



The Western Breeze

Wake Up West High: we deserve the spotlight!

By Ke'Orland Harrison, '23

For as long as I can remember, Western Hills has been in the spotlight when it comes to media attention. Throughout the years, the media has focused its attention on our school in the attempts to humiliate us and demolish our legacy.

Whether it was a hazing incident or a teacher and student altercation, the media has made it their mission to pinpoint negative condensations about us.

But what about the good things that happen at our school? Ironically, that seems to never make the news.

Here, at Western Hills, we have a variety of student-led organizations that plan great events to benefit the community, but somehow the media is never there to witness the positive things we do. Now, I can admit we are not the best school in the Cincinnati public school district, but we surely are not the worse. Sure, every school has its secrets, but it seems to be our school is always in the spotlight of attention.

Our school, our community, and our lives have been looked down

upon for far too long. It's time that we change the way we view ourselves and change the way we are viewed.



Western Hills American government teacher, Mrs. Lewis Thornton states "if it bleeds it leads". Our entire lives have to continue being exposed and scattered because news reporters are looking for the next story. Looking to make a name for themselves. Our whole lives have been demonized by the biased superstitious mindsets of citizens.

We as students of Western Hills are furious that our school and we

are being looked at in such a manner.

Western Hills Senior Helen Dawit states, "I am angry that our school is

in the media.

For instance, I've met students from different schools around Cincinnati Public Schools, who share the same goal. Although we have differences within our school, we ultimately want similar end goals, which is to succeed.

Lewis-Thornton states "West High has way too many awesome kids, doing the right thing, participating in clubs and sports, and valuing their education than not. Our teaching staff has a library of degrees and certifications and we offer more services from community partners than most can count."

Our schools are not as bad as it seems to be. As students we need to continue our legacy and continue to value our education. We need to ask our alumni to come help us reshape our school's foundation and help build our narrative as a school. We need to continue to best represent our school and ourselves.

We stand together with high expectations. We are on time, responsible, respectful, and prepared! We are West High!

The Holidays are a Time for Traditions

By Lydia Sharp, '23

Now with the holiday season right around the corner, it's nice to think about all of the fun and festive holiday activities that we love to do around this time of year. Whether you're baking treats, singing Christmas carols, drinking hot chocolate or eggnog, or even putting up decorations for the season, it's a great time to get together with family and friends while you get in the spirit of the holidays. We appreciate the older traditions and happy memories from years past, and welcome many more traditions and great times spent with loved ones to come.

I recently asked Aubrey Dowers, a Dater High School Alumni, what some of her unique holiday traditions are, and she said, "I don't have many, but I love making care packages for people. Hot cocoa is a big must, and during spooky-time I go all out." Dowers discussed some of her favorite parts of the holidays and how she makes the most of each one with her personal traditions.

I also talked with Derrika Dorsey, a fellow West High Senior, about why her traditions are meaningful to her. She stated, "It brings the family closer and makes

it more meaningful, and I treasure and value my family."

Dorsey talked about how her family's traditions made her feel more connected to her loved ones and how much that meant to her.

When I discussed the topic of unique holiday traditions with Holly Burgess, a West High staff member, she said, "Every year, my

husband's family comes together for a big family dinner and we have a pile of gifts in the middle of the floor, and you can either choose a gift from the pile, or take the one that someone else picked."

Burgess expressed how much she loves her personal traditions and what makes the holidays special for her.

Dowers stated, "I love Halloween more than any other holiday because I feel like people are more willing to get together and not talk

about politics or anything. We can just chill around and eat candy and good food, and watch movies together. It's for the kids to have fun and for adults to have fun too without the pressure of having to be prim and proper."

Dowers told me how one particular holiday is special to her because of her traditions and how

much she appreciates being able to enjoy herself during it.

When asked about her special traditions for the holidays, Dorsey said, "For Halloween, we dress up in matching pjs, make hot cocoa, and watch scary movies."

Dorsey discussed her own traditions for Halloween and how she enjoyed the holiday with her family.

I asked Dowers if she had any traditions for specific holidays and she answered, "Many! On Halloween, I make way too much food, go

trick-or-treating because I'm cool, and have a bunch of people over and watch scary movies, and eat chicken nuggets. For Thanksgiving I work, and for Christmas I like to make care packages for some people and drink hot cocoa all the time."

Dowers reminisces about her favorite parts of the holidays and how she makes each one full of well-spent fun.

As we near the end of 2022, it's crazy to think that even after thousands of years, we still take the time each year to celebrate holidays that have been celebrated for so many years, longer than any of us have been alive.

Holidays should never be taken for granted and should be treasured by everyone, whether you make new traditions, keep traditions from past years, or even if you don't think you have any special traditions at all.

In conclusion, the holidays are especially important because they serve as a reminder to us of everything and everyone that we have to celebrate and enjoy the presence of.

"I don't have many (traditions), but I love making care packages for people. Hot cocoa is a big must, and during spooky-time I go all out," said Aubrey Dowers.

OPINIONS

Hocus Pocus: still a classic?

Lydia Sharp, '23

As Halloween approaches, everyone is preparing for the fun autumn activities. Pumpkin carving, house decorating, costume shopping, and watching classic and iconic movies to get in the spirit of Halloween. A night filled with vampires, werewolves, ghosts, jack-o-lanterns, and even witches.

Speaking of witches, it has been almost 29 years since the release of one of the most iconic witch movies of all time, Hocus Pocus. Released in 1993, directed by Kenny Ortega, Hocus Pocus explores the stories of the Sanderson sisters, the Binx siblings, and the Dennison siblings on Halloween. Now, almost 29 years later, with the release of the sequel; Hocus Pocus 2, some people may wonder if the original has withstood the test of time, and if the sequel lives up to the original.

I have grown up watching Hocus Pocus every year, and I was very excited when the announcement for the sequel was made.

According to Thea Jones, an Oylar School junior, "No, the original Hocus Pocus is still a great film to this day, even with its modern-day sequel."



Jones shares her perspective while still acknowledging the lengthy gap between Hocus Pocus and its sequel.

