

Drug detecting nail polish sparks controversy

More than just fashion, nail polish can now detect some date rape drugs

by Hannah Young

Every 107 seconds, sexual assault occurs in the U.S. One in three sexual assaults involve some type of intoxication, whether by alcohol or other drugs, according to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN).

While assault is prevalent on college campuses, many experts believe the problem is escalating, bringing a need for additional prevention measures for people of all ages.

Kinetic Wellness and Health Teacher Jennifer Tricoli said, "Most high school kids think that it's not going to happen to them, especially in this community. Until it hits home, it just needs to be reiterated that it happens all the time."

In August 2014, four college undergraduates at North Carolina State University created a nail polish specifically meant to detect unsolicited or date rape drugs. Their brand, Undercover Colors, was built to change

colors when it identifies some of the most common drugs like Rohypnol and Xanax.

There has been a lot of controversy over whether these detectors are harmful or beneficial to the epidemic.

"I am weary of saying everyone needs to wear or use the detectors because it puts all the blame on the victim," junior Allison Thabit said. "If you don't put on the nail polish, suddenly it's your fault that you were taken advantage of."

Many believe it creates a culture in which the onus is on the victims for essentially leaving themselves vulnerable to rape.

However, Tricoli only sees the potential benefit: "By being proactive about your health, you are protecting yourself. The more you can do to feel empowered, the better. Otherwise, you become a victim. We need to do what we can to protect ourselves as women."

Senior Grace Murphy agreed, "I think that it's horrible that we have to protect ourselves against drugs by hiding little detectors in our nail polish, but it is a real problem and I think that it's a good way to give yourself some control."

In addition to the nail polish, the Personal Drink ID coasters, straws



The nail polish changes colors when exposed to certain drugs | Undercover Colors

and cups have been created to find a solution. Typically, they are fabricated to detect Rohypnol, Xanax, GHB and Ketamine.

Yet, with every solution comes another problem. There is a constant influx of new drugs that can't be detected by these devices. Ambien, a new and easily accessible drug meant for treating insomnia, has become one of the newest methods for date rape.

At high dosages, the drug can create effects like that of drunkenness and cause unconsciousness. Similar prescription drugs such as Zolpidem are used, leaving no trace in the

body's internal fluids.

According to a report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 9.3% of the female victims surveyed have experienced drug-facilitated rape in their lifetime. Even so, it doesn't take into account the 68% of women who don't report sexual assault to the police.

Tricoli explained that students who have been sexually assaulted often question whether or not what happened to them needs to be reported at all. Many people convince themselves that they either misinterpreted the situation or were to blame for let-

ting it occur.

"We just have to talk about it more normally because if we don't, people think it doesn't happen and then don't report it," Tricoli said.

According to RAINN, four out of five rapes are committed by someone the victim previously knew, whether it be an acquaintance or their boyfriend/girlfriend.

Junior Matt Shapiro said, "You are only going to feel the need to use these devices if you don't know the person or you don't trust them. A close friend could just as easily drug you."

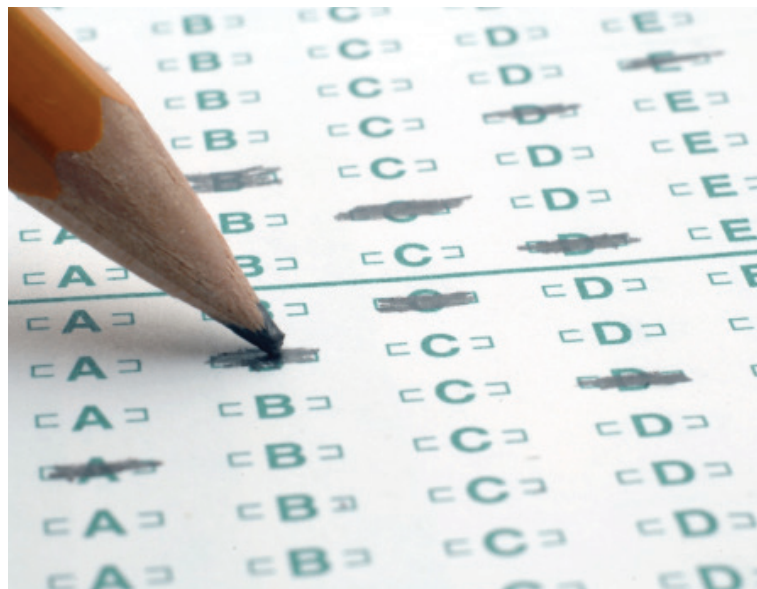
While these innovative prevention methods could result in fewer sexual assaults, many fail to address the real issue at hand: the culprits.

"I'm not sure these detectors should be used more than just people need to stop drugging their dates," Thabit said.

Since people have yet to find a way to stop sexual assault offenders, any way to protect oneself is crucial in saving lives.

"Women have to treat their bodies to the best of their abilities," Tricoli said, "no matter if it's about nutrition or physical health or whatever it is. This is the only body that you have."

