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# the inkblot

Volume 19, Issue 1

Communications High School, Wall, New Jersey

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Inside:  
The road back to  
normal for  
universities and  
restaurants



BLOT GRAPHIC BY KARA PETROSINO

## CHS starts in-person learning on Oct. 5

By BEATRICE KARRON

After seven months without students roaming the hallways of CHS, in-person classes resumed on Oct. 5 under a hybrid schedule. But with the student body divided into alternating cohorts and assigned seating in every class and even at lunch, it was anything but a “normal” first day of school.

It was a return to a hybrid plan first announced in July and then scuttled on Aug. 28 when MCVSD Superintendent Dr. Charles Ford addressed parents and students, stating that the entire district would be implementing a remote learning plan until Oct. 5.

“I am saddened to announce that because of significant staffing needs, we will not be able to execute this plan,” Dr. Ford said in his letter to parents and students. “Therefore, we will be required to open using a Remote Learning Plan instead.”

But the district was able to reopen for in-person learning on the date it set as a goal.

CHS Principal James Gleason said he was delighted to see students back in class — even if they were at half capacity.

“I think the best learning that takes place is when everybody is here,” Gleason said. “That’s why we need to get back to CHS, and the sooner, the better.”

Under the hybrid schedule, the Cohort A students report to CHS on Mondays and Tuesdays and the Cohort B students report Thursdays and Fridays. Both groups — as well as students who have elected for virtual learning — attend classes online on Wednesdays and on the days they aren’t attending in-person classes.

For the students who arrived at CHS, it was a second “first day” of school to begin a year unlike any other due to the continued threat from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Students and staff were required to follow public health guidelines including a daily health questionnaire, a temperature check when entering the building and wearing masks.

Senior Ravenna Gemignani of Oceanport is happy about returning to school.

“It feels good to be back,” Gemignani said. “I’ve missed my teachers a lot and I’m happy to be in school even if it’s just two days a week.”

The impact of the pandemic hit CHS in March when the school was forced to switch to a virtual learning environment that continued through the end of the school year in June.

On Aug. 12, Gov. Phil Murphy signed an Executive Order clearing schools to open for the 2020-2021 school year. All schools were originally required to offer some kind of in-person instruction, but it soon became apparent that this would be impossible for some districts, due to issues like class size, building space, and staff availability.

CHS opened the school year with students learning from home and with teachers conducting virtual class from their classrooms in order to be closer to their normal resources — and to be ready when the district was ready to receive students again.

Spanish Teacher Courtney Van Arsdale called the return of students the highlight of the new school year.

“I was so happy to see students back in the hallways,” Van Arsdale said. “CHS is a building that should never be quiet.”



BLOT PHOTO BY WAYNE WOOLLEY  
CHS senior Erin Carr of Wall has her temperature checked by math teacher Paula Gilligan as she enters the building at the start of school on Oct. 9. Thermometers and online health questionnaires are part of the “new normal” brought about by the global COVID-19 outbreak.

## Coronavirus causes concerns for clubs

MCVSD Board of Education delays adviser approval due to uncertainty

By ELLA LUKOWIAK

COVID-19 has taken a toll on society, leaving people trying to find a way to assert a new normal in a world that is anything but that. With the start of September, CHS and schools all around the world have been trying to discern what will be best for their students and staff this school year. Throughout this process, schools had to make difficult decisions, including delaying the approval of clubs.

As of Oct. 9, the only approved clubs at CHS are the National Honor Society, *The Inkblot*, the Student Government Association, Junior State of America (JSA), Yearbook and all class councils.

While some may interpret this as meaning all other clubs are cut, CHS Principal James Gleason stated that this is not the case.

“I wouldn’t necessarily say [club] cuts. There’s a delay,” Gleason said. “I understand that it certainly could be interpreted as cuts because those other clubs aren’t approved right now... It’s just that they are not approved, it doesn’t mean that they aren’t going to become approved.”

Gleason went on to say that the delay was due to the uncertainty that defines the upcoming school year.

“I think that the Board of Education is taking just a careful approach. Obviously, it’s a commitment to funds once they do approve it. They are just waiting to see how school is going to open, is it going to stay open, you know just all those different questions,” Gleason said.

For now, the clubs that have not yet been approved are continuing to find ways to keep their members involved.

The Cultural Communications Club (CCC), one of the largest clubs at CHS in years past, is among the many unapproved clubs thus far. However, copresident and junior Dani McLaughlin of Tinton Falls said that the CCC will continue to make sure that their objective of helping the community never changes.

“We plan on staying in touch with organizations we’ve worked with in the past as well as some new ones to keep track of volunteer opportunities available to students,” McLaughlin said. “We want to find a way to let everyone know about them, whether it be through CCC or already approved clubs.”

On the contrary, clubs such as *The Commons*, the literary magazine at CHS, cannot work around their current status.

Co-Editor-In-Chief and senior Steve Ostrom of Middletown said that while *The Commons* would like to try and work

through this, it will be almost impossible without any approval.

“We are definitely going to try and figure out ways to work virtually, similarly to last year during the shutdown, but it’s still a big work in progress and we are not entirely sure of what we’ll be able to achieve without club approval,” Ostrom said.

With clubs being a vital component of life at CHS, it is understandable that many members of the student body and staff are disappointed at the news that some of their favorite clubs may not be operating during the beginning of this school year.

“While it definitely makes sense in the troubling times, it’s very unfortunate to see that so many clubs didn’t get approved since many of them hold the hearts of the population of CHS,” Ostrom said.

Gleason also explained that the Board of Education understands how important clubs are to students, and it is not permanently saying “no.”

“They certainly see that clubs are very important for the students and they are going to wait and see how this school year starts to unfold,” Gleason said.

## School year preparation becomes a teachable moment

Teachers discuss new and creative methods for virtual class engagement

By LILLIAN CHEN

With the Monmouth County Vocational School District facing a virtual start to the year, many teachers are finding ways to make online learning more engaging, aiming to bridge the gap between virtual and in-person instruction as best they can.

"Readjusting current projects and activities that were always successful in class to an online and/or hybrid platform will be a challenge but I am looking forward to figuring out how to manage it," said history teacher Sharyn O'Keefe.

O'Keefe spent her summer working with social studies educators along the east coast in the HistoryQuest fellowship, designing new assignments for their students.

"We collaborated on designing game-like learning activities for our classrooms," O'Keefe said. "I am so excited to implement my first game into US II in the beginning of the semester."