Julia Mercer, a Dater sophomore, says, "I would've liked to see more of the different dynamics between the Binx siblings and the Dennison sib-

lings."

Mercer remarks on the sibling dynamic additions that could've added extra detail to the original film.

Jones states, "I thought it was interesting to see a new director's take on the story, although Kenny Ortega's work on the original was phenomenal."

Jones comments on the change of directors between the making of the original to the recently released sequel.

Duane Byrge, writer for The Hollywood Reporter, says in regard to the original film, "Even when the plot bobs for story apples too long, director Kenny Ortega's nimble narrative choreography propels it along.--- The kids are good too; Katz as the conscientious older brother and Birch as the feisty, younger sister are properly sympathetic."

Byrge highlights the positive aspects of Hocus Pocus, with only a slight underlying acknowledgement of excessive plotlines.

Although there are varying opinions about which of these movies is best, it shouldn't discourage you from visiting the Sandersons on your silver screens.

Let us hear YOUR OPINION!

Submit letters to be printed in The Breeze.

Letters can be sent to room 1236, or placed in Ms. Silbernagel's mailbox

(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.

Child-Parent Relationships

By Alexis Hill, '23

A bond between the parent and child is important.

"Kids need emotional support, guidance, love and stability that only a parent can provide. Without a bond between them it would be like confiding in a stranger or looking for guidance in the wrong places," said Aaliyah Hill, 2019 Western Hills graduate.

Child-parent relationships do matter. No one should feel abandoned by their parents, especially those whom they live with. Our parents are the ones who we want to lean on, share our successes with, and run to when we need help. They're our safe spaces, at least they should be. The people who literally brought us into this world should be the ones we can rely on.

All child-parent relationships are not the easiest, or the best. Some people struggle with a lot of childhood trauma, some that may or may not be caused by parents. Some parents struggle to realize that a lot of things they do affect their children. Some parents even think that their kids don't pick up on their actions at all.

But they do, emotional trauma is a real thing and some people need to realize that. Some people may not realize that they actually have childhood trauma until they actually reach a point of breakdown. Most childhood trauma can be brought up as an adult.

You're probably thinking, all chil-

dren have some disagreements with their parents, but how far can they go? Can they lead to you not wanting to speak to your parents at all?

Some choices made by parents can greatly affect their children mentally. Even though they think the children are clueless, they pick up on everything. It can be something minor, one thing can lead to a child's fear of talking to their parents. Strict parents can scare their kids, they scare them to their children not wanting to talk to them at all because they're too scared of being judged or punished.

"I can't tell my parents anything because they use everything I tell them against me," said Danyell Foster.

Children SHOULD be able to share things with their parents. Child-parent relationships are something that I feel very strongly about.

Talking to someone can be very helpful, sometimes people just need to vent and let things out to move on.

If you can't talk to your parents directly, you can always talk to friends or your school counselor. Families are complicated but it's your family, fix it if you can, while you can.

OPINIONS

IS COLLEGE EDUCATION NECESSARY?

Sheree Hill, '23

There has been an ongoing controversy on whether a college education is necessary or not. While many families instill in their children that college is a must, others believe that it is optional. Growing up with a college graduate mother, she taught us the importance of a secondary education. We were always told that college was not optional, that it was a must without hesitation. I've abided by this rule my whole life and so have my siblings. With one brother with a bachelor's degree and a sister midway through her first semester of her sophomore year.

I took it upon myself to ask a series of questions about college education to a randomly selected group of teachers to see their viewpoint on the topic. When asked "How beneficial is a college education to you", Ashton Ledbetter (Bachelors in Sociology) responded with the word invaluable. "I have earned/gained so much from my college experience/education that has improved numerous facets of my life, my families, and extended families lives." Ledbetter also encourages students to attend college. "It helps start the process of growth beyond a hometown. Widens the perspective of students that attend. Sharpens the mind and critical thinking skills to prepare for adulthood.

Mindy Muddiman (BS in Education) encourages people to be lifelong learners, but whenever they're ready. "I started college when I was 27 years

old. Had I gone before that I probably would have failed out and had a pile of debt with nothing to show for it." When asked "For those who don't decide to go to college, do you think they're making a mistake?" she responded with a wise statement. "I think all life paths should be chosen by the individual. College can be very expensive; if you are not prepared to put in the work, you should not go. I personally have \$74,000 worth of student debt. If I had not finished it would have been for nothing. However, if you're thinking about going to college at all, you should give it a try. It might change your life for the better."

Elizabeth Thole (MA English Literature) on the other hand thinks of college education differently. She does not believe in forcing children but to allow them to find their own paths. "It is a huge financial burden in today's society," says Thole.

"Yes, it is a financial burden. College is not cheap and would take considerable wealth to say it is not cheap. The financial aspect of college can be a challenge if one is unprepared or doesn't have a good academic streak to win/acquire scholarships. College can ruin your credit or families," says Ledbetter.

College is not for everyone. Only you know what's best for you in furthering your education. For example Muddiman, she did not go to college until she was 27. She knew if she would have attended any earlier it would have been a waste of time and money. Give yourself time to decide on your life decisions instead of rushing it.

College Admission Criteria

By Ke'Orland Harrison, '23

The college admissions process usually requires an open-ended personal statement in response to either broad or general prompts that may include you sharing your story, discussing a topic, or just simply talking about how you overcame an obstacle. Many people think that since colleges use different methods for admissions, why is standardized testing so important? Should colleges use other resources other than testing for admission into the university?

Western Hills University High School Counselor, William Mcaleenan states "test scores are important. They show aptitude, and the ability to perform under pressure. Those are also important factors for future success" in the response to whether should all colleges and/or universities be test optional.

Institutions with test-optional policies can often attract and reject more applicants, which lowers their acceptance rates and makes them appear more selective. With that being said, I do believe that all colleges should not be test-optional. Standardized testing allows you to perform at the next level and separates you from the students who cannot perform under such conduct. If indeed all colleges were test-optional students would have the mindset that going into college would be easy. Ultimately this would cause graduation rates to decrease and the percentage of students failing or dropping out of college increase.

In addition to this, Tennessee State University Freshman, David Thomas agrees with the statement of William Mcaleenan stating, "Grades, GPA, Volunteer Work are all things that colleges look for in admissions".

