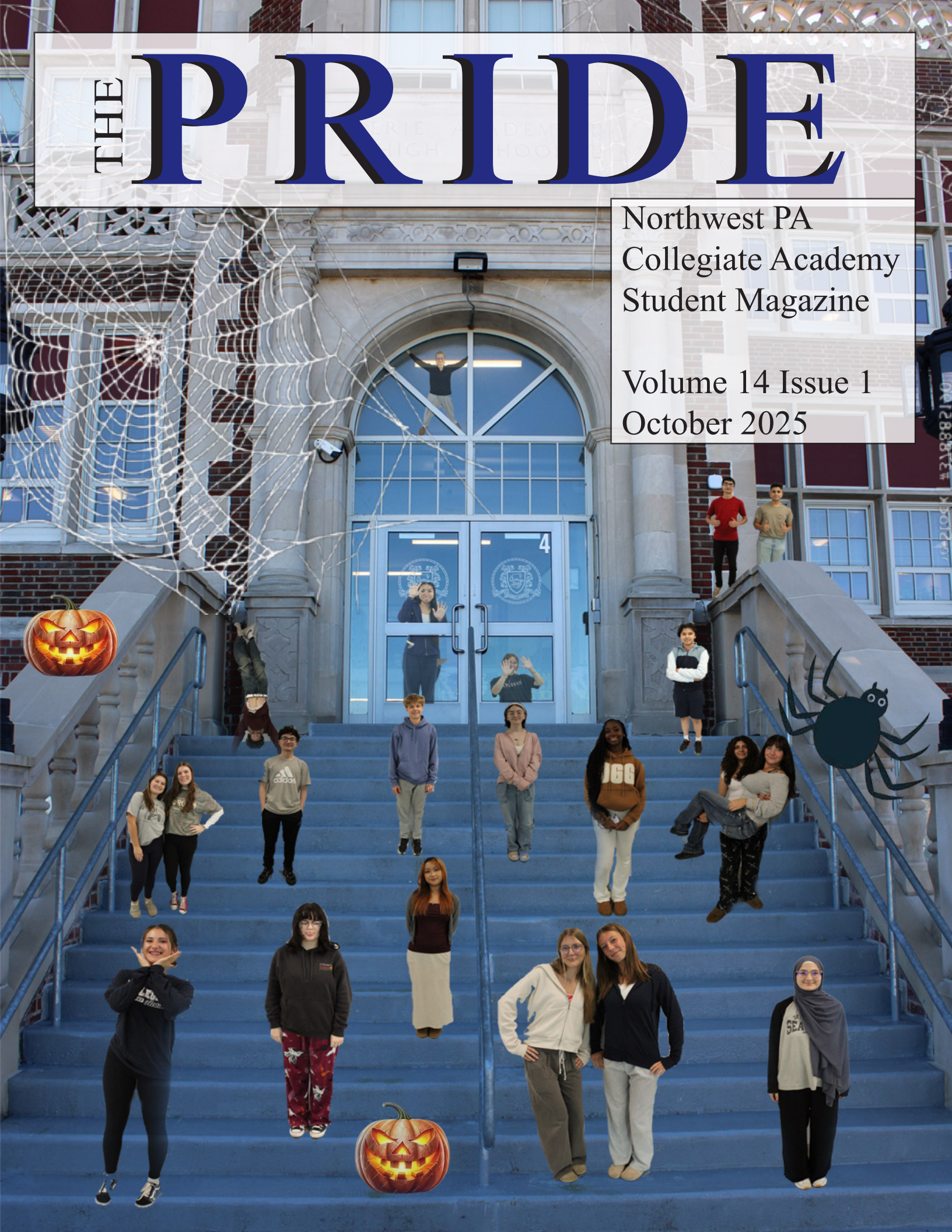


# THE PRIDE

Northwest PA  
Collegiate Academy  
Student Magazine

Volume 14 Issue 1  
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# Meet the Staff!

## The Pride Northwest PA Collegiate Academy Student Magazine Staff

### Editors-in-Chief

Silvia Kang  
Brecken McLaughlin

### Layout Editors

Quinn Hoffmeister  
Anna Kranz

### Layout:

Alaya Knight  
Larissa Komisarski

Maggie Cooney  
Cassie Lowery

### Writers:

Ali Abdulzahra  
Hussain Abdulzahra  
Zinab Alhasan  
Ava Burns  
Cassie Geiger-Herman  
Advik Joshi  
Mariam Kanj

Ava Kerchansky  
Rachelle Messmer  
Ehmwe Paw  
Myles Rhoads  
Jadier Rivera-Rosado  
Mercy Sanhtay  
Na'Kylah Tate  
Madison Wolfram



## Editors-in-Chief

Silvia is a Junior who brought back this paper last year after being apart of it her eighth grade year. This is her second year being the Editor-in-Chief. Brecken is a Junior who was a wrtier and assistant editor last year, and is now new to the Editor-in-Chief role.



## Layout Editors

Quinn and Anna are both Juniors who have been on the staff since last year. They love doing layouts and decided to take on this role together.

Collegiate Academy Administration  
Dean Mr. James Vieira

Associate Dean Ms. LaShawna Page  
Associate Dean Mr. Stephen Shaut

The Pride Advisor: Ms. Elena Parthenakis

Comments, questions, and letters to staff should be sent to  
[eparthenakis@eriesd.org](mailto:eparthenakis@eriesd.org)

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# Snag A Smart Snack - Gallery Goes Healthy

By Rachelle Messmer

The Gallery has noticeable changes due to the new requirements from the U.S. Department of Agriculture; schools must now prioritize healthy, decent portioned snacks that can help students' health and energy, rather than the unhealthy choices that cause sugar highs.