English II teacher Emily Crelin has also utilized the summer break to expand upon her knowledge of the

opportunities virtual learning presents.

"I've trained myself in a few different online learning tools that I'm excited to implement in my classroom," said Crelin. "I participated in professional development that really inspired me to share with my students. I also spent time over the summer looking for a variety of new material to teach and amp up some of my units."

Despite the benefits online learning may have, the complete elimination of in-person and instruction for the time being poses disadvantages to both teachers and students.

"It was easier to take an established class and move to remote because we already knew each other and had routines that we could just translate into a remote setting," said science teacher Leah Morgan. "This I am finding more difficult because it will be harder to establish connections with the students from a distance and harder to introduce material for the first time."

Crelin added, "It's hard to replicate what happens in a classroom setting, but I want to make sure that I am still

providing my students with all the tools they are going to need. To me, that means taking things day by day and being patient."

In spite of the uncertainty the new year holds, Crelin and Morgan are choosing to maintain a proactive outlook, using what is provided to make the best of it.

"I think the biggest challenge is going to make every day different and engage students. Sitting at a table and staring into a computer screen doesn't come close to the interaction that you can have in the classroom," Crelin said. "As a teacher, I really miss that interaction. I miss that collaboration between teachers and students. But I'm very excited to get started and dive in."

"I know that the CHS community will rise to any challenge before it and that the teachers and students will do an amazing job," Morgan said. "We will not move as quickly and things may not run as smoothly but we will be stronger for the challenge we face and we will make some memories in the process."

Rebecca Heath contributed to this article

## New English teacher comes to CHS, replaces Diver

By BRIGID McCARTHY

Anne Kelterborn has held many titles throughout her life: farm girl, college student, prep cook, community volunteer. 'English teacher,' however, wasn't one she was seeking out — at least, not until she realized the potential impact she could create.

After graduating with an English degree from the University of Michigan, Kelterborn worked for a small Michigan publishing company but realized it wasn't what she wanted to do. Then, while working on a community involvement project in the Detroit area, she had a revelation.

"One of the best ways to start to make change in your community is to work with young people and encourage young people to use their voice to participate in a democratic society," she explained.

Inspired, Kelterborn returned to school to earn a teaching certificate. She completed her student teaching requirements in Detroit before making her way to Brooklyn, New York and finally landing in Red Bank, New Jersey.

"My husband is a surfer so we looked at a map and we asked ourselves 'Where can we be the closest to the ocean but then the closest to New York City?' because I was still teaching and had to commute," she said. "We literally just looked at a map and found Red Bank, New Jersey."

She continued commuting to Brooklyn for a time, but ended up pursuing local teaching jobs to stay close to her family. After teaching at Clifton T. Barkalow Middle School and then Biotechnology High School (BTHS), this fall she came to CHS to step into a freshman English teacher position previously held by Kathryn Diver, who accepted another position teaching special education at MCVSD's Career Center.

"Over the past year and a half, I've been taking courses to obtain my Teacher of Students with Disabilities (TOSD) certification. I completed my courses and was granted state certification early this year," Diver explained of her leave. "Teaching and being an

advocate for students with special needs has always been a career goal for me. I feel lucky for this opportunity but will always cherish the fun times and amazing students I had at CHS."

"I've always been eyeing Communications. With the humanities focus and the art focus, I was like 'this would be a good fit for me,'" Kelterborn said. "When I saw that it [the job] was posted, I spoke to Mrs. Diver, asked her about it, and she was like 'you would love it there.'"

In terms of teaching style, students can expect to feel heard in Kelterborn's classroom.

"I find that I learn just as much from students as maybe they learn from me, especially with literature... I believe in discussion, I believe in centering student voice within my class," Kelterborn said. "Within my 80 minute blocks, I make time for reading, I make time for discussion, I make time for writing."

Kelterborn also shared her plans to bring a new diversity of writers and perspectives to CHS's English department, something she previously did at BTHS.

"Our classrooms are a space where kids start to figure out who they are and what they believe in... In order for our students to be empathetic and knowledgeable citizens of the world, they have to hear more voices than the ones that look just like them," she said. "I feel that if we only hear one voice and one experience, I think that's limiting... As I am reading Antigone right now, I am brainstorming a list of contemporary titles that share similar conflicts and themes."

Kelterborn's teaching career began with a revelation from community work. Now, she strives to create her own community and her own movement for change with each class she teaches.

"I love teaching. I'm excited to meet my students," Kelterborn said with a smile. "I just love that moment where the classroom just feels like a community and where kids start to maybe let their guard down a little bit more, where they're willing to trust they're in a space where they can share their writing and what they're thinking about."

"I wish her [Kelterborn] all the best," Diver said. "I am confident she will love it at CHS!"

## Teens adjust to "new normal" in school and at work

Masks, social distance and other COVID-19 changes become routine

By BRIGID McCARTHY

As Communications High School students prepare to endure another school year through a global pandemic, they are saying one thing: bring it on.

"I'm not sure anything about the pandemic really surprises me anymore," said senior Charlotte Frick of Wall.

The shock and disbelief surrounding the early months of the nation's public health crisis has somewhat worn off; now, teenagers are adapting to what has become "the new normal." After spending the summer finding new ways to have fun, from outdoor drive-in concerts to distanced outdoor dining, CHS students are taking a few more weeks of remote learning in stride as they remain vigilant to future changes.

"It's hard to remember what life was like before any of this, where there could be enormous crowds and no one would think twice," said junior Drew Lepping of West Long Branch.

Both Frick and senior Chad Fruscione of Marlboro commented on how comfortably mask usage slipped into our daily lives: another subtle difference from the world seven months ago.

"The past few months, wearing masks and being socially distant has become very second nature to me. Especially bringing masks everywhere and wearing masks," Fruscione said. "I'll leave my house and I'll go into my car and I'll be like 'Okay, I have my wallet, I have my phone, I have my keys, I have my mask.' It's just a part of my daily routine now."

"I've definitely gotten used to wearing masks, though I will occasionally realize half way down the street that I forgot to grab one before leaving. I hostess at a restaurant a few times a week so I'm used to wearing a mask for several hours at a time," Frick said. "Everyday when you leave the house, you do the mental check of phone, keys, wallet, mask, hand sanitizer."

The adjustment to this new routine was not one that came easy. Governor Murphy's ongoing executive orders in tandem with the changing infection rates and daily cases are making for a hectic year full of changing expectations.

Lepping knows, however, that each time he wears a mask and social distances, "it's for the greater good."

