

Birth order causes disorder—siblings may be family, but not necessarily friends

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Staff Reporters

Growing up as a second or third child presents the possibility of following in the shadow of an older sibling. This can take quite the toll on some students. Watching an older brother or sister thrive in academics, or sports, can make high school

attempt to help each child to see themselves as unique individuals and avoid comparisons with siblings or others.

"My parents push me to do well, knowing I can, but also push me harder and give me longer talks about succeeding more expectations," Curran Stark, sophomore, said of

following in the footsteps of his older brother, Dylan, a National Merit



Alexandra Mink, junior, with brother Derek, Class of 2004



Tyler Whitcomb, junior, with sister Alysia, Class of 2004

divorce, in which siblings live separately, can also influence birth order traits.

A case in point is Alexandra Mink, junior, who is almost eight years younger than her brother Derek, Class of 2002, who was Symphonic Choir president, Thespian president and had an approximate 3.8 GPA.

"Pretty much he was the

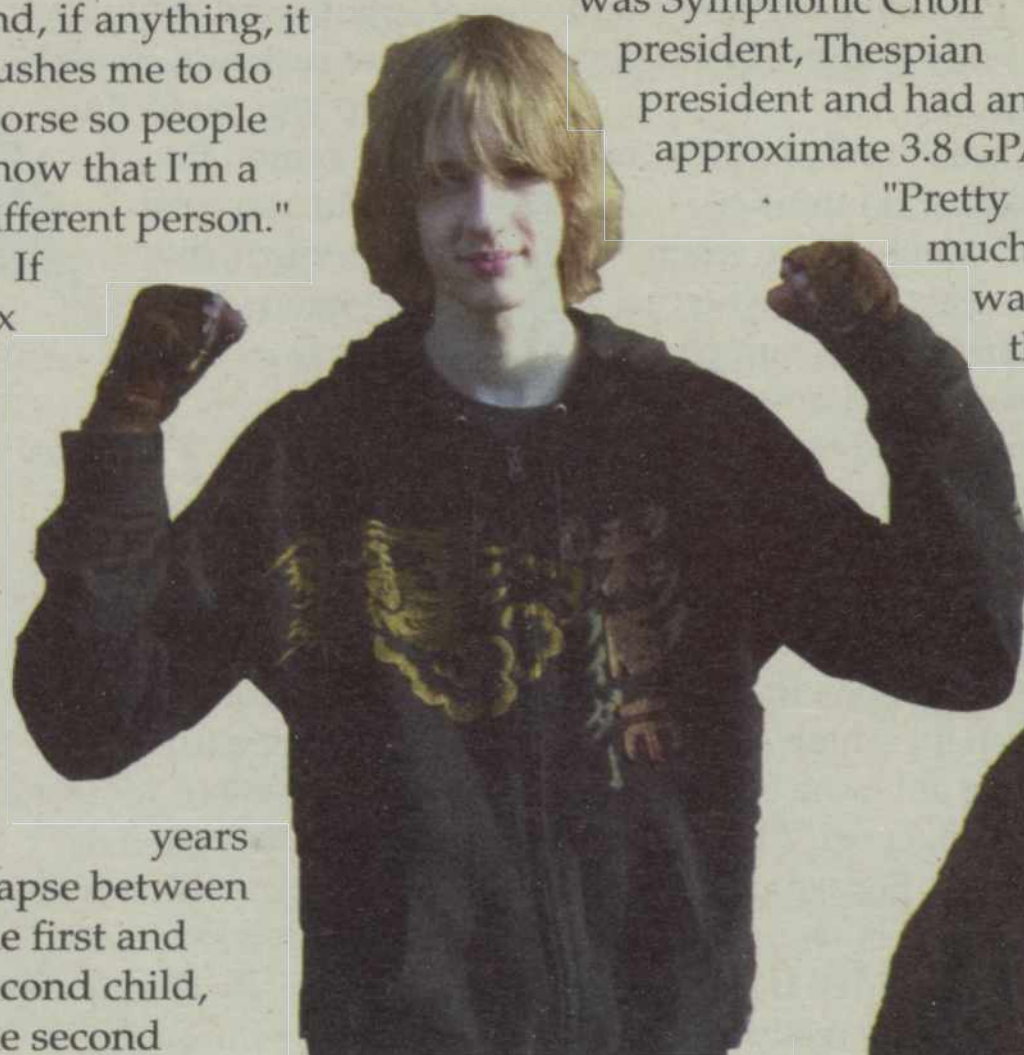
best at everything he did," she said. "So, I feel like I have to be that way sometimes too, for myself, but also because I want to beat my brother... It pushes me, but probably puts a lot of unnecessary pressure on my mass load I already have. But I look up to my brother and love him."

While some students want to outdo their siblings, others just want to follow in their footsteps.

Hillary Obye, Class

Scholar finalist from the Class of 2008. "At any rate, I ignore most of it and, if anything, it pushes me to do worse so people know that I'm a different person."