Food like chips, soda, and candy can no longer be sold in the gallery.

Senior Taylor Askins states that, "I think it's a good idea, but I believe that there should be some junk food options."

Dean Mr. Vieira says, "This is a positive change. Some people think that it's a negative, because of the change, but I think it's a good thing."



Photos by Rachelle Messmer

Sophomore Amelia Young says, "I think that maybe this is a negative change, because people won't want to buy them."

Ms. Ulmer, who runs The Gallery with pride says, "I was a little thrown off at first—I mean...who doesn't love change at the beginning of the school year AMIRITE? But now, I'm excited with all the new changes.

Being healthy is so important—especially when we are stressed and anxious. When we eat and drink healthier options, we look and feel better."

Ms. Ulmer also says that the prices

won't escalate too much. New healthy additions to The Gallery include: Fruit Bars, Slim Jims, Coffee (iced or hot), pickles, sparkling water and many more amazing options. There are also the new fall drink specials which include the new Starbucks Pumpkin Spice Drink that uses Starbucks coffee, sprinkles, and whipped cream, the Fall Hot Chocolate that has whipped cream and pumpkin marshmallows.

The Golden Apple Pie which includes caramel apple pie coffee with caramel drizzle. And The Apple Cider with apple toppings which can be served either hot or cold.



# Getting in Shape: Beyond Mirrors, Mindset is What Counts

By Myles Rhoads

Weights clanking, fans blaring, maybe some meatheads grunting through reps: this is the perception most people have about working out, but there's one element people often overlook, the mirrors. For some, they're a source of fulfillment, proof their shoulders are getting broader, new striations are cutting across their chest, or that bicep vein they've been working relentlessly toward is finally popping, but, for others, the mirror is less of a motivator and more of a judge. It reflects insecurity, comparisons, and the quiet pressure to look a certain way.

Photos by Myles Rhoads



This line between pride and pressure is what defines a lot of gym culture. Social media sharpens this line immensely, as platforms like TikTok and Instagram have turned the mirror into a stage. With progress pics, pump checks, and transformation videos everywhere, it can get overwhelming for many people who aren't confident in themselves or are just starting their weightlifting journey.

This is where our "thin line" comes in, because for some social media can be inspiring, showing what can come from consistency and effort. But, for others, it can fuel an endless cycle of comparisons.

The mirror becomes more than glass, it becomes a mindset checkpoint. There is a difference between lifting to conform to standards, and lifting to feel comfortable in your skin. All of these have a terrible effect on new lifters' mental health and how they feel about the gym. This is why many will choose to start, but then quit a few weeks later simply due to it being overwhelming and results not showing as fast as they'd like.

Collegiate Academy Senior, Marc Mancinelli, an avid gym goer, states, "I believe mirrors can provide a general sense if you are making gains however your body is constantly fluctuating and how you look in the mirror should not be taken as an absolute." and that "on off days, I often feel discouraged seeing myself with a pump in the mirror."



Marc says he finds influencers posting themselves online as inspiring, and it shows him that he can one day accomplish the feats that they have. While he does train for functionality and strength, he also trains for his appearance as well.

Whether you've been lifting since you were 13, or are just starting out, remember the gym is one of the most welcoming places out there. "Meatheads" at the gym have hearts as big as their muscles and would love to help out.

Even here, at Collegiate Academy, there are many ways you can exercise for free. During lunch/free periods you can workout, or after school on Fridays you can come to weightlifting club. Finally, gyms have trainers you can schedule with, or you can hire one online. Acquiring a trainer, asking for help, even doing research can make your experience so much better!



# Crafting Your Look with a Dishonest Mirror



Photo from Bark

By Zinab Alhasan

Social media plays a huge role in how people think about beauty today. Every time someone scrolls through apps like Instagram, Tiktok, or Snapchat they see people who look perfect. Most of these pictures and videos are edited, filtered or staged. However people know that these pictures are doctored, it can still lead to building insecurities for vulnerable teens and preteens.

According to psychologists it can lead to eating disorders and body dysmorphia? Collegiate Academy sophomore Riam Ahmed says social media can make “people start to care too much about looks instead of personality or achievements because that’s what they see getting the most attention online.”

Trends on Tiktok, like “Get Ready With Me” is an example of how social media pushes beauty standards on kids. These videos can lead to kids buying make up and skin care products to copy their favorite influencers.

Dermatologists warn that these skin-care and make-up products are not meant for young kids and can cause serious harm like severe irritation, allergic reactions and premature aging.

In 2022 according to the National Institutes of Health, many plastic surgeons have

said that people were coming in asking to look like their own filtered selfies. This is called Snapchat Dysmorphia.

People spend so much time with filters that they stop liking how they look in real life. Instead of accepting their own faces, they want to look like a version of themselves that doesn’t exist.

Another problem is how social media hyper-fixates on so many attractive people all the time. Psychologists say that the brain was never made to see that much beauty everyday.

This creates a contrast effect. After scrolling through a bunch of “perfect” people a person will begin to see themselves as unattractive.

Food related videos can also be harmful, “What I eat in a day” videos often show a lot of strict diets. Many people who watch these types of videos start to question their own habits. A tiktok and diet culture study by the Center for Countering Digital Hate in 2020 found that teenagers who signed up for tiktok were shown content promoting eating disorders within about 8 minutes of making an account.

Ms. Palotas, Collegiate’s mental health counselor, says, “Social media has a big impact on people, especially when they post themselves seeking validation. They start to pick on their own appearance and try to change into something they are not.”

