Increased screen time has negative effects

By Kylie Newton

Since the invention of the internet, the use of electronic devices has been a privilege in which many indulge in. This year, kids, teens, and adults alike are increasing their screen time more than ever due to virtual events amidst the pandemic. Though creating a beneficial compromise, hidden within our screen time lies many adverse effects.

In a survey of 61 high school students at Sevastopol, 49.2% of students admit to being aware of the negative effects of screen time and 37.7% admit to being somewhat aware. However, 40.7% of students still use their phone five or more hours per day outside of school.

Screens of electronic devices emit a wavelength of light known as blue light, which measures around 380 nanometers.

Optometrist Paul Filar from Peninsula Vision Care explains the dangers that come with this wavelength of light.

“Computer screens, cell phones, fluorescent lighting, and LED lighting are putting out blues 430-455 nanometers, which is very very close to the UV that damages us from the sun,” Filar said.

The dangers of UV damage have shown to be immeasurably more dangerous with today’s generation, while already showing significant damage in older generations of people.

“When your great great grandparents got older they had damage to their eyes and developed cataracts because they could have had up to eight to ten hours of UV damage from being in the sun. Well, your generation is getting UV damage twenty hours a day, not just from the sun, but also from devices… that’s the problem,” said Filar.

Along with cataracts, one is also at risk for macular degeneration. Compared to cataracts, which is the clouding of the lens of the eye, Filar explains, “Macular degeneration is damage to the back of the human eye.”

Macular degeneration causes distortion and blank spots in vision. As conditions worsen, there becomes a lack of central vision.

In addition to long-lasting effects, there are many irritating daily symptoms that stem from the blue light emitted from devices.

“Science has proven that it does affect sleep and your mood… blue light is also responsible for [eye] strain, glare, migraines... People fatigue faster, they get more irritable... there are a lot of short term effects that aren’t as obvious as a cataract,” Filar said.

Sleep and mood are most dramatically affected. Melatonin, a hormone that regulates your circadian rhythms, or sleep cycles, is suppressed from excessive screen time, causing a lack of sleep.

“By looking at a computer or any device like a phone, within three hours of planning on falling asleep, your body stops melatonin production and you are still in that morning wakefulness,” explains Filar.

Despite screen time being a hindrance at night, 70% of students at Sevastopol admitted to using their phones every night right before bed.

With this lack of sleep, a decrease in mood is directly affected. According to Dr. Lawrence J. Epstein from a Harvard Medical study, those who get less sleep are more likely to develop emotional disorders, depression, and anxiety.

Forty-seven percent of students report experiencing a lack of sleep due to excess screen time. To help mitigate these effects and avoid a decline in both sleep and mood, you can wear blue light blocking glasses, which filter out blue light emitted from electronic devices.

Senior Jenna Engeldinger studies on her Chromebook for the fifth hour in a row.

Continued on page 7
**Junk in the Trunk:**

**Featuring: Lindsay Lautenbach's Vehicle**

By Maggie Ripp

Though fairly mundane and unassuming, the random items thrown, dropped, and lost in a student's trunk can reveal more about a person than commonly believed. Junk in the Trunk strives to highlight the arbitrary nature of the average teen's trunk in an attempt to showcase even the most ordinary aspects of teenage life possess value.

This issue of Junk in the Trunk features sophomore Lindsay Lautenbach. Lautenbach's trunk holds many practical items: a few jackets, an extra pair of clothes, two saddles and two saddle pads, and fire department gear. At first glance, the items reveal Lautenbach to be an organized individual, always coming prepared with an extra jacket in case it is cold, and a change of extra clothes so she does not have to borrow others.

"I had a few jackets because I always end up getting cold and taking other people's jackets so now I'll have my own when I go places," Lautenbach said. "I had an extra pair of clothes because I borrow everyone else's usually so instead I can wear my own clothes and have them when I need it."