If six



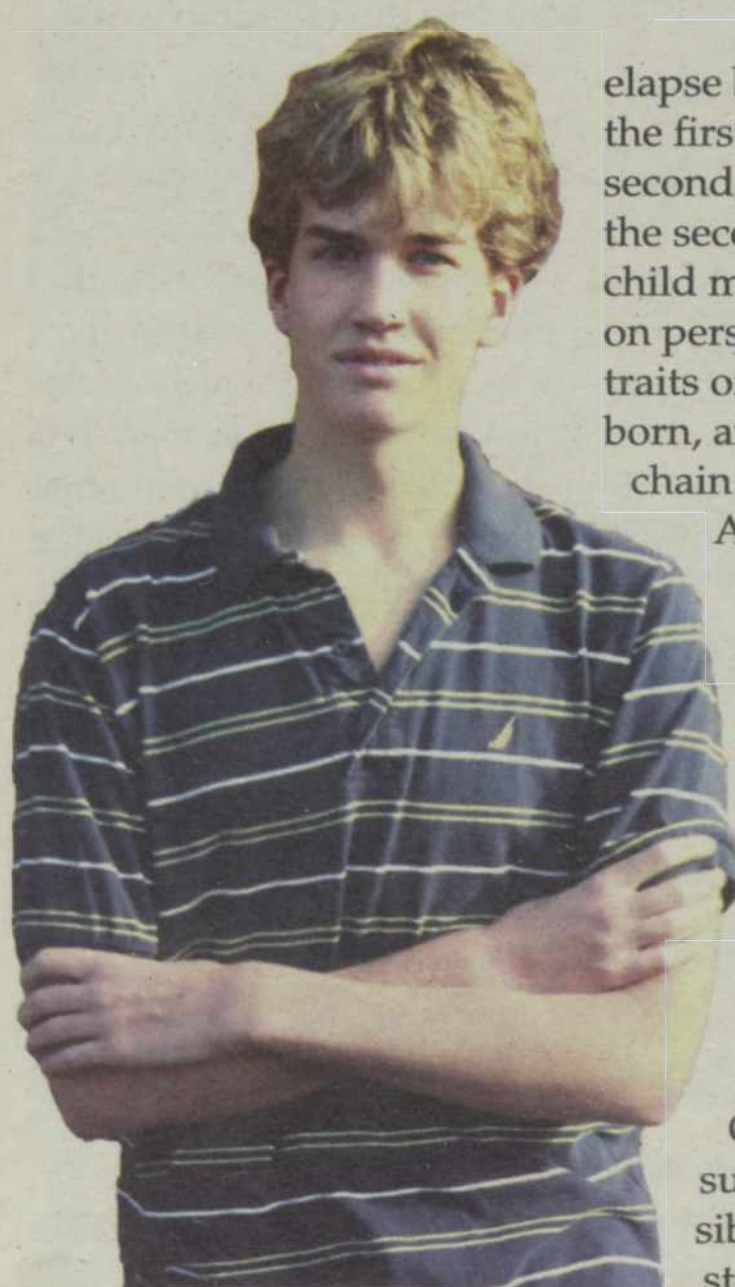
Curran Stark, sophomore

years elapse between the first and second child, the second child may take on personality traits of a first-born, and the birth order chain can start over.

According to sixwise.com, birth order personality within genders can also start the chain over.

If the first child is a girl and the second a boy, the boy may take on some first-born traits because he is the first-born male in the family.

Other circumstances such as death of a sibling, adoptions, step-siblings, multiple births and



Alexander Obye, sophomore



Holly Ashby, sophomore, with brother Jack, Class of 2007

of 2008 and ASB vice-president, set the bar high for the Obye family. "My pressures are just living up to what I have to be, and following an act that's really good. It's tough," Alex Obye, sophomore, said. "It affects me a lot because I'm stepping up on what I'm taking this year."

"Sometimes it's hard to live in their shadows but I've gotten used to it. It's kind of a part of me now so it's not really pressure any more," Holly Ashby, sophomore, said of her older sister and brother, Alyssa, Class of 2005, and Jack, Class of 2007.

Some students feel the pressure of their exceptional older siblings, but find that over time, they come into their own.

"I felt pressure my freshman year but as time goes by, the teachers get to know me, and they don't



Sara Sebastian, senior

compare me to my sister," Tyler Whitcomb, junior, said. "It was just the pressures of getting good grades and being a student leader. It makes me want to be more like my sister (Alysia, Class of 2004, ASB president and a straight A student.)"

Some students feel no pressure, but know that their older siblings have set the bar very high.

Sara Sebastian, senior, has an older brother, Theodore Sebastian, Class of 2004, and sister, Rachel Sebastian, Class of 2007, who were both very involved in the high school, and were May Day queen and king their senior years.

"It doesn't affect me very much, because nobody can tell you what you should do to lead a happier life except yourself," Sebastian said.

"If you focus on the gifts and talents you have, and who you are as a person, you can be very successful," Swearingen said. "Value yourself for who you are and use your gifts to be the best you can."

Student photos by Hannah Zaayer