While social media can have a large impact on people, it’s not always negative. One of the biggest positives is representation. Online, people are able to see beauty in different skin colors, body types and cultures, which helps people feel included and shows that beauty is not just one type of person.

Social media can also inspire people to be creative within themselves. People share make up looks, hairstyles and fashion tips that others can try which makes beauty more about self expression.

Allira Potter, an Australian influencer, says that influencers who use filters and editing tools contribute to an “ideal beauty” that pressures people to conform to unhealthy diet cultures.



Photo from Mindy Turmind

# HOW TO THRIVE IN FRESHMAN YEAR

By Ava Burns

Going from middle to high school is a significant moment in a student's life. It is the moment where one is granted more freedom than they've ever had in their educational journey. For me, it was a bit of a culture shock. In middle school I went to St Luke's - a catholic school. It was very structured and reminiscent of elementary school, so walking into Collegiate for the first time as an official high schooler felt overwhelming to say the least. (Though, it was underwhelming in the chromebook department).

No matter the middle school, starting high school is nerve wracking, but for the freshman out there, don't let the nerves get in the way of the excitement this new beginning has to offer.

Although there is much more freedom, don't just try to walk out on the promenade whenever, especially when it's cold. The doors do lock behind you. -I had to learn that the hard way my freshman year when my friend and I thought that a brisk early morning promenade walk sounded fun.

Aside from getting lockers and roaming the halls freely - are those things still cool to freshmen? - there are a wide assortment of clubs, sports, and dances at Collegiate.

During my freshman year, I would not have considered myself as a "dancey" person. I tried to avoid dances at all costs, and the ones I attended, I left early. This isn't because the dances were horrible, it was because I already had the idea in my mind that I didn't like them.

Now that I finally allow myself to enjoy them, you can find me on the dance floor all night, especially at the Halloween dance. It is my favorite dance, and it has a strictly costume dresscode, so don't show up in a homecoming dress, or in a suit and tie, unless you are a secret service agent like my friends and I were sophomore year.

The point is, opening oneself up to new experiences allows for growth, and hopefully you'll do a lot of that over the course of your four years, so why not start now?

Aside from the Halloween dance, there is a homecoming to look forward to this month, as well as a semi-formal down the line. And one can't forget about prom once an upperclassman!

If truly a dance-hater, feel free to branch out to new sports, clubs, or even people. Collegiate shares custody of most of its sports with Erie High. Erie High being the primary parent of sports like football, baseball, track, etcetera.

There are also courses available like: news magazine, yearbook, KingTV, dance, theater, and music classes that one can implement into your daily schedule.

And when I say Collegiate has a club for everyone, I mean it. If loneliness still kicks in, feel free to start a club of your own.

All in all, my word of advice to freshmen, or any grade for that matter, is just do

things, and get out there. Get the most out of these four years because - I hate to say it and sound like someone who peaked in high school - it really does go so fast.

Of course the educational part of high school is crucial. It is especially important to lock in during freshman year because it will set up the rest of the whole high school career.

As a senior, I still remember my first day of freshman year like it was yesterday. Collegiate: ceilingless and carpeted, when students could still eat lunch on a windowsill if they wanted. So take it all in while you can! Soon you'll be "unc" status looking back on your freshman year too.



photo by Ava Burns

# High School Athletes Avoid Potential Harm with Hydration and Stretching

By Ali Abdulzahra

Throughout our life we usually get injured when we are playing a sport or running. People need to know how to prevent these injuries so it doesn't happen to them next time they play a sport.

The Carrell Clinic warns football players of the following: concussions, jumpers knee, and foot fractures. Concussions often occur during a tackle which causes the head to snap back or strike the ground. Jumper's knee is generally caused due to repetitive strain. Foot fractures are caused by the long slender bones in your midfoot region which are called metatarsals that are prone to fracture due to a direct blow or excessive rotation of the foot.

Sophomore Ethan Miller, a lineman on Erie High's football team says the way to avoid injury is to "train harder, sleep recover, stretch, [and] stay hydrated."

According to OrthoInfo, soccer players should be wary of sprains (ligament tears, especially ankle), strains (muscle or tendon tears, like hamstrings), concussions (brain injuries from contact), and knee injuries (like ACL tears from sudden stops or changes in direction).

Some of the common causes to these injuries are collision, sudden movements, improper landing, repetitive motions, improper technique.

Sophomore Kushal Basnet, a midfielder on Erie High's soccer team says the way to avoid injury is to "warm up, stay hydrated, and play smart."

Shoulder and elbow injuries from throwing and swinging are common among baseball players, often due to overuse but also from acute trauma. Like other athletes, they can also experience lower-body injuries like sprains, strains, and ACL tears from running and sliding, and head and face injuries from collisions with the ball, bat, or players.

These injuries can be acute, resulting from sudden impacts or forces, or develop over time from repetitive stress, such as from pitching or swinging.

Fit to Play notes that volleyball player injuries are primarily caused by the repetitive

motions of jumping, landing, and hitting, leading to overuse and stress on joints and muscles. Acute injuries, like finger fractures and ankle sprains, can also occur from awkward landings, contact with the net, or collisions with other players.

The OAA Orthopedic Specialists describe the following wrestling injuries: cauliflower ear, concussions, and skin infections, often caused by direct contact with an opponent or the mat, sudden or awkward movements, repetitive pressure on joints, and skin-to-skin contact.

Specific injuries include ligamentous knee tears (like the MCL), shoulder dislocations, AC joint sprains, herniated discs from spinal pressure, and infections like impetigo or ringworm. Ligamentous injuries: Such as meniscus and MCL tears in the knee, or AC joint sprains in the shoulder, are caused by rapid pivoting, high-impact moves, and awkward landings.

