

THE SPRESS

SOUTH PARK HIGH SCHOOL

An age difference in opinions

NOAH FISCUS

Now that the election is finally over, how do American citizens feel about the results? How do younger people's opinions differ from older folks'?

Many people had differing opinions on the election. Initially, some people thought older voters might score a win for Trump. However, as researched by Tufts Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, more young people turned out in 2020. An older voter, M. Mey, 78, supporting Trump said, "I am disappointed that he lost. He really tried hard, but I think I can accept Biden as our new president." However, some Trump supporters were furious about how the election turned out. In fact, some have still not accepted that he lost the election. On the opposite side of the spectrum, there are the younger voters. It is believed that young voters had a major role in Biden's victory. This makes sense because younger people are interested in higher education, and Biden promised funding to equip teachers and decrease student debt. A young voter, Rob, 29, who supported Biden said, "I'm so glad he won. With him in office, we can get better funding and better help with the pandemic."

Although this is a most tumultuous time in our lives, most people are just glad this election is over.



CHILL room gives students a chance to take a breather

LUKE FURMAN

Have you ever had a day at school when you wished you could hide in the bathroom to collect yourself? The Allegheny Health Network understands how overwhelming school can be sometimes, and its new CHILL project aims to help students through these issues.

Ms. Sara Green LCSW (licensed clinical social worker) describes the CHILL project as "a therapeutic program based in promoting mindfulness to support the mental health and emotional needs of a school's student body and staff." This new operation is run out of a room in the school and will provide a safe space for students to relax if they are overwhelmed. There will also be a school-based therapist present for students who wish to speak with them. Ms. Green, who will be the therapist in

SPHS' CHILL room, wants to let students know that "therapy is a wonderful space to be able to express yourself without judgment. If you are curious about therapy, don't hesitate to come meet me. I am happy to talk with anyone who may need a listening ear."

There are also opportunities for socially distanced sessions for anyone who is interested in speaking with someone remotely. Ms. Green's office is located in the guidance office.

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Social media’s impact on self esteem

CHLOE BYRON

Social media plays a big role in our everyday lives. It helps us learn new information and meet new people, but recently it has caused more harm than good.

All over the world people have their phones to go on Instagram, Facebook, etc. and follow influencers who post about their daily lives. When teens make a post, it is hard to not care about the number of likes you get on it. “When we were making the like button, our entire motivation was ‘Can we spread love and positivity in the world?’ The idea that fast forward to today and teens would be getting depressed when they don’t have enough likes,” said Justin Rosenstein, former engineer at Facebook and Google who was featured in the Netflix documentary “The Social Dilemma.”

You question your self-worth because of a post you saw with someone that you have never met. They could be going through something too. They may just choose not to show it. Be nice to yourself. Your body works so hard to get you through the littlest things in life, why compare it to somebody else's? So many influencers use Photoshop and filters to make themselves look more presentable. Face blurring filters are available for school photos in Kindergarten. What is that teaching younger generations? Accept yourself. It’s hard, but you’ll find happiness once you do.

Making time for better things

CHLOE BYRON

It is very hard to find time to do what you enjoy with everything going on right now. You may be overwhelmed with school or work and too stressed to think about how to fix it.

Whenever you are feeling like you don’t have enough time for certain things, take it step by step. Instead of waiting to do your work later, do it as soon as you get the chance. Instead of taking long breaks in between, take shorter breaks. It will be worth it because whenever you are finished, you can do everything you’ve wanted to. “To be honest, I put my needs and wants last. My family is my first priority. Pretty soon, my daughter will be off to college,” said Mrs. Brace, an English teacher at South Park High School.

Try to write down everything you have to do that day and organize it. Figure out what will take the most amount of time, and do that first. Do the things that will take less time last. It will make time go by faster and by the end of the day when you don’t want to work anymore, you’ll only have smaller, faster things to do.

STUDENT CORNER

Digital photography



Sophia DeMatteo

EDITORIAL

What words can do

TESSA LETTIE

It could be a word, a simple sentence, or even “just a joke” that hurts someone's feelings. Words truly do affect people more than you would think they would. I believe that you could receive one million compliments to build yourself up, but all it takes is one hurtful comment for you to feel completely shattered. At our age and in this generation, it’s easy to write something on social media that you might think is completely harmless. Even if you’re upset with someone or someone is upset with you, don’t intentionally say something that could be permanently hurtful just because you’re temporarily upset. Before you type up a message, think about how you would feel reading it from the other side. Read it aloud and ask yourself if you're being polite. What could be the consequences? No one knows what anyone else is going through beyond what you see yourself. You should always be considerate and think, “What if they’re having a rough time right now?”