While the extra clothes indicate a sense of organization in Lautenbach's life, the saddles reinforce this in addition to revealing some of Lautenbach's favorite activities, like riding horses. Lautenbach prefers to be prepared for any riding opportunities she might encounter. Missing out on the little moments like getting to ride your horse when there's sporadic free time in a busy schedule, or bringing a jacket to make an outing with friends all the more comfortable, are things Lautenbach always comes prepared for. She appreciates the small things in life.

The items in her trunk seem to disclose little about Lautenbach as a person. However, upon further inspection of the items, objects can illuminate pieces of her life and personality that might not otherwise be so obvious. Never underestimate the power of simplicity, as Junk in the Trunk proves just how valuable one's junk in the trunk can be.

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**Sweets and Sours**

The girls' basketball team had a successful season with a conference record of 8-12. Congratulations to senior Zoe Kuchn for scoring 1,000 career points!

We are going back fully in person! Less screen time means fewer headaches for many of us!

Some of our post-poned fall sports are finally underway. Good luck to volleyball and girls swim!

Warmer weather is finally around the corner!

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**Signs from above:**

How life's elements affect your astrological sign

Earth, air, fire, and water are the primary and foundational elements of life. The elements are major groupings in astrology, which can offer people an analysis of their traits based on their birth date, place, and time. A birth chart shows a mixture of the elements and displays what you are working with in this life, since there are varying levels of influence. If you know your time of birth and where you were born, there may be one element that is more dominant in your chart than another. Now, let's dive into how your astrological sign can be described by these elements.

**Earth Signs:**
- Taurus (April 20-May 20)
- Virgo (August 23-September 22)
- Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

- The "grounded" people on the planet
- The ones who bring us down to earth and reminds us to start with a solid foundation
- Appreciate the finer things in life
- Stubborn and inflexible

**Fire Signs:**
- Aries (March 21-April 19)
- Leo (July 23-August 22)
- Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

- Require nurturing and attention
- Bold, charismatic, creative, confident
- High-spirited and self-motivated
- Aggressive, selfish, vain, quick tempered

**Water Signs:**
- Cancer (June 21-July 22)
- Scorpio (October 23-November 21)
- Pisces (February 19-March 20)

- Intuitive, emotional, and ultra-sensitive
- Wonderful artists- highly imaginative
- Like the water, can be refreshing or drown you in their depths
- Moody, highly suspicious, mysterious

Yours truly,
Emma Olson, Sophomore
Editorial: Grades Edition

By Maggie Ripp

What would school be like without grades? Would there be a lack of structure, motivation, or work ethic? Probably. However, grades tend to weaken the foundation which schools should be based on; young minds blossoming into shameless thinkers, doers, dreamers and makers.

The stress students feel is often generated by the emphasis society and schools place on the letters we see in the gradebook. Grades, in students’ minds, determine their intelligence, their self worth and their rank among other students. So, inevitably, grades induce massive amounts of pressure.

In a poll taken by students, 61.1% of students feel consistent stress concerning their GPA. For something so insignificant in the broad scheme of things, scores cause far too much strain on students’ minds for them to be beneficial in the long term.

Grades are taken on almost every assignment in school, whether it is for completion or measurement of one’s understanding, they are everywhere. Under some circumstances, students will forego their own learning experience to ensure that a 4.0 remains in the gradebook. How are students’ minds supposed to flourish with individuality, knowledge and their own views of the world, if everything we learn is diminished into one insignificant but defining letter. A letter that does not reflect a student’s feelings and experiences that day, or even their understanding of the material in some cases, has the power to define and shape a student’s future and self image.

The conversation among students often centers around the current grade they have in a class. Rarely, if ever, do students converse about what school is truly about: learning. Not only do students stress about grades with one another, but competition among students and their grades can also be a frequent topic of conversation.

Class rank and scholarships thrive off not just motivation to achieve “good” grades but the toxic competition that ensues between students. There is so much competition in the world already, why must it also consume school, a place for learning and growing?

More often than not, grades reflect how much memorized information a student can regurgitate on a test, only to forget the information weeks later. How great would it be if schools were actually about the intrinsic value of learning, or the excitement that can come from teachers and kids enjoying the learning process?

