

Taking a Stand: PUHS Student Editorials

Water Pollution



By Nicholas Botz

Did you know that while 70% of the Earth's surface is covered in water, only 2.5% of that is freshwater? The rest is saline and ocean-based. With most freshwater trapped underground or in glaciers, only 1% of *that* is accessible by humans. Furthermore, of earth's 0.025% of precious water that we should actually be able to drink, tragically much has been rendered useless by pollution. From improper sanitation to careless dumping of sewage into rivers to just plain accidents, such as the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the world's supply of water is getting filthier each day.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 2.5 billion people do not have access to clean water. While these problems are huge in developing countries, they are right at our own doorstep, too. Of all the lakes and rivers in America, 43% are declared unfit to even swim. Flint, Michigan, has lost use of their tap

water because it's stained deep orange with lead corroded from their pipes. In 2015, the Gold King Mine near Silverton, Colorado, spilled 3 million gallons of waste, including arsenic, into Cement Creek. Within a week, the contaminants reached Lake Powell, Utah, and the San Juan River in New Mexico, harming wildlife and the careers of those who made a living by the rivers.

This is not an issue in some faraway land. It affects us directly, here in Patagonia. While it may not have a huge impact on our lives right now, the future of water is going in only one direction, and it's our responsibility to do something about it. So, what can we do? Since most water pollution comes from domestic acts like littering, make sure your trash goes where it belongs. Be frugal in your use of water at home, running the taps only as long as you absolutely need. You can help people in developing countries, too. Many people, from YouTube stars to worldwide organizations, have taken measures to improve water sources in suffering countries. Remember that the Earth's water is not unlimited, and that we are always in a position to help.

(Nicholas Botz is a Freshman at PUHS.)

Why Crying is Good For You



By Kaelyn Kueneman

Have you ever heard someone say that crying makes you weak? Or maybe you've heard of the stereotype that men

shouldn't cry?

Well actually none of this is true. Research has proven that crying can actually be beneficial, especially to teenagers.

To understand the concept of crying, first let's talk about what tears actually are. Tears are produced by tear glands inside your upper eyelids. When someone blinks, tears spread across the surface of the eye, which creates a sort of protective covering. Getting watery eyes around smoke or dust is the body's protection to keep it from scratching the cornea.

Why is crying good for you though? Well, crying is the body's way of telling you something is most definitely wrong emotional

ly. Whether you are angry, sad, or sobbing tears of joy, tears actually remove toxins from your body. Plus, if you do end up holding back tears it can actually prevent your body's fight or flight reflex. Over time repressing emotions can actually lead to high blood pressure and diabetes, yikes!

Crying actually helps the body relieve unwanted stress and lengthens your life expectancy. So go on, take that little break and let it all out.

(Kaelyn Kueneman is a student at PUHS)

Dress Code Decoded



By Ava Lattanzio

Jumping straight from the freedom of a middle school classroom where you can wear what you feel comfortable in, as long as it's appropriate, and receive no negative repercussions, to a still small, but significantly larger and infinitely more strict high school has been difficult

for a number of reasons.

Prior to this change, I had never worried about whether or not the straps on my most comfortable top were 3 fingers wide, if my skirt was acceptably longer than my fingertips, or if the rips in my favorite jeans were just a centimeter too high above my knee, but this issue is becoming increasingly problematic as the seasons are changing.

Yes, summer in this hot desert climate is almost upon us and I, as well as all the other girls in schools across the country are scrutinized by authority figures just waiting for a life-threatening pair of denim shorts to come and force all the boys to fail their classes.

While it is obviously important that every student at

school is fully clothed, kids should be able to express themselves through their outfits in any way they choose. Self expression is a huge part of being a teenager, and the strict rules at many public high schools across the country, and even the world, are keeping us from feeling completely comfortable and confident in our outfit choices.

Self expression is only one of the factors that cause me to not be in favor of dress codes. Most high school dress codes target the female students by using phrases like "you will distract the boys" or "boys will be boys" which is harmful because, as young women, we are constantly taught to change ourselves for the benefit of the males around us.

I have never personally been "dress coded" and cannot claim that any member of Patagonia Union High School has said any of these things, yet I have seen and heard many trusted friends experience similar situations. How is a girl wearing her most comfortable pair of leggings responsible for a boy who can't focus enough to complete a test? Why are we living in a society where we are taught to dress for the benefit of our male peers instead of teaching them to respect us in the first place, as all of us should respect each other equally.

(Ava Lattanzio is a Freshman at PUHS.)

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