

PARENTS TALK BACK

Lip plumping and a punch in the mouth

A box arrived at my work with a seductive message. It promised “the pouty lips you always wanted. Naturally.”

I had not given much thought to the state of my lips, but I supposed that maybe they could be a little plumper.

“What harm could there be in trying a device that doesn’t involve needles or chemicals?” I thought. The company had sent my office the CandyLipz Xtreme Lip Shaper to be tested, so why shouldn’t I test it? In retrospect, when “lips” is spelled with a Z and “extreme” with a capital X, it may be a red flag about the scientific validity of the product.

I vaguely recalled hearing about some ridiculous “lip challenge” that had been making the rounds among teenagers, but this wasn’t that, of course. This product came in a fancy box and retailed for \$69.99.

I handed the instructions to a colleague, who seemed a little too amused and eager to spearhead the experiment. After inserting my lips in the mouthpiece, I was told to compress the sides of the cylinder. When I released the tube, it created a vacuum that sucked my lips into the plastic tube.

It hurt. I looked at the fashion editor who had been guiding this misadventure, and she said the directions said to keep it dangling there for two minutes.

It hurt a lot. When the two minutes were up, I broke the seal and peeled my lips out. They were definitely swollen. Within minutes, I saw a reddish-purple ring form around my lips.

I looked like I had been punched in the mouth.

The discoloration around my mouth got darker by the hour. My colleague advised me to find an ice pack. By the time I got home, hours later, it looked like my mouth had been lined with black marker.

“Look what I did,” I said to my family. “What happened?” my 13-year-old daughter asked. I described the product I had tried at work.

“You know you just basically did the Kylie Jenner lip challenge, right?” she said, making no effort to contain her smirk.

“No. Noooooo.” The indignity of being called out by your child stings more than sticking your lips in a vacuum. Trust.

My husband took one look at the ring of dark bruising around my mouth and said: “You are not a child. And you are not a Kardashian.”

Duh. I didn’t have to pout. I was already there.

“I MADE A BAD CHOICE,” I announced to all parties who would be witnessing the results of said choice for days to come.

My ego was bruised far worse than my lips.

Sometimes it’s difficult to remember how the teenage brain operates. We may recall that we did some foolish things in our youth, but the plus side of thinning hair (and lips) is that experience and maturity make those occurrences far less common over the years.

When confronted with some ridiculous behavior, we may be tempted to ask an otherwise intelligent young adult: What in the world were you thinking?

So what makes teenagers — and, ahem, the occasional columnist — take such foolish chances?

A study out of New York University suggests that adolescents are not inherently risk-takers, but they are more likely than adults to take actions when they don’t fully know or understand the consequences of their actions.

“In risky situations where you know the outcomes and the probability of the outcome, teenagers didn’t take more risks than adults,” a lead researcher told LiveScience about the study in 2012. “Teenagers went for the risky option when the outcome was not exactly known.”

When adolescents know an activity’s potential dangers more precisely, they are less likely to participate.

Had I read the accompanying instructions on the Xtreme Lip Shaper myself and known that 80 percent of users end up with bruises on their face, I would have found someone else to test the product. Clearly, there wasn’t much forethought involved. I was reminded how easily rational adults can fall prey to marketing and peer pressure.

For five days, I took pictures of my damaged lips and studied the photos for signs that the marks were fading.

“I can’t believe I did this to myself,” I thought each time. I also took herbal remedies, and watched videos and read articles on how to heal bruises faster.

As the days passed, I also embraced my humility and vowed to remember this feeling when one of my children does something head-shakingly dumb.

There’s a thin line between a fat lip and a fathead.



AISHA SULTAN
Parents talk back

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Half of black millennials in U.S. know of police abuse

WASHINGTON (AP) — Long before the deaths of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown and Freddie Gray, more than half of African-American millennials indicated they, or someone they knew, had been victimized by violence or harassment from law enforcement, a new report says.

The information, from the “Black Millennials in America” report issued by the Black Youth Project at the Study of Race, Politics and Culture at the University of Chicago, reflects starkly different attitudes among black, Latino, Asian and white millennials when it comes to policing, guns and the legal system in the United States.

Researchers, who have surveyed millennials several times during the past decade, point out that the disparities existed well before the “Black Lives Matter” movement began.