Schools may place such an emphasis on grades and standardized test scores because it reflects the overall success rate of a school. Consequently, schools become data driven and statistic focused. Schools that prioritize success of the masses, rather than the individual growth of young minds, diminish the value and true meaning of school. Luckily, at a smaller school, our teachers are able to work more one on one with students and ensure that each student is progressing both academically and emotionally.

Instead of grading every assignment a student does, discussion and conversation between student and teacher and class and teacher would put a greater focus on learning and comprehending a topic than an end of unit test would.

Granted, eradicating grades entirely is unrealistic, as it is a necessary judgment tool for college admissions and scholarships when the time comes, as well as a way to motivate students to learn in the first place. Nevertheless, grading students based on their ability to recite facts defeats the purpose of school. School should be a place of learning and developing one’s mind into the best version it can be, rather than it crumbling over the B a student sees in his or her AP English Literature class.

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Editorial Cartoon:
Holding Out

By Freddie Buergin-Witt
On Jan. 16, senior Zoe Kuehn joined the 1,000 point hall of fame after scoring her thousandth career point in a free throw. Kuehn’s dedication and determination in the sport has proven successful as she now holds the status as the fourth basketball player to score 1,000 points in Sevastopol history.

Despite the season’s rocky start with a mass quarantine of the team and the lingering fear that the season would be canceled entirely, Kuehn was able to persevere and continue working toward her individual and team goals.

“I was overwhelmed as a senior [since] you can’t rely on next season, and for a while we didn’t even know if we had this season,” Kuehn said. “It felt like I was losing a sport that was really important to me.” Fortunately, when the season resumed, the team’s and Zoe’s hard work paid off in the game against N.E.W Lutheran High School, when Kuehn and her teammates took home another win.

Beginning her basketball career in the YMCA youth programs, the sport has been a major part of Kuehn’s life since childhood. Kuehn started playing basketball for Sevastopol as early as fourth grade when her father, Bryan Kuehn, coached her. With her parents both being past basketball players, it was a given that Kuehn would follow in their footsteps and become a star basketball player herself.

“My parents are the ones who hold me to higher standards. They are the voices I can pick out of the crowd when [playing],” Kuehn said on who her main supporters are. “My dad used to coach me when I was in fourth grade so basketball has always been something my family fully supported.”

In addition to her parents, Kuehn also acknowledges the role her former basketball coach Daniel Judas, her current coaches Ben and Beth Rikkola, and the Wiesner family have played in her success in basketball. Varsity coach Ben Rikkola and JV coach Beth Rikkola were both high school and college basketball players who have experienced firsthand the hard work it takes to accomplish such a feat as scoring 1,000 points.

“It takes dedication, persistence, and a love for the game. We know that Zoe has committed herself to basketball and sacrificed a lot to get where she is. What we are most proud of about Zoe this year is that she bought into our system,” the Rikkolas said.

With the coaches’ introduction of a new game technique that emphasized ball control and less turnovers, this meant limiting chances for Kuehn to score. However, despite slowing the game down and decreasing scoring opportunities, the team still needed points.

“It was such a fine line of ‘yes Zoe be aggressive and score but don’t force it, and do it within our system,’ and Zoe did that.”

Zoe finished third in the Packerland Conference scoring at over 17 points per game and she was able to do it while running the stuff the coaches wanted so that we as a team could be most successful,” the coaches said.

Both coaches are immensely proud of Kuehn and grateful to have seen her grow as a basketball player and individual. Coaching teenagers in any sport is a stressful, but gratifying endeavor that always proves worth it in the end, and that is something the Rikkolas are familiar with.

“[There were] lots of questions, and lots of learning; smiles, laughs, tears of joy and heartache, forgotten shoes and water bottles; but most of all there is growth and progress because Zoe keeps showing up no matter what,” the Rikkolas said on what it is like training Kuehn. “She is stubborn, just like us. That means she doesn’t quit even if things don’t go her way or even if we are tough on her. Sometimes that’s all it takes to be successful; being stubborn enough to never give in. That’s Zoe.”

