

Revenge is **not** justice

By Penda Seck // Staff Writer

Injustice doesn't validate resorting to evil, but the passion for getting even disillusions people into thinking that seeking revenge is the right thing to do.

Our intuitive logic about revenge is often twisted, conflicted, and dangerous.

"You can't gain anything, but you can lose your life and dignity," says Edwin Rivera, a 17-year-old student at Boston Community Leadership Academy.

Inevitably, after many homicides, such as this summer's single and multiple killings, there are whispers in the corridors of the city promoting street justice – vengeance. Meanwhile, many others make a point of publicly calling for peace and reconciliation.

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AFH art by Gabriela Cartagena

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TEENS IN PRINT

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In seeking to overturn transgressions, though, many become destructive and violent in their own anger.

"We can lose our self-respect, because it's our irresponsible act," says Selena Mejia, 17, from BCLA.

Revenge is misguided. Simple, shameful acts can make people feel proud, blinding them to the true light of searching for mercy.

"You can have a civilized conversation," says Mejia, "but violence will make it worse and nothing can be solved with revenge."

Absolution is a way to forgive people, a way of washing away their sins. But absolution is one thing many people out for revenge do not understand.

"I don't think that is the only way justice can be done, but it can help a lot," says Angelica Ortiz, 17, from BCLA.

A single act of revenge often has a way of multiplying, harming innocents and making things worse.

"Revenge is selfishness," says Rivera, "because revenge does not just affect you, but the people you love might be hurt because of you." ■

Seeking forgiveness

By Penda Seck // Staff Writer

"Forgive me" is a phrase that many teens find hard to say. However, apologies can heal pain and reduce hatred.

"To cap it off, I try to make wrong right by apologizing for my behaviors so it will not happen again," says Imrana Suleiman, a senior at Boston Community Leadership Academy.

Apologies restore broken bonds and soften the desire to exact vengeance.

"Once you admit you've done something wrong," says Suleiman, "the other person gets to tell you exactly how much [he or] she has been hurt."

Teens and even parents can be reluctant with their apologies. However, without taking responsibilities for their bad behaviors, they cannot repair the damage.

Still, apologizing is an admission that they are wrong and they don't like having to do that. Worse is when they are expected to seek forgiveness for acts they didn't commit.

"To apologize for something that I know I didn't do wrong is stupid and makes me mad because they don't respect my feelings and notice that I was the one who got hurt and abused," says Fanta Diakite, 12, from Dorchester.

Because of that, apologizing can be the spark that starts a fire inside of teens. Self confusion follows, because not only do they know they didn't do anything wrong, but they are acknowledging that the person who expected the apology is right.

"It is nothing sometimes for me to apologize to people if I know I am wrong because it

won't kill me," says Suleiman. "But to admit something that I didn't do makes my soul cry without tears."

And yet, that is a situation many teens have to face if they want to keep their lives from exploding into chaos.

"For the sake of peace, I will do anything," says Audrey Browning Banks, 15, from Mattapan, "even if it means apologizing when I'm right." ■



AFH photo by Christina Vivada



AFH photo by Chris Glover

Across-the-river blues

CAMBRIDGE SHOOTING GIVES BOSTON TEENS PAUSE

By Amina Davis // Staff Writer

For Boston teens, it used to be seen as the safe haven across the river. But a recent homicide in Cambridge has shifted some teenagers' sense of security about being there.

Sixteen-year-old Charlene Holmes died in a double drive-by shooting as she walked home in Cambridge one night in June.

"I feel a little different and scared to be in a wrong place at the wrong time," said Tia Knowles, 15, from the Snowden International School.

Many Boston teens travel to the CambridgeSide Galleria mall.

Daniela Maza, 16, from Boston Arts Acad-

emy, said she'll have to be more careful now when she's in Cambridge. She's been working in Harvard Square.

"Wow," said Maza, "This does change my perspective to watch my back."

Thirteen-year-old Willie Veal, of Mattapan, said he needs to be more aware. He said he goes to Cambridge to watch basketball games.

"Now I know more about the crimes," he said.

According to a police analysis issued in June, serious crime in Cambridge has risen 10 percent so far in 2012 compared to the first six months of last year. ■

Death penalty: pro and con

MASS MURDERS INFLUENCE TEENS

By Dennis Membah // Staff Writer

Fifteen-year-old Bill Tuloe, from Madison Park High School, believes that the death penalty doesn't serve justice.

"Perhaps the person made a mistake and it wasn't their fault," says Tuloe, citing circumstances such as self-defense.

Tuloe also doesn't think avenging a lost family member would stop the grief the survivors feel.

According to the Death Penalty Information Center, 33-out-of-50 states support the death penalty. Massachusetts is one of 17 states that does not.

Just as different states have various takes on the death penalty, so do teens.