In the 2009 Mobilization and Change Survey, 54.4 percent of black millennials answered yes to the question “Have you or anyone you know experienced harassment or violence at the hands of the police?” Almost one-third of whites, 1 in 4 Latinos and 28 percent of Asian-Americans surveyed said yes to the same question.

The study, released to The Associated Press on Wednesday, comes as the United States grapples with concerns over policing in minority communities following the deaths of Martin, 17, in Florida three years ago, Brown, 18, in Ferguson, Missouri, last year and Gray, 25, in Baltimore earlier this year. Their deaths, as well as those of other black men and women, have inspired nationwide protests under the “Black Lives Matter” and “Say Her Name” monikers.

But even while being the wellspring of those movements, a clear majority of black millennials — 71 percent — said in that same survey they believe police in their neighborhood were “there to protect you.” Eighty-five percent of whites, 76 percent of Hispanics and 89 percent of Asians also said police were in their neighborhood to protect them.

“We know that young blacks are more likely to be harassed by the police. We know that they are more likely to mistrust their encounters with the police,” said Cathy Cohen, chair of the political science department at the University of Chicago and leader of the Black Youth Project. “But we also know from actually collecting data that a majority of them believe that police in their neighborhood are actually there to protect them, so I think it provides us with more complexity.”



AP Photo/Jeff Roberson, File

In this Aug. 9 photo, protesters march to mark the one-year anniversary of Michael Brown being shot and killed by Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson.

Another survey done by the project in 2013, the Black Youth Project Quarterly Survey, showed that the percentage of blacks and Latinos who said they knew people who carried guns had declined, but more of them knew someone who was the victim of gun violence. Twenty-four percent of blacks and 22 percent of Latino millennials said they or someone they knew “carried a gun in the last month.” Almost half of white millennials — 46 percent — said they knew of someone who carried a gun.

However, 22 percent of black millennials and 14 percent of Latino millennials said they or someone they knew were the victim of gun violence in the last year, compared with 8 percent of white millennials.

It’s not surprising that young blacks and whites feel differently on these issues, given the different experiences the groups are reporting, said Jon Rogowski, an assistant political science professor at Washington University in St. Louis. For example, white millennials don’t report having to explain themselves to police, while millennials of color report that officers stopped them simply to question them about what they were up to, he said.

“We see story after story about how this leads into a more combative situation which has

escalated and led to, in some instances, tragic outcomes,” said Rogowski, who co-authored the Black Millennials In America report. “So the experiences that these different communities have had based on where they live and the kinds of policing procedures that are in place there, we would argue, lead to these different patterns.”

After arrest, black millennials also don’t believe everyone gets fair treatment from the legal system in the United States. They’re not alone in this feeling, with only 38 percent of all millennials agreeing with the statement that “the American legal system treats all groups fairly” in the 2014 Black Youth Project survey.

The 2009 survey was taken between October and November 2008, May and July 2009 and November and January 2010 and included 4,345 people 18 years old and older. The 2014 Black Youth Project Survey consisted of four surveys conducted between 2012 and 2014 and included 6,118 people.

The surveys were done by GfK Knowledge Network using GfK’s probability-based KnowledgePanel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points.

OUT OF THE VAULT

1936 earthquake rocks Milton-Freewater area

On July 15, 1936, at 11:08 p.m., an earthquake registering between 5 and 5.5 on the Richter scale shook residents of the Milton-Freewater area out of their beds. The strongest shock hit the Stalene area, cracking the pavement there, in places up to two meters wide, and at one point the ground dropped by 2.4 meters (7.9 feet). The shaking started slowly and lasted for 15 seconds; more than 54 aftershocks were reported by George Harshman of Freewater following the initial shock, and they continued intermittently until November 17.

The *East Oregonian* reported the earthquake was felt as far west as Arlington and as far north as Spokane, and severely damaged buildings in Walla Walla, Milton-Freewater and Athena. Residents of Pilot Rock, Pendleton and even Heppner



RENEE STRUTHERS
Out of the vault

fled their homes and businesses during the quake.