"I still can't believe that COVID was like a joke in February and no one was even concerned and we had no idea what was yet to come," Lepping said.

**"I'm not sure anything about the pandemic really surprises me anymore."**

## 1 in 300



PHOTO COURTESY OF BROOKE STARK

Stark, left, sits on her brother Ryan's shoulders in 2008 in her first home in Westfield, NJ. She started a foundation in his name after his overdose.

### Stark gives back through grief

By ZOE CONNER-BENNETT

"It has been said that grief is the final act of love," says Ryan's Love of Life Foundation and its co-founder, senior Brooke Stark of Manasquan, "and we've chosen to channel our grief into healing."

Stark began Ryan's Love of Life Foundation in January along with her mother as a tribute to her older brother, Ryan, who died in 2010 after losing his fight with opioid addiction.

"Me and my parents' lives changed completely after he passed away," Stark said. "I feel like I'm a different person than I would have been if he were still here."

Although the website was launched just a few months ago, the desire to make a bigger difference has gripped Stark's family for a while; her mother started studying to become a licensed counselor a few years after her son's passing.

"Now she's actually going for her PhD, so she plans to use the money raised with the foundation to start her wellness center," Stark said. According to the foundation's mission statement, the center will provide local "mental health and addiction treatment" as well as "self-help workshops and outreach programs."

As for her role, Stark is heavily involved in fundraising and planning. She recently has been working with other members of the charity to organize Ryan's Love of Life Foundation Benefit in March, an "80s themed dance complete with a DJ and a raffle."

Though Stark knows that she will always have a job with the foundation, she thinks her future education may take her in a different direction. While she currently plans on studying architecture in college, she shares the same passion for helping others that inspired Ryan's Love of Life Foundation.

"Art therapy has always been a thing for me," she said. "My parents really just want me to do whatever I want to do, and I think [Ryan] would have wanted me to do the same, so it's really cool to have that kind of support."

Regardless of the career path that Stark decides to pursue, she is grateful that the foundation has given her the opportunity to honor her brother's life and legacy.

"I just always remember him being such a kind person," she said. "I know that he would appreciate us doing this because it turned a negative situation into something that is going to be really positive for a lot of people."

## Fall activities face changes

By LILLIAN CHEN

While some Monmouth County schools are opting to move to strictly online instruction, others are sticking to hybrid models, and the varying reopening plans for the new year have students wondering what the plan for home school fall extracurriculars is.

"Our first official practices start September 14 and our first game is scheduled for October 1st," said senior Kiera Higgins of Sea Girt, who plays soccer for Manasquan High School.

"Although we haven't had official practices yet, Manasquan have been practicing with social distance guidelines and different phases in order to ensure we are playing safely."

"As of now, FTTHS [Freehold Township High School] fall sports are still on, so marching band is good to play at the games," said sophomore Joe Wicke of Freehold. "Even if football is cancelled, they still might do marching band performances as those are easy to do while maintaining COVID guidelines."

Some schools, such as Freehold Township, are getting creative, redesigning the way practices function to reduce the risk of exposure.

"Everyone is split up into groups of ten or less, called pods, and they are based off instrument sections... At no point will there be full-group practices," Wicke said. "Practices are only 90 minutes as opposed to all-day, and take place outside of the school... There is now a big emphasis on safety measures. Practices require social distancing and wearing a mask when you're not playing an instrument."

New safety regulations such as the aforementioned have schools moving quickly to adapt fall extracurriculars to ensure the safety of their students. Many have pushed the start of the season back, with students resuming play weeks after they typically would.

"For now, we practice about three times a week without our coach. About halfway through September, our coach will hold tryouts and then we'll practice every day... the first game is set for October 1st," said senior Erin Carr of Wall, who plays soccer for Wall High School.

While the season being cut short is a disappointment, many student athletes are still finding a silver lining in the time they have been granted.

"All the uncertainty regarding if we'll have an actual season has made it harder to really have your heart in it. It's like you're working really hard for the possibility of a half-season," Carr said. "[But] I've had more time to get back into the swing of things and I'll probably be even more prepared by the time tryouts roll around."

Higgins agreed, saying, "as a rising senior, I am a little disappointed, but of course I'm still hopeful because I know if our season continues it will be the best one yet... While these circumstances are not ideal, I actually think it has motivated me to work harder in preparation for the season. I have been putting a lot of work and effort even outside of practice to create new goals for myself in order to improve my skills."



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## PROVING REPORTER

### Q: What is your greatest hope for the upcoming school year?



Freshman Luke Bingley of Wall

"I hope to make a positive impact while at CHS."



Sophomore Ayumi Sykes of Tinton Falls

"My biggest hope for this year is that I'll be able to go to school in person again because... I miss seeing my friends during school."



Junior Ezra Shim of Spring Lake Heights

"To be able to participate in color wars and be able to do other school activities."



Senior Anabell Mazzan of Fair Haven

"I really hope that I'll get to create art in 109... it's something I've been looking forward to since freshman year."

## Monmouth County schools plan to reopen, face setbacks

By Kaitlyn Delaney

As schools across the country return to normal following the COVID-19 pandemic, each school has a different plan for what their "new normal" is expected to be. On July 26, New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy gave schools clearance to reopen, and schools across Monmouth County have had various approaches to doing so.

The Monmouth County Vocational School District initially planned to operate on a hybrid model, where students were split into cohorts and attended school in person two days a week and virtually for the remaining three, also providing students with the option to remain fully virtual. However, roughly a week before schools were set to reopen, MCVSD superintendent Dr. Charles Ford announced that they would no longer be able to execute this plan "because of significant staffing needs." Schools within the Freehold Regional High School District (FRHSD) encountered a similar issue. Like MCVSD, the district planned to reopen its schools on a hybrid schedule with extensive COVID-19 safety guidelines. However, due to similar staffing concerns, Dr. Charles Sampson, the FRHSD superintendent, announced on Aug. 26th that they would be operating remotely until Oct. 19th, when they plan to reopen on a hybrid schedule as initially anticipated.

Some private schools in Monmouth County, however, followed a different route for reopening. The Christian Brothers Academy (CBA) in Lincroft opened at full capacity with students only attending in person. Students were provided with the choice to learn remotely, but a hybrid choice was not available to students. The students who chose to attend in person were required to follow extensive

safety guidelines, including filling out a health screening prior to entering, wearing a mask at all times and maintaining social distancing. After roughly three weeks of operation, the CBA administration announced on Sept. 24th that they will be switching to a remote learning structure due to four positive COVID tests within the student body. The administration followed the CDC's guidelines of contact tracing, resulting in dozens of students being quarantined due to possible exposure, and plans to resume normal instruction following Columbus Day weekend.