Bensley Dorneval, a 16-year-old student at Brighton High School, was against the death penalty. However, Dorneval's opinion has moved since this summer's mass murders in Colorado and Wisconsin.

"A person who kills a lot of people deserves the death penalty," says Dorneval. "I'm against it if it's just one person, but more than that is unacceptable."

Tuloe still opposes the death penalty. He would rather people serve sentences of life in prison.

However, Rachel Dunning, a 16-year-old student at Brighton High School, thinks the death penalty is justified.

"It's not right to take someone's life," Dunning says, "and still be able to walk around." ■



AFH photo by Ping Zeng

Fare hikes don't fit teens to a **T**

By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer

Miguel Martinez, 16, from Madison Park High School, wants to continue his education, but it is not easy coming up with the cash.

"I could save the money that I am using for the MBTA for college," says Martinez.

He thinks the recent MBTA fare increase is hitting high school students hard from many angles.

Dennis McLune, 17, from the Mary Lyon Pilot High School, says it's tougher to take the train now because you have to take more money out of your paycheck.

"During the school year I had to pay \$20, but now I have to pay \$25," says McLune.

Starting from July 1, people have had to pay more to take the train or bus. For example, if you want to get on the train with a CharlieCard you have to pay \$2 now, whereas before it was \$1.70.

Channelle Elad, 16, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, thinks the extra fare money could be better spent.

"I still go out with friends," says Elad, "but....with that money I could buy a bag of chips and an Arizona."

Gloria Nwaoha, 17, from Urban Science Academy, says the fare hike has put a strain on her social life.

She says: "I don't hang out as much as I used to." ■

Washington Street: MAD LONG

By Shanique Lewis // Staff Editor

Many teens believe that Blue Hill Avenue is the longest street in Boston. But, little do they know, it's not. Washington Street is the one.

Washington Street runs from Downtown to the Dedham line, 8.9 miles, according to the city.

Ney-Ney Jones, 19, of Dorchester, constantly travels on Washington Street.

"I've been living in Boston my entire life and I was not aware that Washington Street is the longest in Boston," says Jones.

Jada Fenton, 14, of Dorchester, mistakenly believed that Harvard Street is far longer.

"There is no possible way for Washington Street to be the longest street in Boston because it's just not possible," says Fenton. "Yet again, I'm not sure because I'm a car baby and I don't pay attention to streets."

As early as 1894, Washington Street was hailed as Boston's most stretched-out street, as it was the only road leading

out of the city.

When teens are told the facts about Washington Street, it's like they go into shock. ■

AFH photo by Chris Glover

AFH art by Patricia Romelus

A pregnant pause

SCHOOL REACTIONS

WEIGH HEAVILY ON EXPECTANT TEENS

By Givona J. Dietz // Staff Writer

Eighteen-year-old Desiree Clark did not have it easy as an expectant mom in high school.

“At first people in school thought I was getting fat so they were afraid to ask me if I was pregnant,” says Clark, who’s gone to Excel High School.

Some of her friends were happy for her; others straight out told her it would ruin her life.

“The teachers act supportive but I know they are worried about pregnant teens being able to do their work,” says Clark.

According to a 2006 study of dropouts called “The Silent Epidemic,” one third of the young women surveyed said having a child was a major reason for leaving high school.

A 17-year-old Boston public high school student says she is hanging in there despite the cold reaction of others to her pregnancy.

“There were a lot of rumors, people were always staring at me,” says the teen, whose name and school are being withheld because she is a minor.

Angelique Rodriguez, 18, has attended a school in Chelsea that serves at-risk teens.

She says people in her school were excited for her; a lot of other girls were in the same situation. Rodriguez acknowledges that if she had gone to a mainstream school, she would have received more criticism for being a pregnant teenager.

