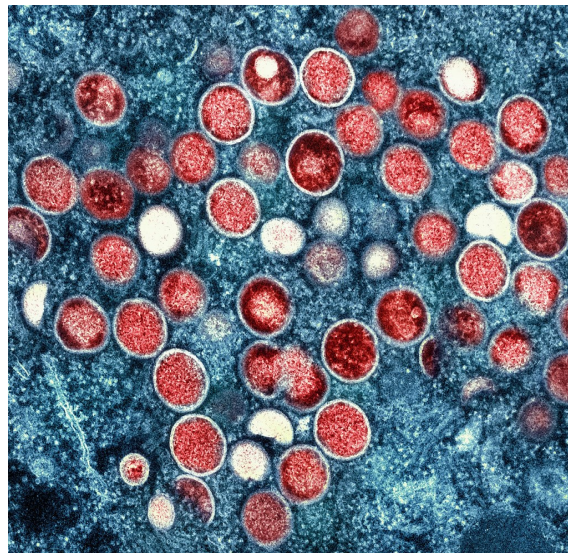
materials that have been in contact with an infected animal or person. Isolate people who have Monkeypox from healthy people. Wash your hands well with soap and water after any contact with an infected person or animal. Avoid animals that may carry the virus."

In conclusion, Monkeypox is a new disease that people need to not be afraid of but aware of. That needed detail and information will help in the future.

Also, to the article of the CDC "JYNNEOS vaccine is approved for the prevention of Monkeypox and smallpox disease. ACA-M2000 vaccine is approved for immunization against smallpox disease and made available for use against Monkeypox under an Expanded Access Investigational New Drug (EA-IND) protocol."

And if you're infected there is a certain amount of time it takes until you fully recover.

From the disease by CDC: 'Most people with Monkeypox recover fully within 2 to 4 weeks without the need for medical treatment. Some people, like those with a weakened immune system or genital or rectal rashes, may need treatment.'



(Photo courtesy of <https://www.flickr.com/photos/niaid/52104277400>)

## SEXISM: THE PROBLEM IN PEOPLE?

By Jannah Ushery, '23

In most opinions, there would be sexism used as insults or used just because someone enjoys something that isn't so normalized in past or current generations, to most that hasn't changed too much through passing generations and have an effect, not just on males but the majority of women are affected by masculinity males feel invalidates women's strength.

Mr. Stephen Colyer a teacher at Western Hills University High School had an opinion on this which he states "Sexism does affect all genders but majority women. Throughout society, throughout history males have felt as a stronger sex and that's obviously not true. Women have proved that throughout history, but for some reason, all the other generations sometimes still believe this. For Example, in sports, you have women athletes that do as much as men but it's definitely still around".

Although, this is a great statement and very agreeable for others that feel this way. Tiara Goodloe a talent Senior artist at Western Hills High School states "Sexism affects both females and males but genders have label stereotypes that are bad. She also gives some Examples; Women shouldn't be working, they should be staying at home and men shouldn't show their

emotions."

Although, these are some newly generational flaws. There are some important facts about why sexism is a problem within a lot of places like



(Photo courtesy of [www.hrmmagazine.co.uk](http://www.hrmmagazine.co.uk))

homes, workplaces, and even schools. Tiara also talks about when/where she has seen sexism being used and what she did to help. "Sexism is highly used in schools when it comes to dress code for females and the limits for clothes. I've seen most sexism at school. When it comes to conversations like guys wearing nail polish and

how it's weird but I stepped in and said that it's normal and it's just painting."

While Goodloe believes this there are a few people that believe that sex-

ions and responses

Colyer said, "You see sexism pretty much anywhere in the workforce or anywhere else, it's still there. Like I've said before it's not as in your face but you can see it, it's quiet. People need to recognize it and change they need to understand it too. Coming from a male perspective, women can do as much as a male can. I'll be honest I haven't stood up for anyone in that situation, not sure if it's because I'm a male myself and I looked over it, going back and thinking about it it's definitely there and I've seen it. Definitely should have probably stood up but I had just kinda moved forward".

In conclusion, sexism has changed and affected generations beginning with the past and present, and not all have been allies to ones that have been affected by sexism although it is still around and has been, not everyone chooses to pay attention to it and dismiss that it is a problem and needs to be treated as such.

ism isn't really

that concerning in Western Hills HS, Marsha Harris also a Western Hills student believes that "there isn't a lot or concerning amount of sexism used in school just because it has not been addressed."

This statement may seem false to a few people who just have yet to come from to give their opinion. But, some teachers have also given their opin-