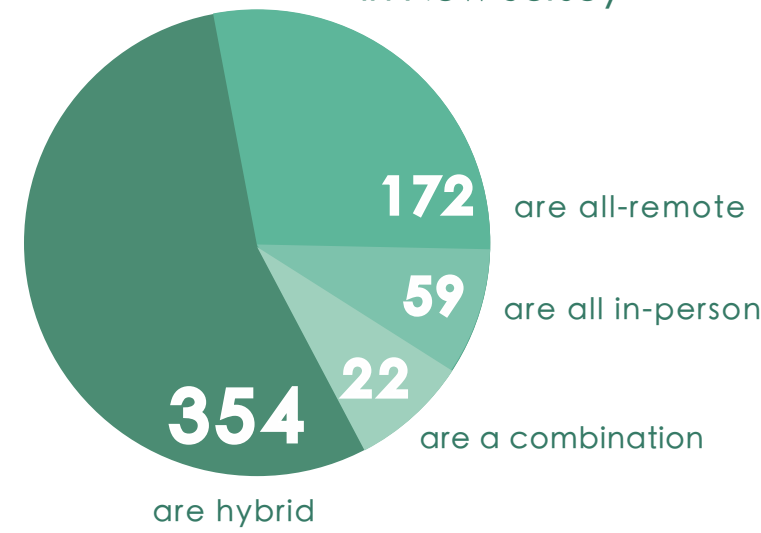
MCVSD students were required to learn remotely for the month of September, and many were disappointed by the decision. Senior Erin Burke of Allentown explained her disappointment, a feeling that much of the CHS community shared.

"I'm definitely disappointed..., but I think that it's what's best for the CHS community, especially the staff members who don't have a choice whether they have to come in or not," Burke said. "Ultimately, I think it's the right decision [but] I think it's just a large disappointment for the CHS students."

After nearly four weeks of virtual instruction, the MCVSD schools are preparing to reopen again on Oct. 5th under the original hybrid learning plan. In a newsletter addressed to MCVSD parents, Dr. Ford explained the guidelines put in place to guarantee the safety of the students.

"The reopening of schools requires a broad community commitment to reduce the risks of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19... in order to keep our school community healthy and safe," Dr. Ford explained.

Of the **607** approved high-school reopening plans in New Jersey:



(nj.com - September 8th, 2020)

## College applicants struggle with standardized tests amid pandemic

By Liam Umbs

On Aug. 29, senior Abby Fuller of Brielle put on her mask and drove down to Donovan Catholic High School in Toms River to take the SAT. Despite taking the test last November, Fuller signed up to retake in August, after seeing Spring tests being canceled. Although many colleges across the country no longer require test scores for admission, all have different requirements and use test scores for different purposes.

"Even though most colleges are test-optional... I still wanted to have them just in case there is a situation where I will need them last minute," Fuller said. "I want to be prepared for any requirements any college has."

The challenges of taking a standardized test during a pandemic are numerous. The College Board has cancelled

the March, May, and June SATs, and although a test date occurred on August 29, closures of individual test centers made getting a seat enormously difficult. In New Jersey, 73 test centers offering the August SAT closed, most without a determined makeup date.

ACT students have dealt with a similar fate. In mid-April, the College Board announced that it was developing an online at-home version of the SAT, similar to the 2020 AP exams, but plans were scrapped less than a month later.

To adapt to the current circumstances, colleges across the country are going test-optional, meaning applicants are not required to submit SAT or ACT scores to be considered for admission. The number of test-optional schools is immense: over 1,500 colleges and universities have declared test-optional policies for the 2021 admissions cycle, according to the National Center for Fair and Open Testing.

While most schools are pursuing test-optional policies only for the 2021 admissions cycle, some are pushing for longer-term changes. On May 21, The University of California system's governing board voted unanimously in approval of an ambitious plan to gradually fade away using SAT and ACT tests. UC schools will remain test-optional for 2021 and 2022 and will shift to being test-blind for 2023 and 2024. In 2025, the university will eliminate all use of the SAT

and ACT, and instead develop a new content-based exam that will aim to "[reduce] the social and monetary burdens associated with the currently required ACT/SAT tests," according to University of California president Janet Napolitano.

The University of California's decision has already begun to change the future of college admissions, as more and more colleges across the United States are already calling off testing for good. The decision to eliminate the only system of measuring academic merit America has known since World War I is not just because of the lasting societal impacts COVID-19 will have, but also because the national effort in eliminating systemic racism — the SAT and its racist past being just one of such systems. While something as simple as a college going test-optional may seem small, these small actions, when put together, are essential to transforming our society into one that is more just for all people.

## Colleges face challenges with efforts to reopen

By Viviana Varlack

Expecting COVID-19 to pandemic to subside, on June 3, 2020, the University of Texas at Austin (UT) announced the reopening of their Fall 2020 semester with in-person instruction and social distancing guidelines. However, as COVID-19 spreads across the country, UT, along with many other colleges, opted for safer reopening plans.

CHS Class of 2019 alumna Rebecca Rippon explained how her college is handling the fall semester.

"Emerson is being super precautionous with everything," Rippon said. "We're back on campus doing a hybrid model of online and in-person learning, our dining centers have slightly reduced capacity and the rules for social gatherings are much more strict than before."

For many colleges, the hybrid model is the perfect balance of in-person and virtual schooling to help navigate the pandemic. However, schools in areas of the country that have reported immense numbers of COVID-19 cases, like New Jersey, or who have faced issues with reopening plans, have decided to be completely remote.

CHS Class of 2018 alumna Rachel Wolson spoke about issues that her college, the University of Vermont, and other colleges might face.

"I think UVM is doing a pretty comprehensive job at taking precautions, but of course the most unpredictable factor is the students themselves," Wolson said. "Hopefully the student body will do the right thing."

Already, colleges that have let students back on campus are facing issues. Many students are testing positive on their initial test once they arrive on campus.

At Iowa State University, a total of 175 students have tested positive for COVID-19 during the move-in period. In response, Iowa State is allowing students to return home or stay in quarantined housing on their campus, until the student no longer has the virus.

Students at UNC Chapel Hill ignored social distancing guidelines which resulted in four different clusters of coronavirus outbreaks, three coming from dormitories and one from off-campus greek housing. The Dean of UNC Chapel Hill, Barbara Rimer, put out a statement about closing the university after only two weeks.