After scoring her thousandth point from the free throw line with a swollen, bruised ankle she had rolled only moments before, Kuehn recalls she became overwhelmed with mixed emotions.

“It’s an interesting feeling. I was very excited and I really just wanted to talk to my mom. I was happy I hit [the thousand point marker] but I really wanted to win the game with my team too,” Kuehn said of what her thoughts were after scoring the thousandth point.

The team bond Kuehn has built throughout her four years as a pioneer basketball player is what keeps her returning year after year. Regardless of the successes and hardships each season brings, Kuehn believes it is the relationships and the teamwork that make basketball so special.

“You’re never really gonna get this [feeling] anywhere else. You’re not gonna get what it feels like to win a game that we hadn’t won in ten plus years. I feel that that was more important, and winning with the girls and having the team there, than just my personal goals,” Kuehn said.
Girls win first regional game in 14 years

By Kylie Newton

The girls’ basketball team accomplished an overall successful season. Finishing fourth in the conference, the team ended the season with a final conference record of seven wins and eight losses and an overall record of eight wins and twelve losses.

While being defeated at the second regional game, the team was able to win their first regional game against Gibraltar with a score of 54-31, making it the first regional game the girls’ basketball team has won in 14 years.

The girls spent an average of twelve hours a week in the gym, averaging two hours per day, six days a week. Varsity Coach Ben Rikkola explains how this hard work consistently contributed to the girls’ success this season.

“All the hard work over the last couple years… have certainly helped. We are scoring more points per possession this year because we are making less turnovers and getting to the free-throw line more,” Rikkola said.

Senior player Chilina Cuelar describes how this dedication stems from the team’s ability to put every effort into supporting and motivating each other.

“I think we as a team under-
After 26 years as a Pioneer, JoAnne Surfus retires

By Emma Olson

JoAnne Surfus is known to many for her grade day Tuesday’s in study hall, but there is much more to her than grade day. Surfus retired on Jan. 29 after 26 years working for the district.

Before working at school, Surfus worked at WDOR as a traffic manager and waitressed at many different restaurants. While at Sevastopol, she has worked in the library for 15 years, transferred to Special Education for five years, and then transferred back to the library, where she has been for the past eight years. She also coached cheerleading for a few years.

Her favorite memories are the high school pep rallies and watching high schoolers grow and change into young adults.

“I just like working with the high school students, I really like high schoolers; I think it’s neat to see them grow and change. When they get to be seniors they’re really young adults and ready to head out, and to just see the changes, it’s really great,” Surfus said.

In her free time, she enjoys thrifting, gardening, cooking, baking, and spending time with her seven grandchildren who range in age from two years old to eight years old.

Travelling has been a major part of Surfus’ life. She has been to 30 states and 10 countries, including Brazil, France, Italy, Austria, Czech Republic, Netherlands, England, Monaco, and Canada. Once the pandemic subsides, Surfus plans on going back to Hawai’i, Georgia, Brazil, and Europe and traveling to the states she hasn’t been to yet. She is particularly interested in Maine and the east coast. Until the pandemic eases, she is focused on spending time with her grandchildren and getting things done at home with her husband who is also retired.

While Surfus is enjoying her retirement, the students she has worked with over the years will remember how much she cared about them, and her mantra of “Another day, another A” will always be remembered.

Mrs. Surfus Fun Facts

- If she had to pick one food that she could only eat for the rest of her life, it would be a tie between potato chips and chocolate.
- She enjoys every type of music, from heavy metal to rock to pop to classical to jazz.
- As far as movies, action, comedy, and romance movies are her favorite. She also enjoys checking out Oscar winning movies to see if she likes them or not.
- Her favorite books are classics, biographies, historical fiction, and cookbooks.

Emma’s guide to fashion

How to elevate your winter outfits with layers

By Emma Olson

Layering also goes back to the concept that I talked about in my last column where a few key pieces in your wardrobe can help elevate your outfit and with winter, make your outfit warmer. I will be showing you how to achieve a couple of looks, but remember that fashion is what you want to do and what you feel comfortable in, not what everyone else is doing.