William Mcaleenan adds "colleges are applying a more holistic approach to determining which applicants would be a good fit".

Both David Thomas and William Mcaleenan think in addition to reviewing standardized tests scores, colleges also give students the opportunity to showcase their abilities whether it be personal statement essays or the number of extracurricular activities you participated in outside of school. Based on past experiences, college admissions advisors look for well-rounded students. They want to see student actively participating in and outside of the classroom.

In conclusion, it has been proven that standardized tests do not determine your academic success. Colleges understand that people are not good test takers which is why most colleges and/or universities use other tactics for admissions. Submitting your test score via common app or any college application can only help strengthen your application, but also keep in mind that colleges pay most attention to the personal statement to better understand the applicant.

Photoshop Filters Foster Insecurities

Gabrielle Truesdale, '26

The teenage years are full of self discovery and that includes insecurities. The internet is advanced technology that can do a lot of things, including masking your blemishes. Apps have been created with beauty filters to change the way you look into whatever the beauty standard is at the time. That includes changing your eye shape, hair color, nose shape, lip size, and skin color. Erasing your acne scars, sharpening your jaw, evening out your skin. Covering up every part of your face that you may or may not like. This is toxic and only makes people more insecure about themselves. Using such harsh features can also cause dysmorphia, making people unable to recognize what their face really looks like. Beauty filters are harming people,

especially teenagers.

Beauty filters don't help teens feel better about themselves. They make them feel worse about their appearance. Filters make teenagers feel insecure about things they've never noticed before.

Heaven Bodenstein, a 9th grade student at Western Hills University High School, says, "They [beauty filters] don't exactly make me feel better about myself because sometimes it's a little weird and different seeing myself look another way."

Some filters adhere to European beauty standards. Including making skin pale, small slim faces, perfect lips, and button noses. This can cause insecurities in many people who are and aren't from European descent.

Azalea Slaughter, a 9th grade student at Western Hills University High School, speaks on the subject

of white-washing filters. "Yes, I've seen quite a few filters that lighten your skin which is AW-FUL."

In my opinion, beauty filters should be banned. They cause people, specifically teenagers, to be insecure of their natural features. Your natural face deserves to be appreciated and admired. Facial dysmorphia is real and chronically using filters can make teens unable to recognize their real face.

In conclusion, beauty filters are harming society. They are causing facial dysmorphia, making people insecure of their ethnic features, white-washing, shunning normal things as blemishes, and making people feel bad about themselves.

Is NBA YoungBoy the Greatest Rapper of our Generation?

By Fallow Sow, '24

Kentrell Gaulden, better known as NBA YoungBoy is a rapper/artist who came out of Louisiana. He is now 23 years old and has multiple platinum and gold records. Some might say he is the greatest rapper of all time, some might say he is the worst of all time. Although YoungBoy is the most hated, his fans love him.

During the summer of 2022, his fans would go viral for putting "Yb better" all over the internet.

Despite YoungBoy being loved, he is most hated by the music industry. I say this because he has been blackballed numerous times and still getting blackballed for no reason. This caused Youngboy to drop one of his hottest disc tracks "F**k Da Industry" this year. YoungBoy has over 10 billion streams on YouTube, off being blacklisted by his label.

He is no longer with Atlantic Records its just him and his producer making music. I asked one

of my peers, Mamadou Ba, if YoungBoy the greatest rapper of our generation.

This is what he had to say, "YoungBoy is the greatest rapper of all time in my eyes. He is versatile, good lyrically, and a good person."

I also asked Mamadou does Youngboy have any competition right now he responded with, "No nobody can compete with Youngboy because he is doing all that he's doing while being

blackballed (no label)."

I totally agree with the statement because it is true he has no label nothing its completely unfair to ask if he has competition because he has disadvantages but still wins in numbers.

All in all, Nba YoungBoy is a great rapper and an influence to many people. Since he is so young he probably has many more albums and mixtapes he can drop for his beloved fan base.

FEATURES

West High Spirt Week: what's fun for you?

By Ja'Niah Ushery, '23

Spirit has been around for generations, showing appreciation for getting as far as you have, and accomplishing things throughout your high school years. For some schools, the seniors have more "Spirit Days" than others. Although the seniors are most of the time in the spotlight of the school not all seniors go all out to support the "Good Days" of their school years.

Spirit week coming from myself is supposed to be a fun week where we all dress up in different characters of ourselves and have an exciting time with each other, getting along, and possibly starting new friendships with people you haven't before. Spirit week for me is inspiring and makes me more comfortable to be more open to bonding with everyone participating and getting others to want to participate.

A Western Hills talented poet senior stu-

dent Raven Simmons states "spirit week is based on participation; no one wants to wear a character outfit alone!" She believes that spirit week can influence others to participate based on seeing her or her peers participating.

It is very important it is very beneficial to have people participate in spirit week because it will allow other grades that cannot participate in spirit week yet something to look forward to when going into the next grade. But, not all agree with spirit week influencing others.

Also, Western hills creative fashion guru senior student Marsha Harris states "No! Some people can be very lame and boring!" She believes that spirit week isn't fun sometimes because some people in certain grades believe that they are "too good" or "grown" to participate in spirit week and fully be very "extra" in the spirit week days.

Both points are very understandable to

believe in that because not everyone participates and choices to live out their high school years, spirit week is definitely based on the participation of your peers and yourself. Would you be fully committed to spirit week and its antics?

Although, many may not agree with some of these opinions. A lot of people have said spirit week is exhilarating for them and their school's environment. But many people have different opinions on what excites them on those spirit weekdays.

Simmons says "It's very exciting because you have a chance to come to school in goofy and fun attire." She based her opinion on the environment fun you can have by wearing creative and silly attire to school to show spirit for your school, sports teams, etc.

Still, not everyone has this same reasoning Harris states that "I just love to have fun with friends".

Hence, not everyone has an environment experience but a circle of friends inflicted experience and the memories you make with those groups of friends.

But as exciting as it is for these two remarkable women they have favorites about what spirit week means to them. Harris says her favorite memory of spirit week is dressing up and it's the most fun when everyone participates.