"The number of clusters is growing and soon could become out of control," Rimer said. "It is time for an off-ramp. We have tried to make this work, but it is not working."

Additionally, students are ignoring college's bans on throwing parties. Schools, such as the University of Alabama, are closing Greek Life events because of unauthorized partying. Penn State has placed a limit of 10 person large gatherings because of videos surfacing on social media of the Class of 2024 having big parties two days after moving in.

While some colleges are still scrambling to contain COVID-19 cases, others, like the University of Notre Dame, have already quelled their spike in cases.

During the school's reopening in early August, 33% Notre Dame students tested positive for the coronavirus. As weekends passed, more students were tested and the positivity rate of students who initially tested negative rose from 8% to 50%. Recognizing that there would soon be an outbreak, Notre Dame moved online and quarantined students for two weeks. After taking these precautions, the cases dropped, in-person classes began, and the university reintroduced normal events.

CHS Class of 2020 alumna Mary Eknoian explained how Notre Dame students have felt about the last month.

"I'm really proud of my school... now we're back in person and there's only one to two cases a day," Eknoian said. "Our first football game is Saturday, and we're going to be able to attend, which I think shows how good we've been doing."

Despite these challenges, some students still have hope for the upcoming semester.

"I was supposed to be studying abroad this semester, so COVID has definitely put a big dent in my overall plans," Wolson said. "But...while this semester looks a lot different than I thought it would, I don't think it's necessarily in a negative light."



**2/3** restaurant employees have lost their jobs

(National Restaurant Association)

## Restaurants recover from COVID-19 shutdown

By Isabella Ji

Thousands across the United States were hesitant to rush into restaurants when outdoor dining first opened, but ended up caving into their burger cravings and their hunger for fries, despite the consistent coronavirus cases.

To answer the nation's questions and concerns for eating at restaurants, the National Restaurant Association stated: "Restaurants are now taking additional steps to meet social distancing guidelines, [including] the use of face coverings as required by local, state or federal officials, as well as enhanced cleaning and sanitizing protocols and the emphasis on personal hygiene."

As a student who has worked in two restaurants during the COVID-19 pandemic, sophomore Skyler Glusman of Middletown spoke on what she has seen her employers do to handle this situation.

"I have seen people put in new air systems to push the old air out and bring in new cleaner air," Glusman said, "I've seen people using masks and hand sanitizer as well."

According to Dr. Natalie Dean, assistant professor of biostatistics at the University of Florida, the

restaurant staff is the problem with outdoor dining. Though diners do not physically interact with other diners at the restaurant, the same staff member interacts with all of them.

Junior Ainsley Lang of Shrewsbury added to Dr. Dean's initial concern, acknowledging

that there are people who are still uncomfortable with outdoor dining despite the precautionary measures being taken.

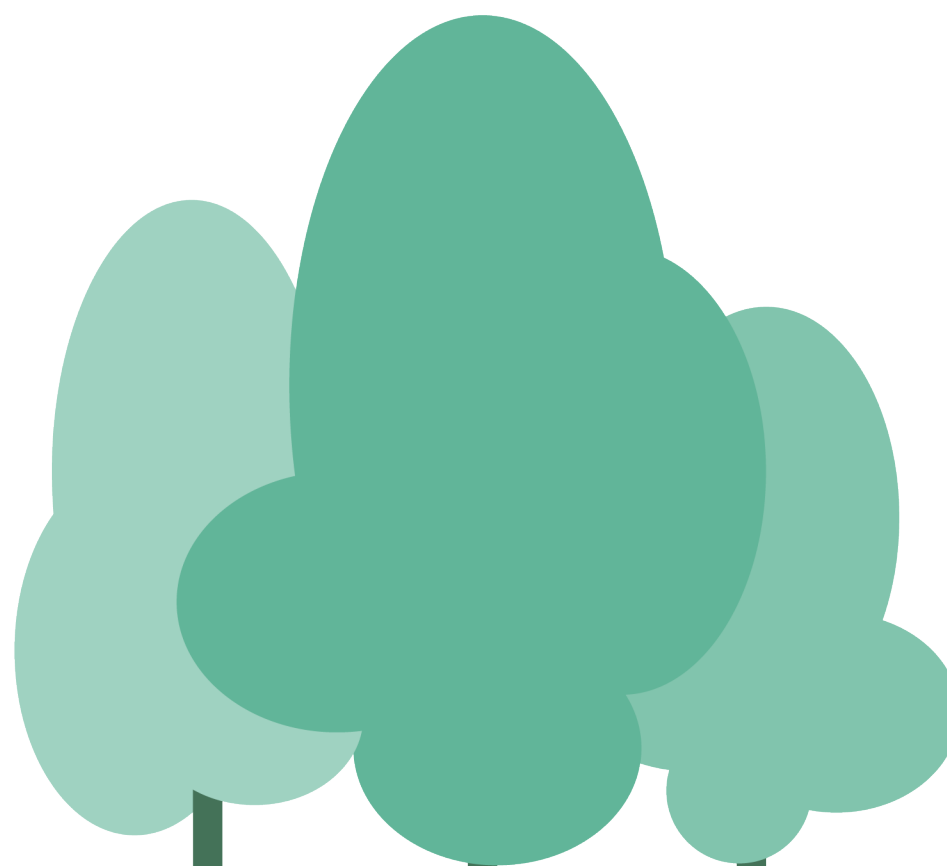
"I completely understand why others would disagree [on the safety of outdoor dining] due to the fact that you may be somewhat close to other parties without facial coverings," Lang said.

Areas such as Broad Street in Red Bank and East Main Street in Manasquan are closed a few times a week in order to help some restaurants bounce back from the losses caused by the pandemic.

After dining at many restaurants on Broad Street in Red Bank, Lang recognizes the financial strain this time period has put on restaurants, but believes that there is hope for their recoveries.

"COVID has definitely given restaurants a fair amount of challenges, but I am glad that a lot have overcome them and have adjusted to the new normal," Lang said. "Some will suffer more long term consequences and might take unfortunate measures, but hopefully they will be presented with new opportunities."

The New Normal



**88,000+** cases across **1,190+** colleges

(New York Times)

## COVID-19 brings in new era of showbiz



CREATIVE COMMONS PHOTO COURTESY OF LORIE SHAULL

A marquee in Minneapolis, Minn. assures visitors that the theater is currently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

BY ELLA LUKOWIAK

Entertainment has always been present throughout time. From the productions put on by past civilizations to movie theater viewings, humans have always had ways to entertain themselves. In recent months though, much of the entertainment that has dated back centuries has been put on hold.

