

Student Views

This week we asked Trevs about what they thought about vaping and vape culture. Here's what they said...



Ilana Nazari, Sophomore

"I don't think it's a huge problem but I don't get why people do it. It's not morally offensive, but I still don't get why people do it."



Drew Kepes, Junior

"I think vaping is too cool for school and these kids should put their time into more productive activities."



Erin Miller, Junior

"I'm a vape god."



David Feld, Junior

"I think it's stupid because there's not really a difference. If you're going to inhale embalming fluid, you might as well just smoke."



Sarah Africk, Senior

"Vaping is about as stupid as smoking flowers from a garden. You might as well be smoking oregano."

Ditching the tech for a day will keep the doctor away

by Daniel Fay

In your pocket right now is the source of the widespread self-consciousness, physical decay, emotional breakdown, and social disconnect plaguing our society today.

The overuse of cellphones, tablets, and laptops is listed as the third worst thing you can do to your body, according to Men's Health, only narrowly beaten out by excessive consumption of alcohol.

There is no better example of these detrimental widespread effects than in a high school. Long term technology use is a major contributor to depression, anxiety, obesity, and even chemical imbalance among teenagers today.

Walking down the halls at New Trier, you are bound to see hundreds of kids sitting in the cafeteria, or hanging out in the scrounge.

At times it's an eerily quiet scene, most of the kids are hunched over their iPads with music blasting through their earphones.

These "social hotspots" have turned to places where people go to disconnect from everything going on around them. Instead of healthy social interaction, we have turned to an unnatural substitute which is actually hurting us psychologically and physically.

Up to five hours a day at school we are staring at iPads, causing our eyes to slowly deteriorate. Somewhere between 50% and 90% of people who work at a computer or tablet screen have at least some symptoms of eye trouble.

Looking at anything that is so close to you can put a strain on your eyes; add bright LED screens and the effects are compounded.

With the number of screens on the rise, the need for glasses is rising. I recommend optometry for anyone seeking a field with job security.

Screens also decrease physical activity. It is not uncommon for me to be walking home from school (often listening to music on my

iPhone) when I look up and see the Sears playground filled with children.

The problem is that, even if I wasn't listening to music, I probably still wouldn't have heard anything. Instead of laughter and yelling, I faintly heard the Angry Birds theme song coming out of the end of the slide. Almost every kid was on a phone or tablet.

The playground used to be a place to get exercise and promote social development in children, but is now all too often a stagnate wasteland of social disconnect.

"After one day without using social media you will feel refreshed and energized."

Just surfing Facebook, Buzz Feed, or Instagram puts impressionable teenagers at a higher risk of chronic fatigue, depression, and decreased social skills, warned psychiatrist Dr. Larry Kerns.

"On social media you see the most perfect version of everyone, because you see who they want you to see. Unfortunately these cause teens to become self-conscious and in some cases even depressed," Dr. Kerns said.

Research also shows that scrolling through a news feed can be a hidden trap of exhaustion.

While scrolling, you constantly need to make decisions, 'Should I read this... click this, like this, share that?'

These micro-decisions all require a great deal of mental effort and actually wear down the glutamine stores in your brain, which slowly exhausts you.

If you don't believe it, then try not using social media. After one day without using social media you will feel refreshed and energized.

So next time you sit down and pull out your phone or iPad, stop, look up and interact with the world around you. Your brain and body will thank you for it.

Picture perfect perception

by Michael Blickstein

Two weeks ago, I worked press for a big convention of over 2400 teens. All but a few photos I took are of people, and most of those people are standing close together with big smiling faces. I took close to 4,000 pictures which amounts to about 1,300 after editing.