Start with a simple sweatshirt, leggings or jeans, and a pair of sneakers. I am going to be using a pair of white Adidas to keep the outfit streamline so whatever you add to the outfit doesn’t clash with your shoes.

Having a flannel over a sweatshirt has become more of a trend over the past few months. Any colored flannel will work, as long as it matches in some way, shape, or form with the rest of your outfit.

A jean jacket is a practical and effective layering item too. You can wear the jean jacket over the sweatshirt and flannel, or just over the sweatshirt. Since a jean jacket over a basic sweatshirt is well… basic, adding a pop of color with your shoes can add a lot to the outfit. If you want to wear jeans and don’t have a jean jacket, you can leave it as just a flannel and sweatshirt, or you can add something like a vest or windbreaker.

Speaking of vests, they are also a simple way to add dimension to an outfit (and make it warmer) and there are plenty of vests that you can find that won’t break the bank or even come in different colors.

All in all, layering in the winter is both practical and fashionable, and an easy, affordable way to elevate your outfit in the winter.
Foss takes over grade-day Tuesdays and studyhall

By Kylie Newton

As the new study hall supervisor, Kirsten Foss joins the Pioneer community feeling accepted into her new position.

“My first impression of Sevastopol was that everyone is friendly and welcoming,” Foss said.

Originally, Kirsten went to Sturgeon Bay high school and later moved to Rhinelander, where she then graduated high school. Along with this, she also frequently spent her time on Washington Island.

“I spent every summer on Washington Island and became a ‘year-round resident’ at the age of 18,” Foss said.

She continued to move onto college in Rhinelander, but later moved back to the Island to start a family. From there, she has continued to further her education.

“I started college in Rhinelander and achieved a certification for early childhood but moved to the Island to start a family. I decided to return to college through Western Governors University and am currently finishing my K-9 elementary education degree,” Foss said.

Foss decided to come to Sevastopol for two major reasons involving both the staff and the school itself.

“I wanted to join the Sevastopol team because it’s widely known for striving [and achieving] excellence, and it’s known for its dedicated staff, a team that I feel proud to be accepted into,” Foss said.

In her free time when she is not finishing college or working, she loves to read, knit, bike, kayak, hike, and camp. She has an avid appreciation for the outdoors.

“I love to be outdoors, so I guess I would love to be an outdoor adventure guide,” Foss said on what alternate career she would enjoy.

In addition to her current position, Foss has also been a preschool teacher, worked in the human services field, and in the banking industry.

As of right now, Foss is excited to be acclimated to her new life working with the students and staff as a Pioneer.

Screen time health effects (continuation)

“By wearing the blue tech lenses, especially at devices, it helps you fall asleep and keep your normal circadian rhythm,” said Filar.

Eye strain is another major issue with increased screen time usage. Sixty percent of students from the survey report experiencing eye strain as a result of prolonged exposure to a screen.

Along with wearing blue light glasses, you can also efficiently minimize eye strain by taking breaks.

“At a computer screen you should take a 15 second break every 15 minutes and look 15 feet away to reduce focusing spasms,” explains Filar.

Perhaps the most effective way to reduce the effects of blue light is to reduce screen time in itself, when outside of school hours. Pediatrician Amy Fogarty from Door County Medical Center believes strongly that designated “screen-free” time is important for your physical and mental health.

“There should be designated screen free time — this can be different in different families, but some examples are meal times, visits with grandparents, religious services, after a certain time at night, etc,” Fogarty explains.

Following this rule, many parents may choose to restrict screen time for their children in the time that they are not in the classroom.

“Screen use should be supervised by parents so just like parents are checking into grades at school, they should be checking screen usage — for time and content,” Fogarty said.

A few students said that their parents restrict them to using their phone between certain hours, refraining them from using screens at specific times of the day, like at night.

However, from the survey conducted of Sevastopol high school students, it was found that 80.3% of students do not have restrictions on their screen time. While already using the screen for an immense amount of time during classes, restricting screen usage outside of school can be effective in minimizing harmful symptoms.