Due to the novel coronavirus sweeping its way across the world, movie, television and theater production halted completely in early 2020.

Now, the industry that employs nearly two million people and supports around 400,000 American businesses, according to WeForum.org, is finally getting back on its feet.

In an article on Vulture.com, American film producer and financier Doug Belgrad explains what movie sets may look like going forward.

"Everybody 'biodomes.' You take over a hotel. Keep everyone separated. You work six-day weeks. Get in and out as quickly as possible. It could work!" Belgrad said.

According to the article, the cast and crew on Belgrad's upcoming project shooting in Canada will go through two weeks of quarantine prior to filming, and then self-isolate during the production itself.

Producer and former head of Warner Independent Pictures Mark Gill explained how in addition to sets being affected by restrictions, the actual content of movies and television shows themselves will change.

"A lot of people just think this is about getting back to work," Gill said. "They don't realize the massive cultural impact we are about to face."

According to an article in The Washington Post, crowd scenes, real-world locations, and on-screen romance will be restricted.

Viewers should prepare to say goodbye to action and fight scenes as well. An article from Vulture.com explains how CG is being considered for everything from far away crowd shots to close contact romantic scenes. This is the time where the age of technology will be truly tested

However, visual effects cannot fix everything, and Hollywood will have to find an alternative way to continue to produce blockbusters, while still following all COVID-19 guidelines.

Moving forward, these new rules will not only change the process of movie-making, but it will also impact the way that people view films.

Movie theaters everywhere have also shut down since March due to the pandemic and are slowly beginning to reopen.

On Monday, Aug. 31, NJ Gov. Phil Murphy announced that movie theaters could open on Friday, Sept. 4 with limited capacity, masks, and social distancing between parties.

According to an article on NJ.com, AMC explained their plan to reopen on Aug. 20, with "significantly reduced" seating capacity, along with 15 cent tickets for opening day to celebrate their 100th anniversary.

As of the weekend of Sept. 11, AMC will have 75% of its 636 nationwide theaters open.

However, many movies that were scheduled to be released in theaters, such as *Mulan*, have been moved to be given a full release on streaming platforms, where viewers pay a premium price in addition to the subscription price to view the movie.

Everyone from movie makers to consumers is trying to figure out the best approach to this new world and era that we are entering.

## Netflix's "The Social Dilemma" details the unseen dangers of social media

By CARLA VREELAND

"There are only two industries that call their customers 'users': illegal drugs and software."

Writer and professor Edward Tufte demonstrated in just one sentence not only the detrimental impact but the intentionally addictive nature of social networking platforms.

Originally released in Jan. 2020, "The Social Dilemma" which has just recently made its way to Netflix's Top 10 List, highlights the dangers of social media.

Director Jeff Orlowski creates an alarming narrative of a family who falls victim to the manipulative power that Silicon Valley has engineered and features interviews from many of the engineers who explain that the manipulative characteristics of the technology are in fact deliberate.

Among an abundance of positive reviews, Devika Girish of The New York Times described how "The Social Dilemma" brings new information and perspective on an issue that was thought to be well known.

"Orlowski takes a reality that can seem too colossal and abstract for a layperson to grasp, let alone care about, and scales it down to human perspective," Girish said. "In 'The Social Dilemma,' he recasts one of the oldest tropes of the horror genre — Dr. Frankenstein, the scientist who went too far — for the digital age."

While the docu-drama explicitly outlines the moral wrongdoings of social networking platforms that, according to Orlowski "undermine democracy," many of the interviewees still hold onto traces of optimism.

They suggest that instead of completely deleting all social networking platforms to instead turn off notifications, fact check all information that is being provided and limit time spent.

Moreover, many of the tech experts maintain that with more ethical engineering, this technology could veer away from dangerous, becoming less manipulative.

Former Google design ethicist Tristan Harris explained the power of social media platforms and the engineers throughout the film.

"Never before in history have 50 designers made decisions that would have an impact on two billion people," Harris said.

## Social isolation affects the creativity of CHS students

By CARLA VREELAND

In an unprecedented time of crisis, it is generally common knowledge that everyone reacts in different ways. When life becomes limited, and just going outside and seeing family is a risk, these reactions heighten.

During the reign and aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, many in-person outlets for artists were shut down and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future. Art galleries, theatres and art and music classes are low on the list of priorities, which has not only cost more than 2.3 million jobs, according to The Brookings Institution, but has also affected the creativity of all ages.

Junior David Pietras of Marlboro explains that the lack of in-person interaction has prevented him from discussing ideas with others, which would incentivise and inspire him to create.

"I was inspired by my friends, places I'd go, random conversations I'd overhear at the mall, etc. But now my creativity is more inwardly focused," Pietras said.

Despite the obvious downsides, the virus has granted lots of students more time at home without distractions.

Senior Charlotte Frick of Wall has used this new found time to offer warmth and support during a period of such isolation.

"As a result of quarantine, I've had more time to paint," she said. "I've been painting rocks with little things like 'smile,' 'stay positive' and other phrases, then leaving them around my neighborhood as a part of the Kindness Rock Project."

During an era of constant distraction, being forced to stay inside provided some students the unexpected opportunity to create.

Frick commented how her desire to create often comes in waves.

"I think quarantine has both increased my want to create and decreased it at the same time," Frick said. "There are days where I feel like I have no inspiration to create and others where I want to spend the entire day taking pictures and/or painting."



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLOTTE FRICK

Senior Charlotte Frick of Wall painted rocks and shells to put in her neighborhood for the Kindness Rock Project.

# Photography plays an important role in politics

By LIAM UMBS

It's a picture nearly everyone has seen: a mother, with dirt on her arms and exhaustion on her face. Her two daughters, both dressed in rags, lean on their mother's shoulders, heads turned away from the camera. Covered in blankets and mud, her baby rests on her lap. She looks out into the world with anguish and uncertainty, brought on by the hardships of the Great Depression and the bleakness of the future. This mother, Florence Owens Thompson, was the subject of Dorothea Lange's photograph, entitled *Migrant Mother*, Nipomo, California.

Although Lange did not consider her photographs to be art, her works are hanging in the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), The Whitney Museum of American Art and several more throughout the country. While her photographs certainly have the qualities of art, she instead viewed her role as a photojournalist, aiming to effect social and political change through documenting injustice and inequality.