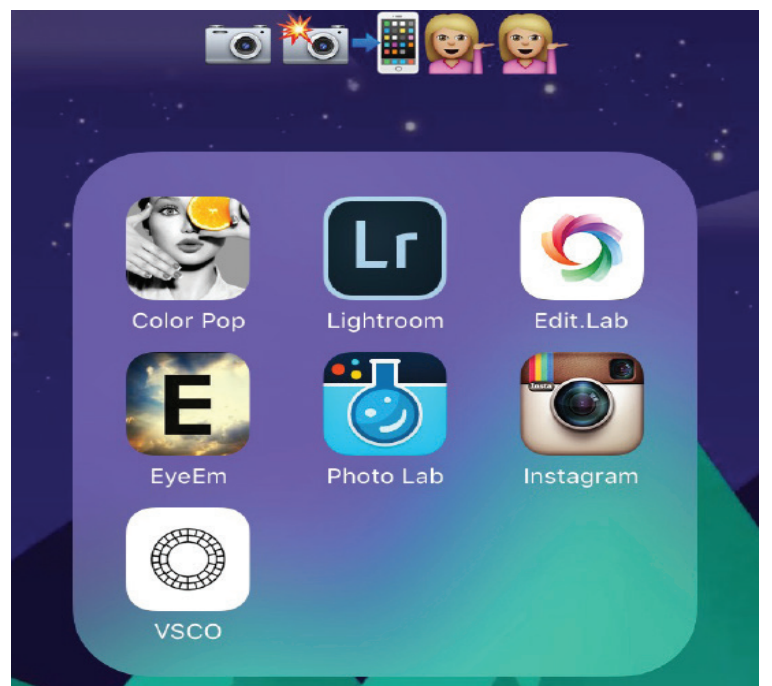
My editing process tends to be pretty standard but also pretty strenuous, and if you've been paying attention to this publication for the past few months now, you may have noticed what I do. To keep it short, I generally play around with the exposure and contrast, fiddle with highlights and shadows, and if a picture is out of focus or generally unsalvageable, I delete it. I only delete photos that are of poor technical quality.

I also have a somewhat unorthodox practice of showing people photos right after taking them so they have the option of reshooting or adding more people. The people I take photos of generally praise me for showing them the shots, but typically, I only push for reshoots when my focus is off or I expose the picture incorrectly.

One of my biggest frustrations I run into as a photographer is when people ask me to retake a perfectly good picture. "Oh, I look terrible in that picture! Can you take it again?" is something I hear all the time. I usually try to convince those people that they look great and it was a good picture (the vast majority of the time, it is). But sometimes they won't have it and just push harder for a reshoot, to which I reluctantly oblige.

At first, I got frustrated about this because I thought they felt I wasn't properly doing my job as their photographer. I took it personally because I thought they were mad about over exposure or saturated colors. Maybe it was because there was another guy in frame that they didn't want to be.

The real and sad truth is that they were self-conscious. They simply didn't like the way they looked and they thought that by asking me for another photo, they would get a chance to make a better smile or have their



The variety of editing apps you can choose from are endless | Blickstein

eyes opened more or look skinnier. The unfortunate truth is that the people I'm taking pictures of just don't like how they look, and no amount of me reassuring that they look great will let them believe me.

This mentality is understandable. Nearly every published photo of a model is retouched or altered in some way, whether it be a simple contrast boost or a complicated alteration of the model's overall body shape. This can cause people, especially girls, to remain dissatisfied with their self-image, especially if they aren't aware of the level of retouching that models undergo before publishing.

According to The Council on Size and Weight Discrimination, young girls are more afraid of becoming fat than they are of nuclear war, cancer or losing their parents. Nearly a quarter of girls 15-17 would consider plastic surgery (PR Newswire) and about 30 million people in the US will undergo a "clinically significant" eating disorder in their life (NEDA).

These statistics are caused by media, and therefore we have a responsibility to stop it. If photographers and fashion publishers keep perpetuating the idea that people can only look

good after Photoshop, then self-image will only worsen.

France has already started this push to raise self-image with a Photoshop regulation law and a law to promote healthy models. The country has created these laws to combat its anorexia problem and requires all models to present a doctor's note with a clean bill of health on it. These laws are a start to a future of better body image.

The first step to creating a better environment for impressionable teenagers is to reassure them that they are healthy, and the best way to do that is to showcase models in magazines that look healthy and strong. The media has to make the goal for health and wellness accessible, not a figment of our imagination as exhibited by the impossible images we see today.

I love seeing beautiful people smiling at me through my viewfinder, and there's a level of satisfaction that comes from accurately capturing the moment. That satisfaction on both the photographer's and subject's side is ruined by this dissolution of positive body image, and it's really unfortunate that we, as a society, are chasing unicorns to love ourselves.

Corrections

In the Feb. 5 issue of the New Trier News, the article 'AP Biology a possibility for incoming juniors' was written by Helen Fagan.