Wrestlers need to make sure the mats and gear are cleaned after every use with antiseptic and antibacterial cleaners to avoid the infections.



photo by rawpixel.com



photo by istock

# Sports Benefits Collegiate Students

By Hussain Abdulzahrah

Sports enhances cardiovascular health, muscle strength, and coordination along with weight management.

For those students who never seem to get enough sleep, increased physical activity can lead to more quality sleep. Exercise also reduces the risk of chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

According to the University of Bridgeport there are many ways that fitness benefits mental and emotional health.

Physical activity releases endorphins, which improve mood and lower stress, and success and accomplishment in sports can lead to higher self-confidence, while learning to cope



with losing helps build resilience and perseverance.

Collegiate student athlete Noel Gordillo says that when he plays school sports some of the benefits he enjoys are better sleep, better physical health, and healthy exercise.

The University of Bridgeport also says that sports participation is linked to increased happiness and lower rates of anxiety and depression. Athletes tend to have better overall cognitive functioning and better concentration in the classroom. The university's studies show a correlation between sports participation and better

academic results.

Parental and peer support helps keep kids interested and involved with their sport, making it a positive experience, where they can focus on their enjoyment and effort, rather than winning.

Collegiate sophomore Ethan Miller says that sports is the reason why he has so many friends and he claims that sports have changed his life for the better.

Collegiate junior Lary Mashchys says that sports make him happy and his physical fitness has improved a lot.



all photos by instagram

# Stay Safe and Healthy: An Easy Life-Hack

By Cassie Geiger-Herman

Flu season is upon us, and besides the flu there are: sinus infections, the common cold, and COVID-19, in all its variations, pneumonia and bronchitis. I have caught tonsillitis during flu season more times than I can count.

And this was not due to a lack of hygiene, but because I wasn't responsible with the clothes I was wearing. I was not wearing coats and scarfs. In Pennsylvania alone there have been dramatic increases in respiratory illness, Doctor's office visits, emergency department visits, and even hospitalizations.

Preventative measures include getting your yearly vaccinations and practicing an overall healthier lifestyle, which involves keeping good hygiene. Additionally, washing one's hands and simply covering one's mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing does more

for oneself and the people around you than you think.

Eating healthily, getting adequate sleep, exercise, and stress management are all very important when considering the stress these things put onto the immune system. Nurse Barb, advocates quite simply to wash your hands. She also added how each person experiences each illness differently, but that one, universal habit can literally save lives. Since the COVID pandemic, many more people have worn masks though they have always been available and receiving vaccines have been stressed a lot more since then.

In Erie, PA you can go into places like CVS, Walgreens, and Walmart and get a walk-in vaccine, sometimes with no cost.



# MISSING

## Virginia's Silent Crisis: The Race to Bring Virginia's Missing Children back home. HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

By Mariam Kanj



Photo by: Adobe Stock

Each year, numerous children go missing for various reasons including: running away, abduction, or getting lost. Though it doesn't happen quite often in Erie, it's still a serious issue. According to the World Population Review website, there are currently 520 children missing as of December 2024.

Erie teens can look to Virginia, where a crisis is unfolding as the state tries to bring numerous missing children back home. According to the Virginia state police, a total of 3,274 children have been reported missing to the Missing Children Clearinghouse since the beginning of January 2025.

In the first week of January 2025, about 88 children went missing in Virginia. Although, in an interview with WDBJ7, state police said, "In reality, most missing child cases in Virginia are runaways, and most come home quickly."

The Hindustan Times reported, "Adding to the Virginia mass abduction claims, new rumors have said that a suspicious ice cream truck is being spotted every night." Although there is no clear evidence that this ice cream truck is correlated with the children who have been reported missing, it raises suspicion.

Why would an ice cream truck need to be driving around a neighborhood late at night, let alone every night?

Several viral videos compiling pictures of the missing children have begun popping up on social

media. One video in particular that shows screenshots of missing children taken from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's website, highlighting the dangers these teens face.

Critics argue that Virginia state police overlook this in an attempt to hide the fact that these children are missing. Virginia state police say the idea of this "Mass kidnapping" is just a false rumor, and that most of these children

have been found.

However, the amount of missing children cases in the span of a couple months in one place isn't just a coincidence. Many more people on social media have been making videos in an attempt to find some of these children, and raise awareness.

Though, there are a few ways that this can be avoided. Collegiate Academy police officer Ashley Powell says, "It's in your

presence, you want to protect yourselves using things like: pepper spray, apps like life360, and also communication. Don't get sucked into the unknown, someone can appear nicer than they look."

Ultimately, the unfortunate reality is that these individuals remain missing with each passing day. It's important to make sure that all children stay inside past nighttime and don't go out unsupervised.

# PLEASE CALL (800)-000-000 WITH ANY INFORMATION



# What Makes Your Favorite Scary Movie Scary?

HORROR - SUSPENSUL-THRILLER- SUPERNATURAL- MYSTERY<sup>1</sup>



Play



Photo from Amazon

## My List



By Na’Kylah Tate

Most people who watch scary movies like getting the thrill and adrenaline rush. A few Collegiate students discussed what makes their favorite scary movie scary.

Freshman Simran Sunuwar says that the jump scare in *Conjuring 2* is what makes her favorite scary movie scary.

Jump scares are common in most horror movies because they’re intended to scare the viewer with maybe a slight movement or a scary face, or they could be moments when someone or something suddenly rapidly appears. Jump scares in the earliest horror films were found in Silent Classics like *Nosferatu* (1922) and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920), where sudden appearances or shocking visuals startled viewers.