Ever since the first news photograph was taken in 1847, depicting a man being arrested in France, photography has been entrusted with the role of demonstrating life as it is and capturing events as they happened. This realistic depiction could not be more important when it comes to covering politics in the media. Photography associated with a story can be just as, if not more, influential than the story itself. In the United States, photography has played an important



PHOTO BY DOROTHEA LANGE  
Florence Owens Thompson's children cling to her in iconic photograph "*Migrant Mother*, Nipomo, California."

role in politics since the Civil War, but surprisingly, photographing the day-to-day activities of the president was not common until one hundred years later, when Cecil Stoughton was appointed as the first Chief Official White House Photographer under President John F. Kennedy. That office was later held by Yoichi Okamoto, who was the first to be given full-time access, and David

Hume Kennerly, who was given both full-access to and complete freedom to photograph President Gerald R. Ford, rounding out his picture as both a politician and a person. The images shot by occupants of this office have been crucial in documenting news and informing the public.

Pete Souza, the Chief Official White House Photographer for President Barack Obama, shot nearly 1,000 pictures a day for eight years. Souza explains the importance of documenting every instance.

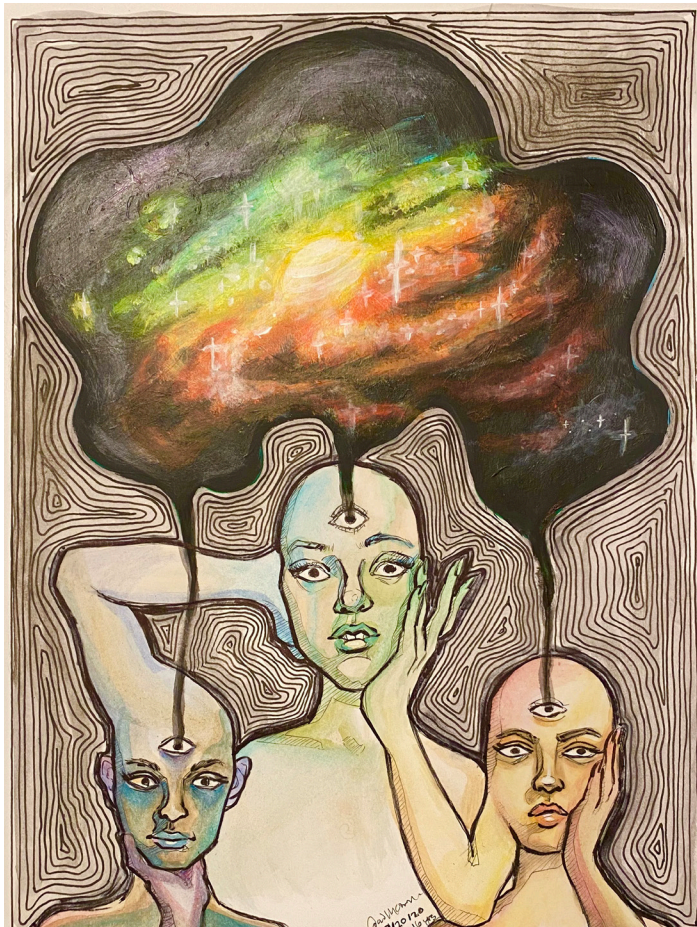
"It was my job to capture real moments for history. The highs and lows, the texture of each day, the things we didn't even know would be important later on," Souza wrote in the introduction of his book *Obama: An Intimate Portrait*.

In a world increasingly dominated by Photoshop, deepfakes and fake news, pure photography continues to serve as a means of counteracting misinformation. Jeffery Furticella, a photo editor for *The New York Times*, told *TIME Magazine* how photography has the power to bring out the truth from darkness.

"In a time when our global awareness is under siege by an increasingly insular perspective, the responsibility of empowering photographers whose mission is to not just capture but to investigate, to enlighten, to excite, is one of the great privileges of our time," Furticella said.

Photographers know the great power they have. Like Lange's *Migrant Mother*, a single picture has the power to change the world.

## THE ARTIST'S BLOCK



### "Twisted Dreams"

by

Dani McLaughlin

Media Used  
Acrylic, watercolor, and ink

Time Spent  
2.5 Hours

#### Interesting Fact

"This is only my second painting using watercolor."

"Most of the time when I draw for fun I try to express some kind of emotion. This piece is a combination of a strange mood I was in one day and some weird dreams I had the night before. I'm not sure what other people think or feel when they see it, but it reminds me of that late-night feeling I had when I first started sketching. There was a strange sort of freedom in making this, since I had spent so long just practicing and doing studies before. It was really refreshing to get a little weird and make something a little more personal."

-Junior Dani McLaughlin of Tinton Falls

## Technology introduces new ways to assist artists with disabilities

By ISABELLA JI

People with disabilities could be at a disadvantage when it comes to creating art. However, with the additional help that technology provides, artists with disabilities can widen their range of creative outputs.

According to the arts magazine *Cascade A&E*, the constant evolution of art through technology strives to give artists with disabilities the chance to engage in art activities like other artists.

When it comes to interior design, architecture, and sculpting, *Cascade A&E* emphasizes that constant improvements in technology are prompted by the urge to help those in need. Additionally, there are adaptors that allow users to draw using their head, teeth, and eye movement. Junior Gina Dige of Howell mentions her opinion on technology for artists, saying that technology is very flexible when it comes to adjusting to the needs of every artist.

"There's plenty of softwares available to create digital art that are very hands on and allow artists to have just as much control over their work as they would doing it by hand," Dige said.

A concern for artists, especially with technology, is pricing. Junior Kara Petrosino of Colts Neck said that the benefits of technology are not worth the hefty price of purchasing design softwares.

"When you add up the cost of good equipment and software, prices can get very high very fast," Petrosino said. "Of course, this can become a problem for anyone, but I feel that it may be a larger issue for artists with disabilities. If an artist with a disability already relies on expensive technology and resources in their day to day life, they may not be able to splurge on a luxury like expensive equipment or software for art."

Though some artists believe there are limitations to art through technology, others, like junior Giulia DeFabritus of Freehold, argue that technology is beneficial because of how easy-to-use it is.

Mad Design Works, a company that utilizes technology to create a customized workspace for artists, specifically those with disabilities, explains that having a company like itself is important in our modern world. The founder of Made Design Works, John Lash, founded this company with his passion for serving the disabled community and his interest in giving others the opportunity to achieve good design.

Together, Lash and his crew gathered by visiting their clients in their households and examining their situation to create a personalized creative workspace.