Check up on your friends and people that you love. Make sure they are taking care of themselves, for example eating and sleeping ok. Make sure to be careful with your word choices. Think about clicking that send button.

And in case no one has told you today, you are precious, you are valued, and you are loved.



John Winter Photography



PROFILE - ALUMNI

Mina Kimak

SOPHIA DEMATTEO

Mina Kimak, a beloved former South Park High School student, is currently a freshman at the University of Pittsburgh and has just completed her first semester of college. Although her experience looks a little different than she had originally envisioned, she remains cheerful and optimistic.

SD: What did you initially anticipate your experience to look like?

MK: Some classes would be in person... it'll *almost* be like a normal college experience, but all of mine ended up being online.

SD: Do you enjoy college?

MK: I do. I'm excited to get into classes that pertain to my major. I also really like the independence and community-feel.

SD: How is this experience different for you?

MK: The negatives that I envisioned were 'oh, I won't feel immediately at home there', and it's a good thing that it didn't turn out that way. It was better than I envisioned.

SD: Has the COVID-19 outbreak benefitted you in any way?

MK: Socially, I think it benefitted me because I met fewer people, and it was nice to get closer to the people that I *did* know. I'm grateful for that.

SD: What does your college social life look like?

MK: Pitt students are doing a pretty good job (during the pandemic), and personally, I just hung out with my inner-circle.

SD: Are the academics sufficient?

MK: I feel like I'm learning less than I think I should. Over Zoom, it's hard to have a discussion.

SD: Do you have any advice for rising freshmen?

MK: In general, don't worry too much about fitting in, or having to meet certain expectations. There is no precedent. But, you're on your own, and you have to try.

Tough times for preschool program

CORA SMITH

Covid-19 has been affecting many people and organizations as the pandemic continues to dwell onwards, most notably school districts. One South Park School District program has seen the worst of the precautionary measures as the preschool for young children was closed down momentarily.

The teacher in charge of the preschool program, Ms. Stull, states that, "Covid-19 has greatly impacted the preschool schedule. Sadly, due to the pandemic, we had to end our 2019-2020 preschool year early. It was really upsetting to last year's high schoolers, as well as myself."

We can see just how far this pandemic has reached with the closing of the preschool this year as well. Students enrolled in the Understanding Child I and II classes will still gain valuable knowledge. Ms. Stull shares that students will be "learning the theory behind 2, 3, 4 and 5 year olds, behavior issues, discipline problems and solutions, as well as how to make mock lesson plans, craft example ideas, and teach their lessons in a clear fashion." Hopefully the preschool can open again safely with coming times.

Meet the staff

STAFF

This year's staff of The SPress are excited to revive the school newspaper. After starting the year learning about the role and importance of journalism in our community, these students are ready to bring the news to South Park High School.

Chloe Byron is a freshman. She is a member of Interact club and plans on continuing with it for the next three years. Chloe enjoys writing advice and about big things happening near us. She hopes that people will find her articles helpful and informative. She wants the newspaper to be entertaining and used as a way to spread important information.

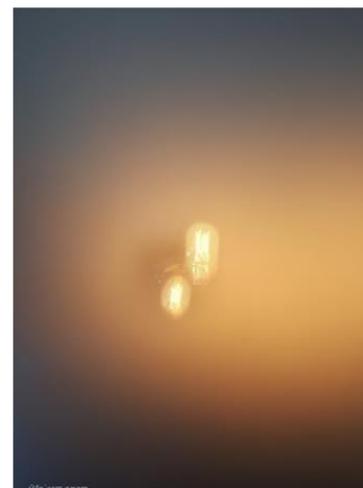
Sophia DeMatteo is currently a senior and has been an active member of both the Drama Club and the Board for the past few years, as well as participating in the Interact, Principal's Advisory, and Student United Nations clubs, the latter of which she leads. She has been passionate about writing for years and hopes that the SPress will keep its readers both informed as well as excited to learn more about South Park.

