

Although perfection is unrealistic, pressure pervades

MARY EARP

Perfect: entirely without any flaws, defects, or shortcomings, an impossible trait to have. It may seem like an innocent enough

is without flaw no matter who the beholder is. As far as data or conditions are concerned, perfect simply means every requirement has been fully met," Emma Kennard, freshman, said.

Although many students also feel pressured by peers, coaches, or teachers, 43 percent of students said they feel pressure to please their parents. Parents should push their children to do

said. "Because parents are often poor communicators, many teenagers feel that they will only be loved by their parents if they are perfect."

If parents and students can both realize that perfect isn't possible, and that we all need to merely try our best, the pressure children face would decrease immensely. Parents and students coming together to set reasonable goals would result in a better life for us all.

"If we actually accept that no one is perfect, then

the power struggle would cease to exist. That's not how we have been raised to understand the world to be," Nicki Zavoshy, freshman, said.

Take a look at the world around us; we need to recognize that perfection is impossible. No one can be perfect, and it is unreasonable to attempt to be so. This doesn't necessarily mean we should stop striving, just that we all need to shoot for goals and to recognize our efforts in trying our best.



Photos by Ethan Brent & Pascale Patterson
Photo Editing by Ethan Brent

Forty three percent of teens face pressure from parents and friends to be perfect. However, in a national poll, less than three percent of Americans actually believe in perfection. The destructive consequences from reaching for perfection can include suicide.

goal, but its destructive qualities outweigh any potential benefits. We all are pressured far too much by parents and ourselves for perfection, when in reality, we are just devastating ourselves and others around us.

In a national poll, less than three percent of Americans actually believe in perfection. But there is still an overwhelming amount of pressure to accomplish it, according to a student survey. It's unreasonable to ask for perfection when it is an unreachable trait, and this affects us negatively.

"Perfect" is an unattainable ideal identity, where every aspect of you

Students also think that being perfect isn't limited to one area. In order to be truly perfect, you would have to excel in every aspect. This is quite simply unattainable.

With 53 percent of students saying they pressure themselves, this may be a bigger pressure than any of the others. It affects us in a multitude of ways, and can inhibit us from leading an enjoyable life. The third leading cause of teen death is suicide—a shocking amount. If the pressure to be flawless ceased, self-esteem and confidence levels would rise.

"I pressure myself by beating myself up mentally when I don't achieve my goals," a freshman said.

their best, but should also consider what is reasonable, and when they're asking for too much.

"My parents pressure me to be perfect the most because they want to be proud of someone who does the best at what they can do," Megan Jensen, sophomore, said.

Many parents want to live vicariously through their children; basically, they want their children to have everything absent in their lives.

"I do think that often parents will try to make up for their own failures though their children by ladling guilt upon them and pressuring them to do things they don't enjoy," Kennard

student called it "okay within limits."

Compulsive gambling seems a far cry from the type of gambling most students do. One female student spoke of gambling with her family using quarters. Another spoke of how he put \$5 into a pot for poker. But for the student who already has a genetic disposition, it is

just like a gateway drug. It leads to bigger stakes and bigger problems. That said, not all gambling is terrible. It is accepted in society in moderation, but the emphasis should be on moderation. Gambling safely is a must, and if a student feels like they have a problem, they should go for help immediately, before it gets out of hand.

McLeod finishes career, looks toward retirement

McLeod

continued from page 1

She has even taught some dance classes at Portland State University, where she earned her Bachelors degree in Health and Physical Education and her Masters in teaching. She has used her career as a teacher to educate students not only on health, but on life.

"I would love for my students to really understand that life is all about choices," McLeod said. "The choices made and the consequences of those choices rest on their shoulders alone. So think thoughtfully, act wisely and enjoy the outcome!"

During her final weeks at WLHS, she looks back on what has made her experience here so meaningful.

"I have good memories of the relationships I've built with some of my students," McLeod said. Some of her favorite parts have been supporting students by going to sporting events and plays, as well as her field trips in Anatomy and Physiology. She also enjoyed assemblies.

"I have always loved school assemblies, especially when we had Spirit Week and everyone would dress up all week and have class competitions and the search for the spirit stick," McLeod said.

Throughout her time here, she has formed strong bonds with her colleagues, as well.

"Mrs. McLeod is one of the kindest, most sincere people that I have ever known. She always remembers people's birthdays and special occasions," Ron Chappell, health and PE teacher, said. Nikki Stroup, a fellow teacher in the same department, shares the sentiment.

"Her students mean the world to her, and she will do everything she can to make them feel important and

special. She is the same way with her co-workers, and she always goes the extra mile to show you she cares," Stroup said. "She is a wonderful teacher and an even better friend, and I will miss her very, very much next year."

Now that she's retiring, McLeod plans to take advantage of opportunities she hasn't had time for in the past.

"I want to relax and feel free! I want to breathe, run, jump and play knowing that I am in a state of total freedom to do and be in the moment and do anything I want," McLeod said. She hopes to take up ballroom dancing, to travel and to see both the summer and winter Olympics. She also wants to be more involved with volunteer work, particularly working with drug-affected babies in the maternity ward.

McLeod will also be able to spend more time with her family. She has been married to her husband Dennis, a physical education teacher at Aldercreek Middle School, for over 33 years. They have three children named Brianna, Casey and Kelly who are in their 20s. Her extended family consists of nine brothers and sisters and many nieces and nephews.

Even though McLeod is leaving, she won't forget the important lessons that have come with being a teacher.

"I've learned to be open minded and flexible, and that you take one day at a time," McLeod said. "There are a lot of wonderful people out there to get to know and work with and help you learn about yourself and life." McLeod will also warmly remember the relationships she developed with the people she met while teaching.

"To my students and staff members, both present and past I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to each of you who for enriching my life with yours," she said.

Student gambling leads to bigger problems

Gambling

continued from page 5

Many students enjoy gambling. It's easy, fun, and can be an exciting way to spend free time with friends. Poker games and rolling dice are activities anyone can do. Unless the amount of money becomes unreasonably high, it is rather benign. One