Despite difficulties in creating art, the community of disabled artists continues to grow and pave the way for others. While they develop in their own creative journeys, Dige said she believes that artists of all kinds should show off their abilities.

"Artists need to be able to use their own imagination because originality is essential," Dige said. "There will always be something special."

## Social media activism could have unintended consequences

On Tuesday, June 2, more than 28 million took to Instagram, Facebook and other social media platforms to share a black square as part of the #BlackOutTuesday movement as a means of showing solidarity against police brutality. Yet when millions of black squares, many posted under #BlackLivesMatter, flooded users' feeds, it caused relevant information related to protests and other critical resources once present to no longer be seen. Ever since the death of George Floyd, social media has become a prime source for sharing information and resources relating to the Black Lives Matter movement. Organizations such as Change.org, the NAACP and the ACLU have all gained heavy social media traction by posting relevant information in sharable forms. On Instagram specifically, many have shared these posts to their stories, hoping that others will see and educate themselves on the topic. While these posts have good intent, participating in activism on social media can have unintended consequences.

When the Australian wildfires started gaining media attention, organizations started thinking of ways they could help those devastated areas, most taking to social media. Although some of these were legitimate, other accounts were not, such as @plantatreeco, which claimed on Jan. 5 that they would donate \$1 to New South Wales Rural Fire Service for every 100 followers and reposts they received. The societal pressure of posts like this is also a prominent issue. For example, if a topic is trending and users see their friends' posts about it, they are more inclined to jump on the bandwagon and share the post as well, for fear of judgement if they don't. This gives them the idea that they're helping the cause, even though it often does nothing.

Celebrities are also susceptible to performative activism, and although many have been criticized for their response to the Black Lives Matter movement, celebrities, in general, have been admirable, using their platforms to inform their followers and support the cause. Some, such as Ariana Grande and Harry Styles, even attended local BLM protests. Emma Watson, on the other hand, was condemned for her self-centered response; she posted three black squares for #BlackOutTuesday, but each square had a small white border around it to match the "aesthetic" of the other photos on her feed. After being called out, she reversed course by posting a wealth of BLM-related content, but then quit social media on June 6.

While getting educated on trending issues is crucial to understanding the world around you, it is also important to consider the validity and impact of the posts that you choose to share with others. Simply posting a black square on your feed or reposting an organization claiming to donate for every share they get may not always be enough. It is important to fact check everything you read, especially things getting shared quickly through social media, and look into doing more than merely posting about issues that are significant to you.

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## The problem with reality TV

*When does entertainment become detrimental?*

By MAGGIE SCHNEIDER

Reality television — one of the most popular forms of entertainment, typically characterized by drama and vulgarity, brings in millions of dollars each year. Viewers tune in every week to catch up on their favorite shows while they root for their favorite contestants. But what is it about reality TV that attracts so many different groups of people?

There is a psychological reason as to why so many people tune in to their favorite reality TV shows every week. According to Business Insider, viewers love to react to fictional drama and may have a "voyeuristic" desire to view others in embarrassing moments. Because of this, networks continue to produce and release new reality shows to bring in revenue. According to Vox, 750 reality television shows aired in 2015 alone.

While its increasing popularity generates millions of dollars each year for big networks and top producers, its so-called "lighthearted" entertainment can negatively effect young viewers.

The problem is not with lighthearted competition shows like American Idol or America's Got Talent, but rather shows such as The Bachelor and America's Next Top Model, based around drama and geared toward young women.

The Bachelor, which first aired in 2002, currently has 24 seasons and was renewed for a 25th. According to Kantar Media, The Bachelor brought in \$86 million dollars in 2017. Viewers tune in to watch 30 women date a single bachelor who has to eliminate the women one-by-one via a red rose until he finds who he wants to marry.

This show has continuously been criticized for its lack of racial diversity and perpetuation of gender norms. In a way, it tries to normalize women viewing each other as "competition" for a man's attention. The popularity of this show comes from its infamous "catfights" between the contestants and the drama that ensues. However, it only reinforces harmful female stereotypes, like the idea that women are emotional and over-dramatic.

America's Next Top Model (ANTM), which brings in millions of dollars and viewers each year,



CREATIVE COMMONS PHOTO COURTESY OF WALT DISNEY TELEVISION  
Cast members of "The Bachelor" pose at a red carpet event.

films young aspiring models competing for the title of "Top Model" and trying to kick-start their career in the industry.

The premise of this show profits entirely off of eating disorders and the body dysmorphia of young women, emphasizing that in order to succeed in modeling, you must look a certain way.

Cassie Grisham, a contestant during Cycle 3, developed bulimia as a result of the show and the industry she was working in.

"If I didn't want to be a model, I would eat whatever I wanted to and not worry about it," Grisham said. "I have this will to be skinny. And if people have a problem with it that's their problem, not mine."

Contestants are constantly shamed for "eating too much" or "letting themselves go," which can be very triggering for young girls watching the show, who equate their self worth with a number on a scale. In fact, it was not until season 10 that the show featured a medium-sized "Top Model."

While some reality television shows can be entertaining, shows like The Bachelor and ANTM promote harmful stereotypes about women and stress the importance of outer beauty. When young impressionable viewers watch these, it can be hard for them not to develop the mindset that beauty is based on how men perceive women and accept that they have to look a certain way.

## Preschools and daycares put young children at risk during pandemic

By ELI TAPIA

The most fun one can have as a kid is getting messy. However, something so quintessential to children like germs and dirt are not ideal during a pandemic. Although the spread of a virus can happen anywhere, it is 10 times more likely indoors, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. Therefore, how smart is it to reopen preschools and daycares for younger children where the spread of germs is almost inevitable?

At a younger age, many kids have the need for a safe and nurturing environment, learning not only how to read and write but also to develop key social skills that will define the rest of their lives. According to IRIS Center at Vanderbilt University, a well rounded physical, social and temporal environment during the earlier stages of a child's

learning can help them succeed in the future. These include classroom materials and equipment as well as the interactions between the students, their peers and teachers.

However, the threat of a deadly virus with cases only rising, social interactions have had to be kept to a minimum and although the state of New Jersey has significantly less cases than many other states, according to the CDC, there is still concern

By adding the nature of kids being messy, while trying to teach them important life lessons and engaging them in learning with materials and activities, the chances of contagion are much higher.

As of June 15, daycares in New Jersey reopened and are operating under strict guidelines. Although this is helpful for many families, the only way to keep everyone safe is to minimize contact.



c/o Communications High School  
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The Inkblot is published by the students of  
Communications High School.

The Inkblot is a public forum for  
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