Junior Kelis Altland thinks that the demonic and paranormal activity is what makes *Andrea* her favorite movie. Many paranormal movies are based on real ghost stories, while demonic movies explore good versus evil.

Junior Kyle Juhasz says that his favorite scary movie, *Annabelle*, is his favorite due to all the paranormal activity.

Freshman Alfonso Velez favorite scary movie is *Us* due to the creepiness and how it’s different from life. *Us* is considered an

psychological thriller made in 2019 by Jordan Peele.

People enjoy being scared by movies because it triggers a release of adrenaline and endorphins, creating a thrilling, yet safe experience. Horror movies throughout the country are ranked sixth behind adventure movies with 16.9 billion total box office revenue from 1995 to 2025.

New scary movies coming out in October 2025 are

*Bone Lake* October 3, 2025

A romantic getaway at a secluded lake-side mansion turns dark when the couple must share with another mysterious pair. *Good Boy* which releases October 3, 2025

A supernatural/haunted house film told from a dog’s point of view. The dog (Indy) deals with a ghostly presence in the house.

*Black Phone 2* October 17, 2025

The sequel to *The Black Phone* sees the Grabber return and target siblings again. *Shelby Oaks* October 24, 2025

Supernatural horror-mystery. A darkness haunts a forest and a cabin, with a mystery slowly unraveling.

*Keeper* October 3, 2025

A couple stay in a remote cabin for their anniversary: things go wrong when one partner has to leave and the other starts facing unseen threats.

*Coyotes* October 3, 2025

A family trapped in a Hollywood Hills home must survive when a pack of coyotes targets them.

*V/H/S Halloween* October 3, 2025

Several horror shorts tied together by a frame story. Each segment comes from VHS tapes.

*Beast of War* October 10, 2025

A survival horror set in World War II, where Australian soldiers must survive on a makeshift raft after their warship is destroyed. A great white shark drawn by blood lurks in the water.

October 2025 promises an exciting lineup of horror films, offering everything from supernatural scares to psychological thrills. Whether big sequels or fresh new nightmares, there’s something to keep audiences on edge. As Halloween night approaches and the theaters \* dark, these stories remind us why we love to be afraid. Every jump scare, every shadow, and every scream is a thrill that lingers long after the credits roll. So when the lights flicker and the wind howls outside, remember some chills follow you home.



Photo from Istock

# Students' Mental Health Isn't Improving. Why?

By Jadier Rivera

Over the years, high school has been a breeding ground of depression which can lead to anxiety, stress, and suicidal thoughts. According to The World Health Organization suicide is the third leading cause of death among teens, and 42% of teenagers experience persistent feeling of sadness and hopelessness.

Although, if you look at the stats, mental health in teenagers has not changed much. This is especially true for those who had experienced the lockdown due to the covid pandemic.

According to Compass Health Center 22% of teens have considered suicide and a 124% increase of youth hospi-

talizations for mental health from 2016 to 2022. Half of all people who have mental illness were diagnosed at 14. Thirty-one percent of which is anxiety and 9% suffer from severe mental health issues - most of whom are 17-18 years old.

Depression is one of the most common mental illnesses among teens with around 20% suffering from it. Fifteen percent of depression ridden teens have experienced major episodes of depression lasting two weeks at the minimum.

Now the World Health Organization studies show that 13% to 17% of students engage in self harm starting at 11 and peaking at 15 to 17. Over 15% of teens have made a suicide plan and roughly

9% of them have done it. This behavior develops due to depression, anxiety, and trauma, and these feelings will worsen if left untreated.

To change this trend, parents and guardian must become more aware of the warning signs in teens so they can prevent self harm or suicide from ever happening.

The signs of suicide are plentiful. According to The National Institute of Mental Health these signs include, but are not limited to, withdrawing from friends, saying goodbye to loved ones, giving away important items, and or making a will.

According to The U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention you can prevent suicide and mental illness by

## Change in young adult suicide rate, 2014 to 2024

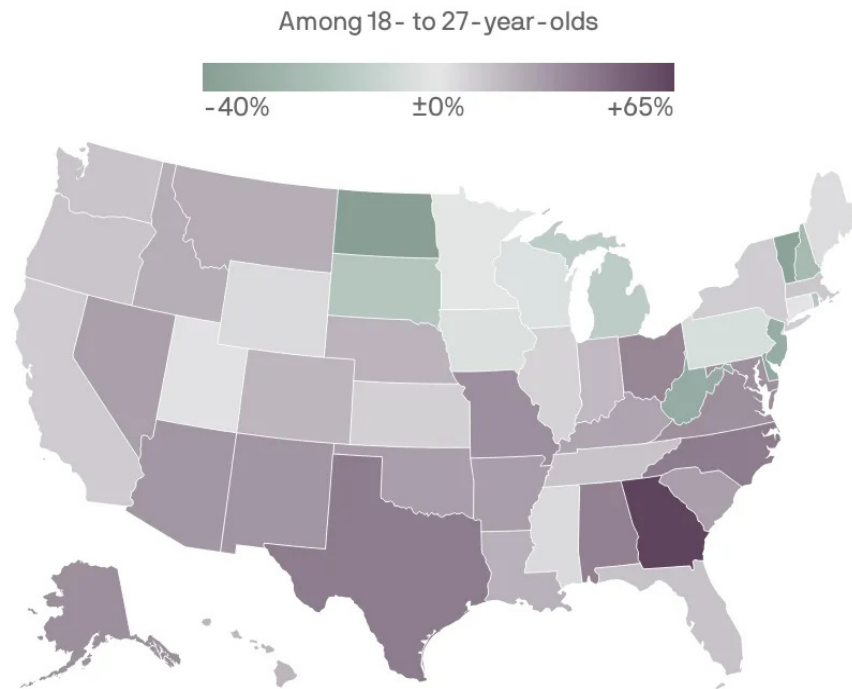


Photo from Istock

creating a safe environment for the person, improving access, and delivery of suicide care by providing remote access to mental help. In Collegiate Academy the school Counselor, Ms. Palotas suggests, “Talking things out with your parents or family members really helps to take weight off students shoulders.”