What you can do to mitigate the effects of too much screen time:

- Wear blue light glasses
- Take a 15 second break every 15 minutes to rest your eyes
- Stay off screens before going to bed
- Reduce overall screen time by getting outside, talking to family at home, or reading a book

Screen use should be supervised by parents so just like parents are checking into grades at school, they should be checking screen usage — for time and content,” Fogarty said.
Movie Review: Disney’s “Soul”

By Maggie Ripp

On Christmas Day this past December, Disney Plus dropped Pixar Animation Studios’ “Soul” to finish off 2020 with a bit of heartwarming laughter and hope for the new year. With Jamie Foxx voicing the protagonist Joe, Tina Fey voicing the soul 22, Angela Bassett voicing successful saxophone player Dorothea Williams, and Phylicia Rashad voicing Joe’s mom, Libba, to name a few, I knew I was in for a wild ride.

The story follows Brooklyn native Joe Gardener, an aspiring jazz musician turned middle school band teacher, who tediously moves through life waiting for his big break in the music world. Once arriving at the brink of hopelessness, Joe meets Dorothea Williams who offers him a spot in her band. The prospect of making it big revives Joe’s passion for jazz and sparks a new feeling of joy in his drab life. However, clouded by euphoria, Joe falls down a manhole, dies, and wakes up on a conveyor belt moving to the “Great Beyond.” Deciding he is not ready to die before he ever truly lives, Joe tumbles off the belt where he lands in the “Great Before” and meets 22, a new soul who refuses to go to earth. Joe and 22 strike a deal to get Joe back to his body so he can finally live out his life’s dream of playing professional jazz, and prove to his mom he can make it as a musician. Joe’s venture through the land of souls and back to earth to reunite his soul and body begs the questions we all try to answer or ignore: What is life? and Why are we here?

The movie filled me with feelings spanning across the entire spectrum of human emotion: bliss, despair, hope, fear, and everything in between. Similar to “Inside Out,” “Soul” takes on a philosophical, transcendental approach to family cartoons, which Disney Pixar seems to nail every time. From the comedic tropes with fat cats named Mr. Mittens to the heart-wrenching moments of all too familiar fights with parents, “Soul,” though entirely fictional, hits close to home. I began to question the times when I felt like my soul was lost in the land of lost souls, or times when I’ve been in the zone, the space between the physical and spiritual realms, but most of all I found myself pondering how I can exist more deeply. 22, a soul who has never experienced life on earth, seems to know what our existence as humans truly means, what human connection should feel like.

In addition to the ample wisdom “Soul” features in its short hour and 40 minutes, the soundtrack created by Atticus Ross, Jon Batiste, and Trent Reznor enhances the merging border between the spiritual and earthly realms. The joy music, particularly jazz, brings to humans is often considered more of an ethereal creation than terrestrial due to its ability to speak to the mind, the heart and the soul. “Soul” director Pete Docter and his team at Pixar specifically chose to make Joe’s profession in music rather than science because a scientist’s life seemed too artificially motivated compared to a musician’s life of finding the natural beauty in sound.

In times like the one we are experiencing right now, it becomes increasingly important to observe life from an alternative perspective. I urge everyone to ignore any prejudices they have against Disney and animated films, and watch “Soul.” The film’s insightful perspective on human nature, connection, and existence is something everyone should experience at least once without having to fall down a manhole or embody a cat to do so.

Question of the Month

What movie would you choose if you could only watch one for the rest of your life?

“Footloose” because I LOVE music from the 80’s and this movie is a classic!”
-Jordyn Welch
2024

“Scary Movie 2” because it's really funny.”
-Cesar Sandoval
2023

“The Notebook” because it’s really cute and very well done.”
-Gaby Moreno
2022

“The Bounty Hunter” because it is an action packed movie that you can never get sick of.”
-Jenna Engeldinger
2021

“I Can Only Imagine” because I can relate to it, and it is the kind of movie that changes your life.”
-Mr. Schleis
Math Teacher

Compiled by Logan Beyer and Lillian Turner