Simmons goes on to say a more detailed statement of what is her favorite about spirit week: "My favorite thing about it is the attitude it puts everyone in. It makes it a fun environment at school." I believe both opinions from these girls signify that spirit week is a fun, environmental, creative day of the school year for whoever participates.

My question for you is: What are your favorite, exciting, memorable things from your spirit weeks throughout your school years?

The Means to Becoming a Writer

Youssef Diallo, '26

What are the means to being a writer? Writing is not easy, yet we still deliver!

When people see the newspapers, they don't know how much it took to write the newspaper. I mean I'm talking about days, maybe weeks of writing. It is not a joke, so it's important to take the time and actually read the newspaper because that's people's hard work, and dedication.

Research shows that a writer is someone who uses written words in different writing styles, taking their time writing every little word, Showing love, and dedication to the topic the writer is talking about. Showing their effort to interact with the audience in different ways that they will explain their work.

Writers also get some of their inspirations in the little things in life; it could be the way it looks outside or even their favorite hobbies. They get this inspiration and take it into excellent words and make great masterpieces of books or papers.

When asked what requirements do you need to be a writer, Travis

Tucker West High's sophomore student states "Well obviously you need the basic English skills, such as spelling and punctuation, but also you have to be creative, being able to come up with new

above, being able to come up with creative ideas, being patient, and having the correct grammar.

While Tucker said this, Faustina Ansah, also West High's sophomore student, claimed "You need

today in society. Or I think of controversial topics, like gun violence, abortion, and religious freedom (etc) topics like these that could make a good argument."

This exhibits that having the ability to choose controversial topics like the ones above, is a big part of being a writer.

What motivates you to start writing?

Ansah articulates, "The topic of my choice, and the purpose it's gonna serve."

The motivation to write makes the whole writing process way easier. Once you start writing, it'll be like a magnet, it'll all come together eventually, and before you know it you'll be all done.

In brief, being a writer is no joke, the means to being a writer are just the topping on the cake. The fun part of the whole writing experience is to be able to engage with your readers. So please next time, take your time to read the newspaper because it's hard, and time consuming also what is a story without an audience !!!

**"If there's a book
that you want to
read, but it hasn't
been written yet, then
you must write it" —
Toni Morrison**

and different ideas is useful, and being patient is good also. It may take time to think of an idea so being patient and waiting for an idea to come to mind. Also being patient as in not rushing the time it takes to finish whatever you are writing."

This specifies that it takes a lot to be a writer, such as, as stated

be able to engage your readers, and also be detailed and have some form of originality."

This indicates that as a writer, you also need to be able to entertain your audience.

As asked, how do you choose a topic that interest's people?

Tucker announced that "I try to just think of topics that are popular

The Consequences of Violence

By Danasia Hudson-Young, '23

Sexual Violence is happening every day and can happen at any time. Most of the time, the survivors' loved ones want to do anything to comfort them but aren't sure if they're doing it the right way. Whether you are ready for learning how to be there for someone, it's good to take your time to watch and learn the movement and sayings you can help to make a difference for that survivor. Most people aren't sure what is the real meaning of sexual violence.

Sexual Violence is sexual activity that happens without consent. According to The Rainn website "Sexual Assault can take many different forms and be defined in different ways, but one thing remains the same... IT'S NEVER

THE VICTIM'S FAULT!" I wanted to get other people's perspectives on sexual violence and how it's different between the two genders.

Western Hills senior Ke'Orland Harrison says, "Sexual Violence is absolutely disgusting. It's sad we as a society have to worry about our rights being violated."

There are other thoughts on this issue.

Western Hills junior Evelynne Irakoze says, "It's a topic not many people talk about even though it's more common than people think."

There are different consequences for men and women as a result of Sexual Assault.

Western Hills Senior Ana'Isa Blunt says, "No because females can become pregnant while men can't."

Sexual assault is not the same for Men and Women.

"Men and Women do not have the same consequences. I think both don't have [severe] enough consequences, but at least sexual violence [against] women is mentioned and talked about. While with men, it's brushed off because people say men are 'Naturally Sexual'." states Irakoze.

Another opinion on this topic is as follows.

Harrison responds, "I think that men and women are both affected [by] sexual violence but women are much more prone to it. As a man, the chances of me being kidnapped and sexually assaulted are very low, but for women, it's the complete opposite."

This topic makes people feel many different ways including anger, depression, and sadness.

"It angers me because this is one of the ways [how] my mom passed away," replies Blunt.

Losing one of your parents in this type of situation can really traumatize a persona and change their perspective on the world.

Irakoze says, "It makes me feel sad for the people that go through it and mad for the people that are afraid to speak up."

Speaking up can be very difficult for people to do because they are afraid of how others are going to react or judge them.

"This topic makes me feel disgusting and also discomfoting because I worry about the people I love experiencing this," Harrison says

FEATURES

Hazing in College: what it is and how to stop it

Huong Lieu, '23

Everyone wants a sense of family and a group of people to fit in with. College has a huge population of people all in one place at the same time. It might be a little hard to get to know everyone or make connections with so many people. Fraternities and sororities promise a sense of belonging and a community to share similar values and opinions. But what is the cost of joining these sororities?

Hazing is a ritual or actions that create embarrassment, mental and physical discomfort in order for those to be initiated into a Fraternity or Sorority.

When asked about if hazing is a problem in the college community, Jolie Sebel, an Ohio State student says "I do, so Ohio State has really strict hazing laws, I think Ohio in general, it's called the Collin's law and it makes Ohio really strict on hazing. But, as a whole it is a really big problem, but even with all these laws, it's still a problem."

Ashton Ledbetter, the Western Hills college career coordinator says "Yes, I think it's normalized for sure, there should be no forcing people to drink or humiliating them. I feel as if some believe that "lighter" measures of hazing is okay when hazing outright

is not, it should not be accepted." Hazing can be as "light" as being forced to eat pounds of food and "heavy" as being forced to drink alcohol until you pass out and still being forced to drink the entire night or until the "brothers" or "sisters" are satisfied.

