

O P I N I O N



Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

A hearty thanks to all the community members who have reached out to me during this partial government shutdown asking about the financial, emotional, and physical health and well-being of our employees and what you can do to help. It is greatly appreciated and heart-warming to live in a place where public employees feel valued and

supported by their community.

This is, unfortunately, not the case everywhere.

We are all looking to getting back to work once this is resolved to care for the land and serve you, the citizens of Sisters Country.

Ian Reid
Sisters District Ranger

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Cloudy 49/31	Mostly Sunny 52/32	Partly Cloudy 53/32	Mostly Cloudy 56/35	Partly Cloudy 55/27	Sunny 44/26

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Apply 'damage control' to vaping

By Andrew Roe
Guest Columnist

Regarding the articles in the January 16 *Nugget* regarding vaping:

I smoked cigarettes for several years and started when I was 18 in high school. I understand how there can be a certain element of pressure involved when your friends and people you know are doing that. But what I have also realized over the years is that a lot of times school staff, parents, and concerned adults can exacerbate the issue by taking a controlling approach.

This never worked for me and I'm sure it hasn't for many others. Believe it or not, some students may be doing this just because of the rebellious element associated with it. I enjoyed rebelling back when I was a teenager. I think it is important for us to all ask some deeper questions, like: why is this the case? Why do teenagers even care to start trying drugs and rebelling to begin with? I was personally very fed up at that age; it was sort of a statement along with something I felt made me look cool in front of my friends.

My high school had random drug tests, but you can also buy fake pee to get around those. There's always loopholes and I think it would be wise for people to remember that it is always going to be an individual's decision for what they actually do in life.

I personally do not even believe that many of these high schoolers should even be called "kids." I understand maybe using that term before high school but once someone has reached the age of 15 or 16 they are pretty much reaching young adulthood. I think it is unfair to call these high schoolers kids because I think that can downplay how smart they actually are.

What I really firmly believe is that all of the facts need to be laid down so students can understand

the risks and also short-term rewards from doing something like vaping. Just saying drugs are bad and acting like there is no reward will pique a person's interest even more when they hear all of their friends saying otherwise.

From what I remember, schools used to use very much of a fear campaign against drugs instead of an informative campaign. I feel like more neutral information needs to be conveyed so we can all take a step back and respect the person's decision to do what they are possibly going to do either way. Yes, students can be prevented from trying E cigarettes, but not by controlling them.

It is absolutely essential for them to be informed with more nonbiased information so they can understand the risks without a picture being painted of "this is bad and you are bad if you do this." This sort of black-and-white approach of trying to scare someone away from something that could be harmful is not as effective. I'm not in any way saying that Sisters schools are doing that, but I just remember that was the case with the high school I went to.

I feel like good information is absolutely the key to prevention. Schools should practice something known as "damage control." Realistically, many students and people are going to experiment a little bit in their lives. That doesn't mean they're going to be addicted automatically, but it is really good to recognize this instead of taking an all-or-nothing approach. Maybe advising students that do decide to vape not to vape every single day or they will risk an even greater potential of getting further addicted.

These concepts can be helpful with other things such as alcohol as well, teaching a person to know their limits rather than telling them they should never try this until the age of 21.

Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or The Nugget Newspaper.