There are many negative factors that affect teen mental wellbeing according to CHC such as family dynamics, relationships between students, school environments, and support systems.

Bullying is a huge problem in school, reports say that over 20% of students have been bullied both emotionally and physically. Students also experience household issues with 17% of teens report being emotionally abused by their parents.

There are also environmental factors that push students to their limits such as academic pressure, their social and economic status, experiencing trauma or

violence, and societal norms.

Teens that come from a poor home are more likely to have mental health conditions. Twenty percent of students living under the poverty line have a mental, behavioral, or developmental disorder, and 15% of students have suffered neighborhood violence.

Students suffer online where the internet and social media is accessible more than ever making it even more easier to influence the impact on students’ mental health and this impacts students’ self image and self worth, social comparisons, how much they sleep, and their relationships. Cyber bullying and excessive screen time and outrageous beauty standards can affect and contribute their feelings of anxiety and depression and low self esteem. Nearly 16% of students report being bullied and harassed online.

Adults should strive to help and support these students in their time of

need, be it a teacher, a counselor, a parent or a guardian for them to even talk to. Compass Health Center suggests, “Without the care and guidance of a parent or guardian, they may resort to unhealthy coping mechanisms or suffer in silence.”

If you or a friend is suffering from anxiety, depression, and/or suicidal thoughts, there are a tone of resources at the school, including a trusted teacher. Collegiate offers a program called the Student Assistance Program which provides mental health and academic resources. There are also hotlines like: 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is a number you can call to connect to a trained counselor who can provide emotional support and connect you to other resources.

1-800-300-9558 is a local Crisis Service number that can also support you in your time of need or someone else’s.



Photo from Keil James Patrick



Photo from Getty Images



Photo from VeronikasKitchen



Photo from Getty Images



Photo from Dreamstime

# IS TRICK-OR-TREAT- ING DEVOLVING?

By Ava Kerchansky

At the age of 14, are students too mature to be going around asking for candy at strangers' houses? Is it boring and no longer what gets everyone going like it did when they were younger?

I interviewed 20 students at Collegiate Academy, narrowing down what students are really up to this fall season.

Out of the 20 people, 18 said that they were still going trick-or-treating this year, regardless of their age. Other activities are in the cards, but not until after they go to their neighbors houses.

Senior Lucia Bennett states, "Fun doesn't have an age limit, it's unfortunate that people make comments on it." She believes that no matter age, people are always allowed to enjoy something that's common for little kids.

Junior Jordan Salamon goes on a ramble about how trick-or-treating is still at its peak, and that she "loves getting free

candy from strangers."

Another junior, Aurora Chiemara, states that she is definitely going trick or treating this year, however, she said if she were to do anything else on Halloween it would be to stay home and bake cookies with Ava Kerchansky.

Even though it seems as if a lot of students really enjoy trick or treating, other students have other plans in mind.

Junior, Jacob Goodman says he isn't going because it "got boring." Even though not a lot of students believe this to be true, a lot of students at Collegiate have different interests, passions, and/or plans on Halloween that don't involve knocking on stranger's doors.

Junior, Eliza Borczon doesn't think she's going either, she simply just wants to hang out with her friends and her significant other, which is totally understandable. Sometimes being surrounded with people you love carving pumpkins

and watching horror movies is more fun than getting your daily steps in.

Students from Collegiate are more likely to go trick or treating than not, but a lot of people stated that after high school they probably won't anymore.

If you're looking for something to do this Halloween that doesn't involve trick-or-treating, there are a few things you can do in the area.

You could take a trip to the Eeriebyss Factory of Terror to get a little spook, or you could simply go to the Haunted Hay Ride out in Waterford.

If you want to take a little trip, 13 Levels of Fear is also a great haunted walk-through out at Conneaut Lake, or "Ghost Lake."

You could also always choose to just stay home and watch scary movies with some friends if you're not into traveling or going out. Either way, Halloween should be celebrated by most people, regardless of age.

# USING **A.I.** TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

By Advik Joshi

Artificial Intelligence, or AI, can be used in a variety of good ways: whether that is studying, learning new skills, improving writing skills, personalizing learning, or even learning a new language.

AI can help students study by summarizing long articles and making them easier to read. It can organize notes and make flashcards from them to help you study; it can even



generate practice questions.