An Article by *The Guardian* called "Nobody called 911: what

can be done to change the culture of hazing in US colleges," talks about the stories of those that are victims of dangerous hazing done by the people in fraternities and sororities. The author of the article says about Danny Santulli, "Surveillance footage from the "pledge father reveal" party hosted by the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity revealed how Santulli was force-fed beer through a funnel in between guzzling a 1.75 liter bottle of vodka; after two hours of drinking, he lost his bal-

ance and keeled over backward. He was barely conscious when fraternity members dropped him again.." Heavy alcohol consumption can have detrimental consequences as once a person's blood level reaches a fatal level, they could pass away. The most recent method of hazing is heavy

alcohol consumption, humiliation, sleep deprivation and even sexual assault. Santulli's death sparked massive protests and a permanent ban on Phi Gamma Delta at Mizzou but this sparks a question on how colleges deal with hazing that has gone wrong.

Andrew Muddiman, a senior at the Western Hills High school says "No, colleges don't take accountability because they don't pay for your medical bills if you get severely injured or even pass away, They send out a mes-

sage saying they are "taking steps", they always do this and they really only do this when something goes wrong or when someone dies and the news is on them. They don't punish those who were held responsible for hazing. They said they do but they probably don't and we don't know if they even punish those that we don't know about."

Colleges want to protect their image in order to get more students. What we question is how much they care about fraternities and sororities. Frats and sororities members do community service, boost graduation rates, raise money for charity and add value to the college experience. So, it's hard to focus on only the bad few but it is getting much harder to view frats and sororities as good when there are so many that are dying from the hands of their members.

Everyone wants to be accepted by their peers and have fun while they are trying to experience college life. But it is better to be careful of what you are getting yourself into and to be as careful as possible. Always make sure that people who you are around have good intentions and the activities that you would like to be involved in would not involve yourself getting hurt.

"Fraternities and sororities promise a sense of belonging and a community to share similar values and opinions. But what is the cost of joining these sororities?"—Huong Lieu

Music is an Escape for Athletes

By Ja'Niah Ushery, '23

Music can be a lot of different things for a lot of different people. It could be an escape, an admission to freedom, an awakening to how her/him/they feel inside, it could be infinite things to everyone around the world. But, what does music really mean to an athlete?

Athletes are often busy getting ready for a game, practicing continuously, and never having enough time to actually have fun because their focus is making it, whether it's on a field, court, or mat or even balancing sports with a job. They're often busy, busy, busy. Not only do they balance their sports schedules but also school and possibly having a job, and even being in a relationship, so with all that being said, do you think you'll need a small getaway from life?

But, even if you're not an athlete sometimes people just need a healthy escape from the real world for a moment. Right? I asked a few athletes what artists and music genres help them escape from their busy lives and this is what they had to say.

A Western Hills University High School senior baseball player William (Billy) Bowen's main music genre for him would be Rap.

He says "Because it goes more in-depth in words and beat of the music." Although, rap is Bowen's favorite he says he would listen to different genres/categories of music that he doesn't listen to on a regular basis which he goes on to say, "Sure, I would maybe listen to country or jazz music"

For Bowen, not all his days are very "eventful" when it comes to after or before practice but when asked if music is important to him. He says "It helps me stay motivated and on

Secondly, "Capture by Juice Wrld, Use to be my favorite until he passed". Next, "bodyilla by Eminem, One of his songs that aren't that deep". Lastly, "Die Young by Sleepy

music genre is Hip Hop. Soumare's explains that music helps and express himself.

He says "Hip Hop helps in many different ways by getting me hyped or just listening to them verses."

Soumare agrees that music is a important part of his life and can possibly help others with things that are frustrating, overwhelming, or just really hard to go through.

He proceeds to say "Music helps me focus and get out my head, soon as I put in my airpods, my problems go away, it's like I went to another world. I just go with the flow and have no worries."

Music can be a HUGE part in someone's life and can possibly prevent dangerous and/or life threatening things to some.

Soumare says, "Music is a important part of my life, I wouldn't be able to survive without it." stating that music is very important and a stress reliever for him in most days when his head is filled with negative thoughts.

Although, Soumare is very into the Hip Hop genre of he has a top 4 play of songs he listens to which is; Holy by NBAYoungboy, Why he told by King Von, Chosen 1 by Polo G/The Goat, Blocklist by Lil Durk.

In conclusion, music is a big thing to most athletes and can be to people all around the world. Music for most athlete's uses it to express themselves, and focus before and after practice wether it's on the field, mat, court or school, work, home chores. But, how does music effect people? What's your reason for



(Photo courtesy of <https://www.google.com/lhttpspitchfork.com2Fnews2Flil-baby-and-lil-durk-release-new-project-the-voice-of-the-heroes-listen>)

track with something I'm doing. Music can always be a healthy balance for anyone, music can help balance out your brain's focus on what you're aiming to get done. It can also, help motivate you to get anything you need to be done like working out, doing homework, or calming your mind at times."

However, Bowen does favor rap music but when asked his top four he said "For Fun by Lil Uzi Vert, It's a recent popular song I like."

Hollow, A more new artist that goes in deep with his words".

Bowen goes on to say "Most rap music I listen to are chill like there are not huge beat drops or anything, they match my personality as a chill person". So, with that being said Billy Bowen's music is based on his personality and helps him get his day running. But it may not be like that for everyone.

Next, Western Hill University senior wrestler Alan Soumare's main mu-

MUSTANG VIEWPOINTS

LEARNING STYLES LEND TO CLASSROOM CHANGES

By Demetrius Thompson, '26

Is the current teaching style in school helping or harming students? School is a place for learning and exploring the world around you, but can the way things are being taught affect you? As a student myself I would say that some ways certain subjects are being taught aren't helpful and could use a change.

Learning is a big part of a student's life and making a big impression on students regarding their future. So is current school teaching beneficial for different learning styles?

Ashanti Booker a student at West High believes "Somewhat, I believe some of the things we learn are beneficial." She goes on "Only to a certain point, I feel some teaching sub-

jects could be expanded."

I completely agree with Booker. I feel as if some things we learn aren't beneficial and are a waste of time to learn. Some things are beneficial and are actually worth the time when it comes to learning.