Noah Fiscus is a freshman. Outside of school, he enjoys cooking and writing. He likes to write about current events and current topics. He hopes to have a better understanding of writing and hopes to educate others on the things he writes about.

Luke Furman is a senior. He has been a member of the marching band, interact club, jazz band, and drama club for the past three years. Luke enjoys writing about popular culture, as well as happenings around the school. He hopes that the newspaper will be enjoyable for everyone, and that it provides for people who wish to keep up with current events.

Dan Pepke is a freshman. He plays baseball and basketball and is passionate about sports. He enjoys writing about the latest news in sports, locally or nationally or something along the subject of animals. His goal for the paper is to let people know what is going on in the sports world and address issues people may want to know about.

Cora Smith is a senior at South Park High School. She has dabbled in the student government, principal's advisory committee, the drama club, and school sports. Cora enjoys creating profiles for various people and creative writing. She would like to see the newspaper become a yearly addition to the school and can provide students, faculty, and parents information and perspective on all sorts of subjects.



How will 2020's legacy impact the new year?

NOAH FISCUS

With 2020 finally coming to an end, what will 2021 look like? What can we expect in the new year?

At the top of everyone's wish list for 2021 is a COVID-19 vaccine for a deadly disease that has so negatively impacted our country. Even though the vaccine is available to some frontline workers, the hope is that it will be available for all in 2021. However, the death rate of the pandemic is now at a record high, so only time will tell. The CDC has been dictating that all people in the world wear masks and social distance around others. Because of the

pandemic, a few things might change. Most people might keep working at home. Along with this, people will keep using Zoom. Students might also adapt to new learning modules. Many hope for more peace and unity between people.

Although these are all good ideas and thoughts, we don't know anything for sure yet. Only time will tell if we will be rid of this pandemic once and for all or whether we will be stuck quarantining for another entire year.



Entertainment in 2020 evolved and innovated with the times

LUKE FURMAN

With the past year not going as expected, the entertainment that was slated to release this year faced major setbacks in production. That didn't stop the artists who insisted on providing us with an escape from our occasionally overwhelming new Earth.

"It's hard to not look at everything through the lens of COVID," says Jon Hamm of shot.net, "and the temptation is to attribute everything to this black swan event." Despite this, many of the world's top artists came out with escapist albums

As Vulture said, "If there's COVID fatigue in real life, there's surely COVID fatigue in entertainment." These albums include Taylor Swift's "Folklore" and Lady Gaga's "Chromatica." Some television comedies are allowing those quarantining a chance to laugh at the absurdity of life, such as NBC's "Superstore." With movie theaters closed down, many upcoming films chose to go the streaming route, such as "Mulan" on Disney+ and "An American Pickle" on HBO Max.

Looking into the future, many of the projects postponed will be released in some capacity in 2021. These include "WandaVision" on Disney+ and "Wonder Woman 1984," which opted to release on HBO Max.



Photo by Jake Stokesbury

The sports world in COVID-19

DAN PEPKE

Due to the COVID-19 virus sports around the world have been affected in different ways. Some sports have handled their situations differently than others and some completely postponed their seasons.

We love to watch sports. They pass the time and can get any viewer excited. Although, recently, due to the COVID-19 outbreak in America, professional sports had to adapt to what was going on in the world. Some sports who were already in midseason or playoffs, as the NBA came up with a way to finish their season out. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver came up with a way to keep players in an area so that they are able to play without the risk of COVID-19. This idea was the bubble. The

bubble was an area in Orlando, Florida, where each team had a practice facility, locker rooms, weight rooms, and housing for players.

Other sports chose different ways to combat the virus, so they were able to play their seasons. The MLB only played half the season after the initial All Star Week. The NFL started on time as it does every year, but there have been issues since. They have had multiple games delayed and days changed. Now, we seem to have Tuesday night Football. The professional sports leagues have lost tons of money from ticket revenue, streams, and sales, but it still won't make them stop playing.

THE SPRESS STAFF

- Chloe Byron
- Sophia DeMatteo
- Noah Fiscus
- Luke Furman
- Tess Lettie
- Daniel Pepke
- Cora Smith
- Mrs. Finberg – Advisor**