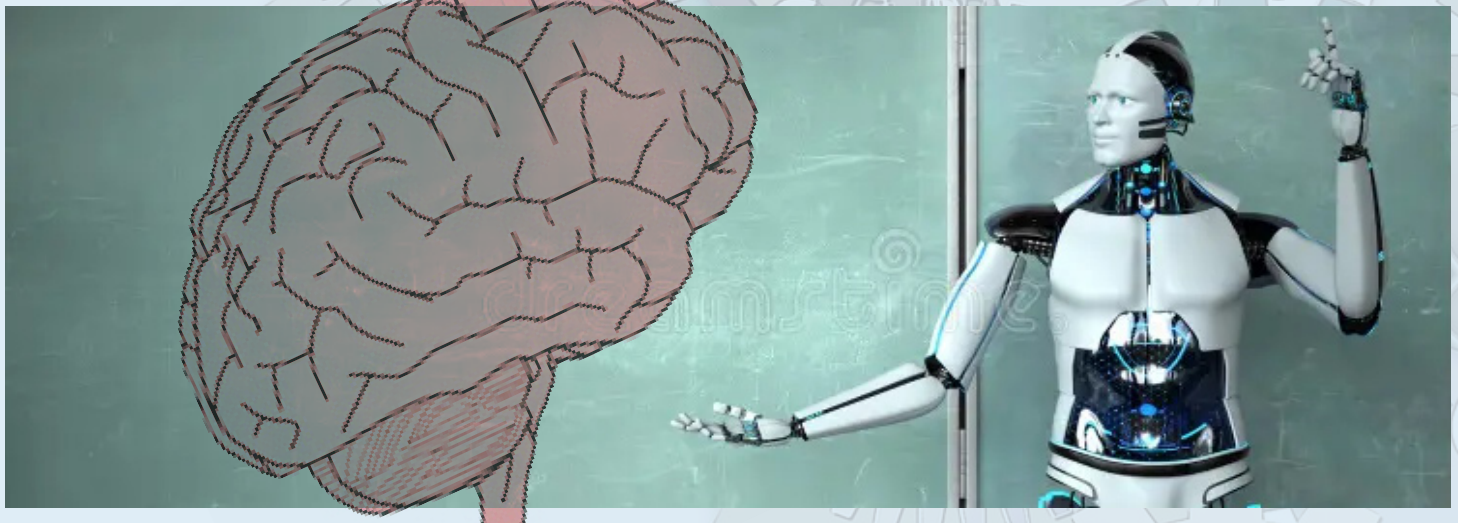
The University of Colorado Denver states that AI can provide a "... detailed explanation of complex topics...".

AI can help students brainstorm ideas, structure their articles, or refine their drafts. Some teachers may think that AI refin-

ing your writing is considered cheating, it is simply helping students improve their writing skills since it can provide active feedback and improve the writing. Plus the majority of the writing is still what you wrote.

Furthermore, AI provides personalized learning opportunities. By analyzing student data and providing feedback on the student's response. On top of that, it can identify any weaknesses or strengths that might show. Having trouble in German? AI can help with learning a new language; for example, it can provide personalized linguistic lessons. According to Microsoft.com, AI can provide you with conversation practice using the Microsoft Co-Pilot app. On top of that it can provide instant feedback, and create custom vocabulary lists. AI can be a great way to learn a new language but, obviously, a real teacher would be better.

The biggest advantage that people overlook is that AI can adjust to unique learning habits. ChatGPT says, "AI is a powerful tool that can boost efficiency and creativity, but it also raises important ethical and social questions."



# Investing in Our Future:

# Why We Should Have a Financial

# Literacy Class

By Madison Wolfram

Students are expected to take on so many responsibilities as we get closer to adulthood. For some of us, that stage is approaching quickly.

As a senior approaching that point in life, I can say that there are many things that I do not know how to address correctly.

One of the main issues I face is the topic of financial literacy.

Financial literacy is the knowledge and skills that are necessary in order to manage finances effectively. Having a strong understanding of financial literacy can help with informed decision making, building wealth, and overall financial stability.

In the article "Tools for Teaching Financial Literacy," published by neaToday, the author states, "Only about half of the nation's schools require a financial literacy

course." Which shows that many people overlook the importance of financial literacy and its surrounding topics.

It would be greatly beneficial for seniors in high school to have a mandatory financial literacy class. You may think that it is a bad idea at first, because who wants to be forced to take a boring class?

But, how much do teenagers really know about Credit and Debt? How confident do most people feel when it comes to doing taxes?

Would the average student be able to explain insurance to a friend?

I would bet most Collegiate Academy students are not on that level; myself included.

As we become young adults, we will be thrown into a world of financial independence. That new territory comes with many decisions. Whether you have adults

in your life to help or not, wouldn't it be much easier to come out of school with basic knowledge of finance?

Senior Hannah Nicklas says, "It is hard for us to figure that out on our own so it would be nice to have a class on financial literacy." In addition she also says, "A lot of us will head to college or start working soon, and it feels overwhelming not knowing how to handle these responsibilities."

Senior Aleah Warshuis says, "If we had a class dedicated to financial literacy, it would give us real life skills that we could actually use right away... I think it would make students more confident and better prepared for the future."

If schools truly want to set students up for success, financial literacy should be a required course everywhere. This is not just another subject, it's a life skill. It certainly would be more useful than calculus.



# DEALING WITH COLLEGE APPLICATION SEASON

By Mika Paw



Collegiate seniors know how hard it is to stay on top with their grades while trying to balance a million other things at the same time. Many want to aim high for a nice university, whether that be an ivy league, Penn State, or other high level universities across the globe. However, some seniors don't even know what university is a fit for them. High goals mean adding more responsibilities, forcing students to better stand out as potential candidates for universities.

Universities always look for good grades, high GPA, AP classes, extracurriculars, college courses, a good SAT and/or ACT score, etc, but seniors and upcoming seniors struggle to do all of these at the same time. According to Walden University, around 30% of high school students are employed during the school year. Treasure Chan, a current senior at Collegiate Academy, says, "As of right now, it isn't bad since I don't have work as often, but once exam season starts and all my schoolwork begins to pile up, I get very

stressed out, considering I also have to go to work after school."