Something else I've always wondered is can one teaching style hurt the learning of students?

I think one teaching style can make a student feel a certain kind of way when it comes to understanding the material. The student could need different materials to learn that subject.

Senorita Hutchison a Spanish teacher thinks, "Yes, one teaching style can hurt students' learning."

Booker agrees, she expresses her opinion on the matter by saying, "Yes, one learning style of learning should

be examined just to see if learning has increased or decreased after a while. Seeing progress of learners."

Learning one way can block a student's path when it comes to understanding the material being taught in class. Students have different learning styles and these different learning styles need to be met with different ways of the material being taught. If the learning style isn't met it can cause complications for the student and student learning in general.

Therefore, should different styles of learning be addressed?

I think different styles of learning should be addressed to help out students who struggle in certain subjects due to how they retain the material. If the students are presented with

someone or something that matches their energy when it comes to hanging onto the material, it can make them understand instead of being lost.

Hutchison thinks, "Yes, students should learn and be taught how they learn best and classroom learning should be different almost every day. Students also need to learn how to adapt their learning styles to different teachers and teaching."

To summarize things, teaching styles can affect learning and to be beneficial for all ways of learning. Teachers need to recognize this and differ their ways of teaching so that all students can benefit from the lesson.

The Effects of "Hook-up" Culture on Teens

By Huong Lieu, '23

We all crave company, love and warmth from a different person from time to time. But what happens when we come along the wrong person who just wants to take advantage of our vulnerability and sometimes our loneliness?

"Hook up culture" has been a big hit for young adults in college and those in high school. It is when you essentially just hook up with a person for maybe a night or two or maybe a few months but it does not last very long. No feelings involved is usually what is said. But this culture could be detrimental to a person's mental health, physical health and their relationships.

William Macleenan, the Junior and Senior counselor at the Western Hills University High School says "It doesn't really lend itself to long term relationships, or at least practice towards long term relationships because while you are young, it's all trial and error. Hookup culture is more hedonistic."

Young adults nowadays are more prone to hook up culture than in the past, especially in college and high schools where there are so

many people, with so many different looks and personalities all at the same place, for those who want to pick and choose. But, they can end up picking the wrong person who does not have the same relationship values as them. This could cause that person's mental and physical health to deteriorate.

Andrew Muddiman, a senior at the Western Hills University high school says, "It could cause people to think that they are only worth one day, when they are attached to someone who does not have the same relationship goals as them. They could get their hearts broken and this leads to their self esteem lowering."

People usually want that warmth and love coming from someone other than them, but once you meet a person who is just looking for a sexual or one day relationship. Your mental health would be heavily impacted as once you felt like a person who is receiving love, you are now left behind being left on read or ghosted thinking about what you did wrong. But sometimes your physical health is in jeopardy as well.

Janiyah Baggett, a senior at the Western Hills University High School says "It depends, if someone is unchecked, they could potentially give their partner what they had

and girls could get pregnant but some girl's pregnancy could be detrimental to their health."

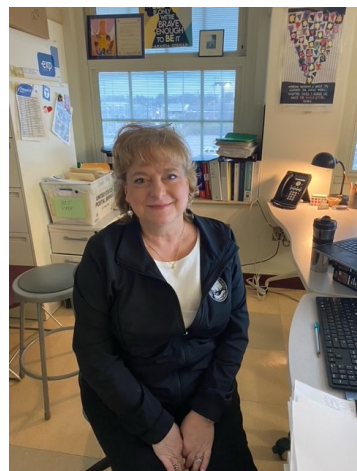
Like William Macleenan says that for young adults and teens, it's trial and error, so they are various partners. Young adults are not comfortable to go to the doctors alone or have an ego that is huge. This causes them to think they are fine physically but once they are intimate and not careful enough. They could potentially just endanger themselves and their partners. And for women, all bodies are not all the same, some could react differently and dangerously to what they have just had given to them (STDs and STIs). And some could get pregnant, whether they are ready or not, again all women's bodies react differently. Some could carry perfectly fine while some cannot and young women like teens in high school and those in college are simply just not ready.

Hook up culture overall could be one of the most damaging cultures to be involved with because it messes up your view on relationships, it impacts on your mental health terribly and physical health terribly. Young adults and teens should be careful on who they are involved with and their histories as they might not have the same values as them.

The Word on the Street: School Dress Code



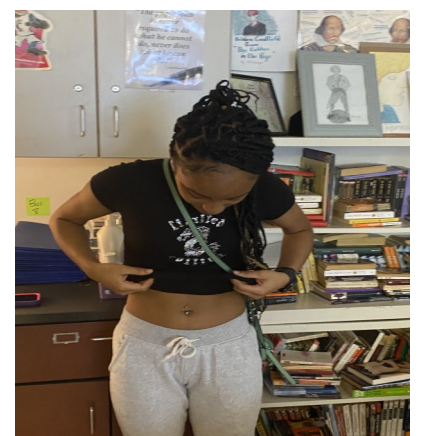
"My opinion on the dress code at Western Hills University is fair. We can't wear nothing to inappropriate but we can wear what we want most of the time."—Devon Bedford



"I do think dress codes can be problematic because it can be targeted towards women more than males."—Ms. Elizabeth Thole



"I think the regulations they got for girls is too much, but overall, it's fair."—Nate Cooley



"Western Hills' dress code is extremely misogynistic and would not let us express our bodies the way we want to. They call it EXPLODING, We call it CONFIDENCE." #freethebellies—Sheree Hill

FEATURES

Modern Culture and Its Effect on Children

By Walter Womack, '23

Today's modern culture is the access to the internet and just being able to see the world at a young age from their very hands. The main impact of modern culture would be the impact it has on children's social lives and the impact it has on their image as they try to fit in.

Nathan Thayer, a senior at Western Hills University High School, expressed modern culture as a door that allows you to get to know people you probably wouldn't come across within a lifetime. He elaborated that it will enable us to see different cultures. Although Thayer doesn't believe it is ruining people as a whole Thayer sees that being exposed to it too early can mess with a child's mental and believes it's what brings more anxiety problems.