ACT plans get real for juniors



Over 850 colleges no longer require ACT or SAT scores in applications | PBS

Extra preparedness may contribute to New Trier's higher than average ACT scores

by Gabi Schulz

On Tuesday, April 19, the junior class is scheduled to take the district required ACT. Although some have already taken it, this school funded test serves as an introduction to the college entrance exam for many.

While some juniors have yet to take an actual ACT, most have been preparing for months, a trend that is especially popular on the North Shore.

Students tend to enroll in ACT prep classes or hire private tutors in hopes of obtaining their desired score.

Junior Chloe Keywell said, "I'll be taking the ACT for the first time on April 19 but I've been doing practice tests every week with my tutor."

Similarly, junior Ellen White said, "I just started going to Academic Approach which is a company full of ACT tutors. They've been helping me a lot."

While ACT tutoring seems to be the norm, not all schools in Illinois

are the same. In fact, many students recognize just how differently New Trier approaches the ACT than most other communities.

"We have a lot of money here and that definitely gives us an advantage because we're able to afford thorough preparation while not all others can do the same," White said.

Junior Sophie Siebert explained, "I think most kids at New Trier do one-on-one tutoring sessions while kids at other schools may take general classes or do nothing at all."

The affluence of the North Shore may be a factor in New Trier students' noticeably higher scores than their peers throughout Illinois and across the country.

According to the New Trier 2015-2016 profile, the school's composite average of 27.5 is 6.5 points higher than the national average and 6.8 points higher than the state average.

Additionally, the 611 students who took 3 level English all four years averaged a 28.1 on the English portion of the test, and 25% of those students scored within the top 10% of the nation. Similarly, the 305 students who took 3 level pre-calculus in twelfth grade averaged 27.8 on the math portion of the ACT, with 51% of these students scoring in the top 9% of the nation.

"I think our success can be attributed to both our school system and the additional help we are able to receive. We get a quality education here, but we also have access to a lot of resources that kids in other areas don't," Keywell said.

The April test is available only to New Trier students, however other districts are administering an ACT on the same day for their student body.

Most of the pre-test registration is completed through the school in advisory, saving kids time and additional stress. Junior Molly Markin said, "It's really nice to have the registration part taken care of beforehand. It takes a while for everyone in the room to fill out such a tedious bubble sheet, and it feels even longer when you're anxious to start the test."

Anxiety occurs not only in the minutes before testing, but starts months before the date of the ACT. Coming from such a privileged area, students often feel expected to score significantly higher.

Competition plagues the halls of New Trier as well, with students constantly comparing their scores to those of their friends and classmates.

Junior Nathan Friedman said, "I think kids put a lot more pressure on themselves to do well on the ACT than in other areas. That's usually why they do so much extra tutoring and practicing. Also, most people take it more than once to ensure they end up with their highest score possible."

While New Trier goes about the ACT in a different manner than other schools, the desire to excel is shared among high schoolers across the nation.

As many get anxious about their scores and their futures, junior Kevin Baer offered advice to all of those testing next week: "It may seem important now to get a super high score on your ACT, but there's a lot of other factors that go into college admissions. At the end of the day, college is what you make of it and the prestige of a particular school is not the most important thing."



Students take a break from performing to explore Padua, Italy | Mae Cody

Italy trip continued

trips and tours are considered part of the total school program, all school rules and students behavior codes apply. Misconduct on a school field trip or tour will result in disciplinary action."

There is no excuse or justification for students to violate any of the policies, because at the beginning of the year every student receives a guidebook saying that, "I understand that if I violate the express or implied terms of the Extracurricular Code, or if I engage in any behavior that negatively affects my activity, fellow students, school, or community, I will be subject to disciplinary measures that may include the immediate revocation of my privilege to participate in the extracurricular program."

There were many chances on the trip for students to experience the life of a musician.

"Students also got to see performances, and learn the history of the music they were listening to and performing while they were there. They also got to go to museums that were related to music or instrument making," Arvanitis said.

The school works with a student travel agency to set up an itinerary, book the hotel rooms and plane tickets, and buy tickets for the events they attend.

The company provides the school with local Italians who are familiar with the area. This gives New Trier the most authentic experience.

New Trier's Symphony Orchestra and Symphonic Wind Ensemble had the opportunity to explore Italy as a true musician, making it one of the most prodigious excursions.

Senior Project continued

be working on the young inventors challenge which gives kids 6-18 years old to make a toy, app, or board games and present it to a panel of judges in order to win recognition and achievements.

However currently the judging process is paper based and takes a lot of time. Westerberg intends on inventing an app or website in order to make the judging process completely digital in order to speed up the process.

Along with that, Westerberg will be working on a video game. He said, "I will be making a video game for ChiTAG that could be linked in their blog or newsletter to add excitement to the event."

These three, and many other seniors are making their departure to Senior Project this upcoming Monday, April 11. Although their experiences may vary, their goal is the same: to learn something new and have fun doing it.