Among the reported damage: Homes in the area were uninhabitable due to large cracks in the walls, and chimneys and

flues were shaken loose from roofs; a meat market and bank in Athena, joined together before the quake, were separate buildings the following morning; two freight cars were shaken off the tracks at Blue Mountain Station, and large rocks the size of cars bounced into the intersection of Souther Creek Road and Walla Walla River Highway; the Rev. J.M. Marlatt’s concrete home fell to the ground; and the quake shook loose

artesian wells in the area — one on the A.M. Fix ranch that had dried up three weeks earlier, and another new artesian well from a previously shared well on the farm of Walter Maxson.

In some of the places where ground cracks appeared, water also was present in the cracks, signaling liquefaction of the soil. Liquefaction (when the soil temporarily loses strength and acts like a liquid) can cause extensive damage, bringing underground infrastructure like water and sewer lines to the surface and even swallowing people, buildings and cars whole in seconds during larger quakes, especially if the ground is already saturated with water.

The epicenter of the 1936 earthquake was fixed at 10 kilometers (6.38 miles) northwest of Milton-Freewater. It occurred along the Wallula fault system, which runs from near

Milton-Freewater to Kennewick, Wash., along the Horse Heaven Hills, and is part of the larger Olympic-Wallowa Lineament that reaches from the Wallowa Mountains to the Olympic Peninsula.

Our corner of Northeast Oregon is still seismically active, though the magnitude of earthquakes is generally below 4 on the Richter scale. The Milton-Freewater area has recorded 66 earthquakes since 1931, the largest in recent history a 4.3 quake in November 1991. The most recent earthquake was Jan. 23, 2015, centered 4.7 miles southwest of Athena; it registered 3.7.

Renee Struthers is the Community Records Editor for the *East Oregonian*. See the complete collection of *Out of the Vault* columns at eovault.blogspot.com

ODDS & ENDS

Finland to launch national emojis

HELSINKI (AP) — Finland is launching a series of “national emojis” that include people sweating in saunas, classic Nokia phones and heavy metal head-bangers.

Petra Theman from the Finnish Foreign Ministry says the emojis will be released as a way to promote the country’s image abroad and are based on themes associated with Finland.

She said Wednesday that emojis suit the character of the traditionally reticent Finns “who only speak when it’s necessary.”

The free emojis will be released on the ministry’s web publication starting Dec. 1 at a rate of one a day, like a seasonal advent calendar.

Emojis, unlike emoticons that use typographical displays in texts, are pictures used to express emotions or ideas.

Company launches Bernie Sanders underwear line

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) — Employees of a Vermont company have launched a side business selling underwear featuring a black-and-white drawing of the



Finnish Foreign Ministry via AP

face of Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders.

NECN reports that the underwear, which features the message “Feel the Bern,” is available for men and women and costs \$15 plus shipping and handling. The three workers with KSE Partners, a strategic communications and government affairs firm, say they created Bernie’s Briefs as a fun side business.

The Vermont senator has said recently on late-night TV and talk shows that he prefers briefs over boxers.

The startup’s founders called Sanders’ passion for serious issues admirable. One founder says the political process has benefited from his campaign.

Ten percent of the proceeds will go toward the Yellow

Ribbon Fund, which supports injured service members.

Albuquerque dentist offering to buy back Halloween candy

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — An Albuquerque, New Mexico, dentist is hoping to get ahead in the fight against post-Halloween cavities with cash.

KRQE-TV reports that Byron Wall, of Cosmetic Dentistry of New Mexico, said he is offering to buy candy back from trick-or-treaters on Sunday afternoon.

Wall says children 14 years old or younger can pawn their sweets at his office.

His office will pay \$1 for every pound of candy up to \$5. The purchased candy goes

to Blue Star Moms, a nonprofit supporting New Mexico troops.

Wall says the organization packages the candy along with clothes and food in holiday boxes to ship to soldiers in November.

His office collected more than 1,000 pounds of candy last year.

Seattle garbageman returns \$12,000 in lost checks to school

SEATTLE (AP) — A Seattle elementary school is thanking a garbageman for finding nearly \$12,000 in checks in the trash.

KOMO-TV in Seattle reports that Waste Management employee Micah Speir was picking up scattered trash next to some bins when he found a number of checks made out to Lawson Elementary School.

Principal Dorian Manza says he met Speir on his route and gratefully took the checks back. The funds were from a fundraising drive and a Parent-Teacher Association member had accidentally dropped the bag along the garbage truck’s route. When Manza tried to tip Speir for his good deed, the man turned him down.

Speir says his only concern was doing the right thing and returning the money to the school.