On the other hand, William Mcaleenan, Western Hills' student counselor, says as a parent he tries to allow his child to develop normal basic skills that some children are believed to have missed, such as facial recognition and verbal cues.

Mcaleenan explains that it's okay to have your child exposed to things early but if you have

nobody there to help them understand what is right and wrong and what they are really looking at then you have a problem. Although Mcaleenan understands the benefits of having a phone as a child, he stated "you have to be taught how to use it appropriately."

He also makes it very clear his child would not have one until he is old enough to afford one because of that responsibility.

There's more to our modern culture than just social media and the internet even though it influences almost everything it helps people voice themselves and now we have come so far in many movements including just accepting people for being truly different and themselves. Since social media is so big in today's society, there is always a place for a child to fit in or have a sense of belonging.

In short, saying social media is ruining childhood is a bit of an exaggeration. Still, it can have major impacts on a child because you have the world at your fingertips, and with just one click, your child can be exposed and influenced accordingly or consequently.

College Friendships

By Alhousseine Keita, '23

Humans are social creatures, therefore friendship is having someone you can rely on, talk to, or turn to when you need them. Friends share understanding, compassion, and a desire to do what is best for the other. They communicate with one another for emotional support and are free to make mistakes without worrying about being judged.

It can often be difficult to make friends in college because most people are shy and anxious about meeting new people.

Mory Doumbia, a college student, thinks that connecting with classmates online can be an easy way to make new friends if you're a shy person. "There will probably be a course group created on social media after registration and during the first few weeks of college, which is a great opportunity to get to know the other students. Before the first day of class, I made one of my buddies, and we remained friends after orientation. I would have been anxious about those first days of college if he hadn't been there," he said.

It can also be very difficult to maintain friendships after college. Jean Claude, a college student,

thinks reaching out is essential to any relationship you have. "To maintain a friendship, obviously, you have to hang out and talk with one another. Reaching out to make plans (even if they don't work) or just chatting to see what's up shows effort," he said.

Among the importance of having friends in college is the fact that this friendship can affect student success. Harouna Sissoko, a college student, thinks supportive interactions with peers can influence overall academic development, knowledge acquisition, and self-esteem. "Having valuable college friendships during your undergraduate or graduate career can also result in improved social life, a successful, satisfying education, and sought-after career opportunities" he said.

Studying with friends is good for your mental health. Starting a new degree can be a bit scary, and juggling a university workload can be a big cause of stress, particularly during exam time. It's important to take care of your mental health while you're studying, and having a friend by your side helps.

Phones Distract Teens Nowadays

By Evelyn Irakoze, '24

Phones are becoming a huge distraction for students. Some students are in class, and instead of doing their class work, they use their phones because it's distracting them.

Some studies show that the distractions of phones can even lower a student's grades. This grade defines the difference between a student who's distracted by their phones and a student who's not distracted by their phone. Some of the main distractions phones generate is social media.

Although phones are very distracting, phones can also be of help. Angela Moore, a teacher at West High, stated "Some advantages to phones is you would be able to stay in contact with family members and keep in touch. The disadvantage is that you are always unavailable, because of the distractions the phone is causing, and this could lead to isolation.

This proves that there are not only disadvantages to phones, but there are also advantages. Antje Jarrett, a student at West High, says "it distracts people from the negative things about life, and helps in case of emergencies" as some of her advantages, This more on proves that

there are also advantages to phones.

It is equally important to be able to separate facts from opinions. For example when talking about why students are addicted to their phones?

Moore stated "Instant gratification" is a reason teens can be addicted to phones.

This indicates that people have different opinions when it comes to certain topics and discussions.

On average teens spend about 8 hours on their phones throughout the day. Antje Jarrett says spends up to 10 hours on her phone and Jer'eMryion Dora, a student at Athens high school, says he spends around 8 hours on his phone. Whereas Moore says, "4 to 5 hours maybe more." This shows that a lot of people lose hours in their day just staring at screens.

In conclusion, phones are distracting students from doing their work. Phones can impact students' mental health, behavior, and even physical health. It's important to know that phones can also have a positive impact, for example, because of the creation of phones, students are able to keep in contact with family members, and loved ones. They are able to call "911" in case of an emergency. Phones are the new normal.

Can Hobbies Help Teens?

By JJ Williams, '23

Hobbies are great distractions from the worries and troubles that plague daily living. There are many hobbies in the world. There are hobbies that involve staying in the school building after school hours. Many kids play sports and join teams to keep themselves distracted because they don't like being at home.

Kids like to keep themselves distracted because they don't want to grow up being lazy; it can even be them wanting to support their school and build a team.

Some students play sports to keep their mind off things like not wanting to go home, to keep their body fit and for the fun of it. Some people want to meet new people and have friends.

When I played sports it took my mind off of a lot of things. I honestly feel like it took my stress away. A can be a hobby you can paint, draw, write, watch movies, dance, exercise. Having a hobby is a good thing. It's good for your mentally health for a lot of reasons; you can be having a stressful day at school, but you know when you get out of school whatever you do is gone and take your mind off of it.

No hobbies should be stressful if they do that mean that's not the right hobby for you.

Pierce Ward who attends Western Hills University High School said he enjoys "playing the game or playing some type of sport." He doesn't like to sit in the house and be bored; he likes to keep himself busy and on track Pierce enjoy the things that he does.

Pierce also said, "I could go home but I like

to go do things and be around people."

I asked a question and the question that I asked was "do you see yourself helping in the community now or in the future why? Or why not?"

Kaniyah Phillips who's also in the 12th grade and attends Western Hills University High School said, "yes I do; I was thinking about becoming a health aid."

This student seems to look forward to doing her career and finding as many ways as possible to get herself in medical school.

Phillips also stated that "hobbies are important because you are expanding your experience and liking and space."

I agree because you also have resources, community service hours and having fun all at the same time.

Furthermore, Phillips mentions, "A year ago I didn't like communicating with people but now you have too talk to get what you want in life."

I feel like that's true because a job and things in life never comes easy if you don't speak up or put in the work that you need to succeed and the things you want.