Many students may be familiar with the term senioritis: "Senioritis is most often characterized by a loss of motivation," says Hillary Shields, an academic advisor with SNHU, Southern New Hampshire University. Senioritis is clearly a very prevalent issue, with up to 59% of seniors dealing with senioritis, found in a survey conducted by The Page, a student news magazine run by Princess Anne Highschool. So, with a loss of motivation, just thinking about college applications would be enough to make someone crack under pressure.

Jeremy Bauer-Wolf, the investigations manager on the higher education program at New America, has found that "around 75% of applying seniors have stated that applying to a university felt like a stressful major life decision."

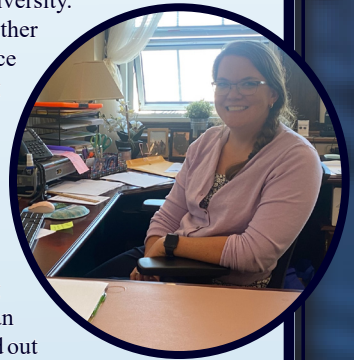
However, there are many ways to deal with the pressure and handle your workload. Many support systems are set up for this exact purpose. Here in Erie, we have GoCollege which is a program set for not only seniors, but all highschoolers.

Seniors can attend campus visits, tutoring lessons, and much more. "On a scale of 1-10, campus tours get an 8/10 on how helpful they were because you can see how big the campus is, explore the city and get more info than what's online," senior at Collegiate, Kalea Williams says. Collegiate also offers peer-tutoring, where students can pair up with their peers during lunch to get some assistance in areas they might struggle with or have difficulty understanding.

One of Collegiate's guidance counselors, Mrs. Shaut suggests that "commonapp.org is the most helpful tool for seniors applying to university.

Xello is another helpful resource for narrowing down thousands of colleges to a dozen you could possibly be interested in."

Issues regarding financial aid can always be figured out by contacting FAFSA, Free Application for Federal Student Aid. There are many opportunities for scholarships of various categories out there that can be found just by googling them. Counselors also can help students with their application process. Seniors have many opportunities for scholarships as well, so those are options to help aid students in the financial aspect of picking the right university. If a student is still lost, Collegiate Academy has guidance counselors, who are here to help through this stressful period. Visit Mrs. Shaut or Ms. Grossholz for their assistance. Everyone understands that this is a stressful period for students, so taking time to unwind and gain a clear headspace is ideal for such a situation.



# Finding the Balance Between Academics and Athletics



By Mercy Sanhtay

According to a survey by the National Library of Medicine, NLM, nowadays more than half (57%) of all high school students are involved in a sport throughout the school year.

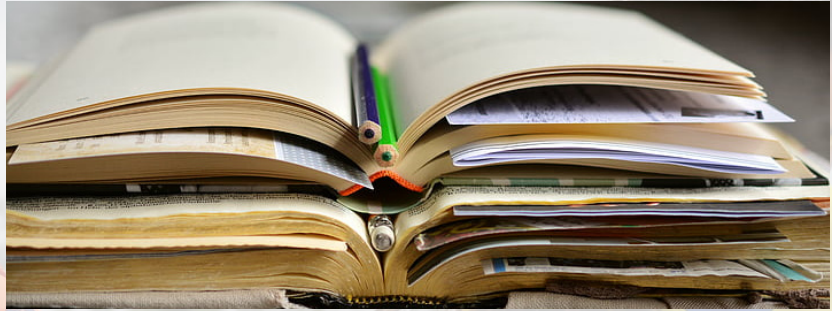
I participate in volleyball in the fall season and track in the spring, so I know what it's like to feel unmotivated and overloaded with work. Many other students at Collegiate who are involved in a sport have expressed how stressful the academic workload can be after a long game.

After another survey by NLM, "Approximately 91% of all the cohort (surveyed) experienced some level of stress due to sports. Interestingly, about a third claimed stress positively affected performance. Fear of failure and self-pressure were the most common causes of stress."

Some games, ending at 8 at or 10 PM leave students with less time to do homework or just work in general. According to the NLM, "About 91% of the respondents claimed to experience stress due to sports, with the most common causes of stress being fear of failure and self-pressure."

Many argue this is impossible to juggle which results in athletes quitting regardless of their love for sport, but students should never have to quit the sport they love in order to succeed in school.

For me, starting the school year off in a sport is very stressful. I feel behind on my work and like I'm missing things. I always feel unmotivated after a late game, especially if it resulted in a loss, so I do my work poorly, and I



don't study as efficiently.

A sports editor for The Voyager, Caroline Becker, has experience with the student-athlete life states, "I sometimes think about how much less stressful my life would be if I did not actively participate in sports throughout the busy school year. I could go home, nap to reset my brain, and then I'd have the rest of the evening to do schoolwork..... I am often too exhausted to put maximum effort into my schoolwork. This almost always leads to procrastination, and therefore additional stress."

The way I was able to fix this was to have a to-do list. I always thought it was dumb and extra, or even too much work, but ever since I started keeping tabs on what I need to do, and when it's due, balancing has never been easier. I also try to do the work as soon as it's assigned and submit it, that way I don't have to worry about submitting it after a game or practice and forgetting.

So, when facing this constant battle of choosing between school and sports, just know that there is no need to pick one. Additionally, no one is alone and many students are struggling. There are many ways to help ease the problem.

One way would be to just try talking to your teachers. Many teachers, especially elective teachers are able to push back due dates and understand the situation you're in.

Another way would be to have a peer tutor. Many students have to leave school early for away games which leave them with less learning time in class. With the help of their fellow tutors, students can be on track and not fall behind on lessons. But the most important thing that can be done is taking care of oneself first.