In my opinion doing things straight when you get out of school makes you feel good about yourself because you are doing something creative instead of wasting your time going straight to sleep as soon as you get home; the things you do when you younger helps you in the real world.

Features

What are the Generations Known For?

By Christian Cohen, '24

Generations are one of the main contributions to society. They all have their unique ways of helping the world be a better place for the next in line, but I wanted to describe what these generations are mostly known for to the world.

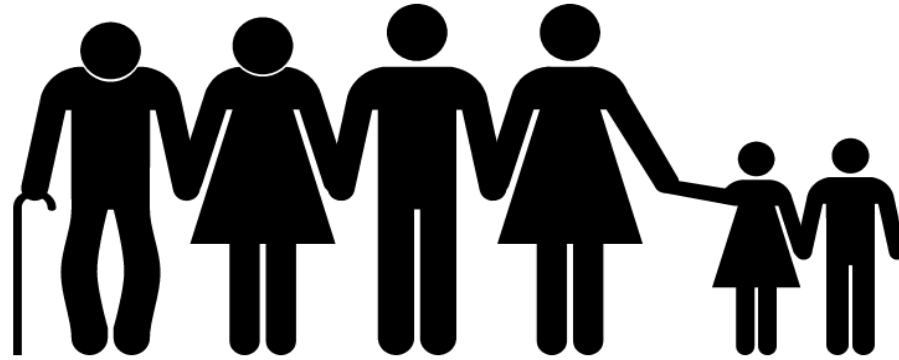
Now the defining definition of generation is by collinsdictionary.com "generation is all the people in a group or country who are of a similar age, especially when they are considered to have the same experiences or attitudes."

This is one of the main components when it comes to being in a generation. The first starting era I wanted to start with was the most important generation in the opinion of the people. I interviewed Mr. Kline, a Western Hills High School teacher, and asked him the exact question here about what he had to say.

Mr. Kline says, "I think every generation brings important development to society, each building upon the advancement of the previous generation."

Each generation has its pros and cons. I do think it's important to know each generation helped in its

own unique way. Gen Z what do the people think of this generation Western Hills teacher Donna Pfahler says, "They have many



(Photo courtesy of <https://openclipart.org/>)

challenges my generation never experienced like social media - covid +education"

"Gen Z is still young they have a lot of challenges in front of them in terms of breaking out of generational birding. the longer-living prior generations. staying longer in the workforce has created a job vacuum that in one way has made it hard to enter that workforce, but in another has made them willing to do work for less than they feel fair," Kline responds.

Also according to "Stanford," the well-known gen Z is known for "They are pragmatic and value direct communication, authenticity,

and relevance. They also love self-care."

The next generation is Baby Boomers and some facts and information about them. Baby Boomers are between the ages of 1946 to 1964.

William Mcaleenan, West High counselor, says, "They were my parents, they were very influential. The last generation that believed in the American dream."

Adding on to that baby boomers mostly influence according to In-

vestopedia "efers to a member of the demographically large generation born between the end of WWII and the mid-1960s. Because of their high numbers and the relative prosperity of the U.S. economy during their careers, the baby boomers are an economically influential generation."

Then there were the millennials born between the ages of 1981 to 1996. What were the millennials mostly known for to the people?

Kline indicates, " Millennials are the first internet generation. they've had the web most of their lives, but can remember its absence. they've often been stigmatized as being lazy, but have faced a lot of challenges societally and financially and inherently that prior generations missed by already having entered adulthood."

Gen X ranges from the ages 1965 and 1984 they are mostly known for being according to to "Britannica" "Gen Xers were the first generation to grow up with personal computers to some extent, thus becoming tech-savvy."

According to Mr. Christopher Bangi, "Gen X can fix anything."

VOTING, IMPORTANT WHEN IT COMES TO DEMOCRACY

By Nyla Allen, '24

Voting is important when it comes to our democracy. The law does not require citizens to vote, but voting is a very important part of any democracy. By voting, citizens are participating in the democratic process. Citizens vote for leaders to represent them and their ideas, and the leaders support the citizens' interests. Voting is your civic duty.

Today most American citizens over the age of 18 are entitled to vote in federal and state elections, but voting was not always a default right for all Americans. The United States constitution, as originally written, did not define specifically who could or could not vote but did establish how the new country would vote.

William Owens, a math teacher at Western Hills highschool states, "what i believe should be changed in our political system is doing more for the people then the political party." He also says he votes mostly every election. Owens was motivated to come out and vote because the primary elections really changed the laws. Owens believes that voting is really im-

portant. Politicians listen to 2 things: money and votes. Furthermore, Mr. Owens states the pros of voting is "you get your voices heard and you get a decision on who is your judge, things in the community, and state."

A majority of respondents who

American Government teacher who works at Western Hills high school, says what she would like to see changed in our political system is "accountability, politicians need to be more responsible for the effect of their words.

Lewis-Thorton also states she

"Voting is a small way for our opinion to be heard in society," says Christopher Kline, Western Hills English Teacher.

did not vote in the recent presidential elections feel that voting has little impact on their lives, and that it won't change how the country is run. In addition to being disaffected, they are also more likely to be Latino, younger, and make less money than voters.

Jennifer Lewis-Thornton, an

does vote in every election.

What motivated her to come out and vote is because she states "I understand that my vote is my voice and that many people sacrifice their lives for me to have that voice."

Lewis-Thornon believes that voting is important; she states,"the

people in charge decide what happens to everybody so we have to choose wisely."

Lewis-Thorton als indicates the pros and cons are "you pick the people who will represent you at the local state and national level and you decide how your tax money is spent."

Another teacher who works at Western Hills high school named Christopher Kline states what he wants to see changed in the political system is "the elimination of the electoral college and wishing there were more than 2 parties."

Kline also states he votes in every election. What motivated him to come out and vote is "the knowledge that things don't seem changed if I don't take the opportunity to try to help change it." Kline believes that voting is important; it's one of the few ways where our opinion can be heard. "If more people voted, it would be better for our population."

He believes that the pros and cons are "voting is a small way for our opinion to be heard in society. A con includes always having that fear when our candidate never or doesn't win and things don't ever seem to change as much as you hope."