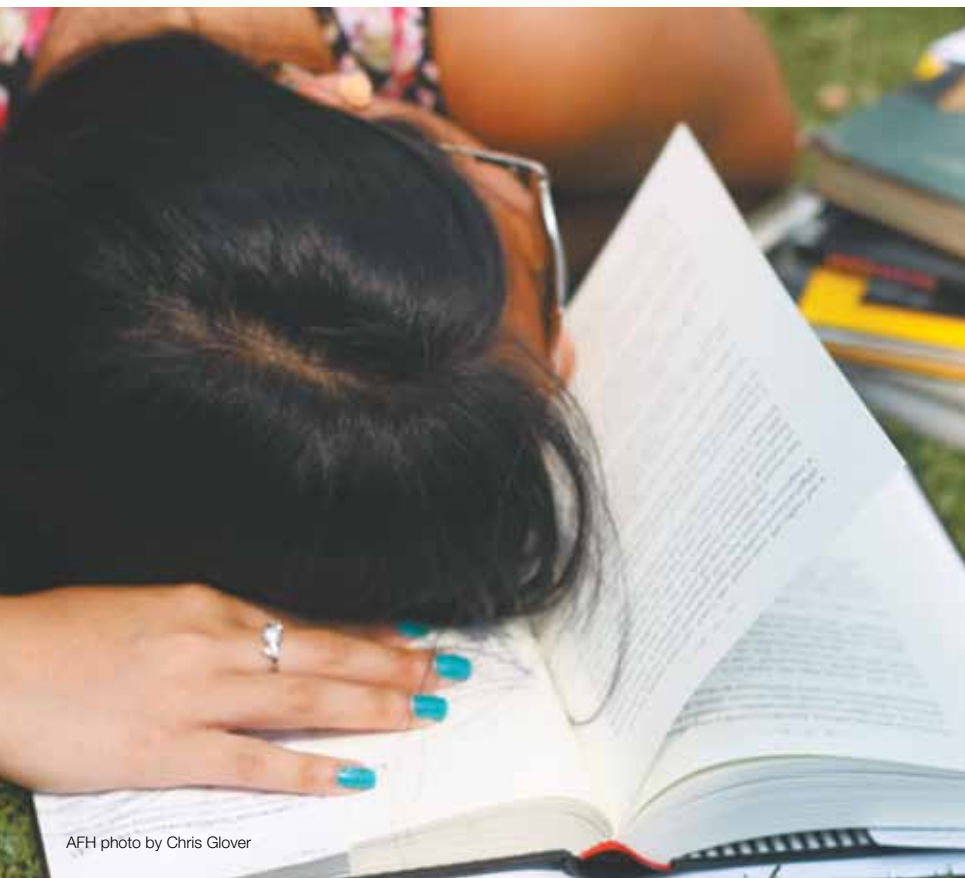
Feedback from her Facebook gave her some indication of the negative reactions.

“Some people would post...messages about how it’s annoying to see pregnant teens,” she says.

But now that Rodriguez has had her baby, she puts up pictures of her newborn. She says she gets a far different response, with many saying nice things about the child, like: “Awww...so cute.” ■



AFH photo by Dominique Cave



AFH photo by Chris Glover

Book clubbed

HIT OVER THE HEAD

WITH SUMMER READING LISTS

By Trizia Mallari // Staff Writer

For many teens, reading books over school break wasn’t the most popular pursuit. Yet that’s what a lot of them were doing to fulfill their summer reading requirements.

Katerina Hitollari, 14, from the Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers, said she’d already finished some reading and still had more, including “Nightjohn” by Gary Paulsen.

Hitollari believes that summer reading has a real purpose.

“We can be prepared for school because we’ll discuss these books throughout the year,” she said.

Alexis Gamez, 16, attends private school. He said he was assigned to read two books this summer, “The Crucible,” by Arthur Miller and “Snow Falling on Cedars,” by David Guterson.

Both, he said, were simply too boring.

“The books they give me wouldn’t be my choice,” said Gamez, who lives in Allston, “but if I were to choose, then I wouldn’t mind reading.”

Isaac Rivera, 16, who goes to Boston Community Leadership Academy, said he got to pick his own reading material as well as select literature from a list.

Although Rivera had more freedom than many other teens, he still didn’t like the idea that schools had students reading during their vacations.

He said: “It takes away from my relaxing time.” ■

Teens on tour

IT'S COLLEGE-VISITING TIME

By Kerry Lydon // Staff Writer

As summer becomes fall, 12th graders across the city are beginning a frantic process that will consume much of their senior years.

"I visited eight colleges and applied to 10," says Kara Joyce, 18, a Hyde Park resident. She went through the drawn-out process of visits and applications this past year.

"I didn't want a school that was going to be cold-hearted," says Joyce, a Boston Latin School graduate who was on her way to Champlain College.

Emma Cook, 17, a Brighton resident, believes that a college's personality is the most important item.

"I want a place where it feels friendly and open, where the people are very accepting," Cook says.

Michele Migliozi, 17, from Boston Latin School, realizes the importance of visits in his college search.

"I want to see people walking down campus with smiles on their faces and don't look drunk," he says.

Even with all the resources available to them, students are stressed as college deadlines approach.

Cook says she feels the pressure now that it's coming up on her senior year.

Joyce remembers this feeling vividly.

"My guidance counselor was saying that I had to have my applications done by the end of December before Christmas break," says Joyce. "I was stressed because I wanted to make sure I liked where I was applying so that if I didn't get my first choice, I would be able to go somewhere I wanted to be."

Joyce advises this year's seniors: "Get started on the application as early as you can. If you leave it to the last month, you'll be freaking out." ■



AFH photo by Timmy Nguyen

Psssst.

How did you do on that test?

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF SCHOOL COMPETITION

By Samuel Ding // Staff Writer

As the teacher passes out the results of the last test, students are whispering and finding out how they did compared to their friends. Events like this happen almost every day in Boston schools.

Many students like to compete in school, but is that good or bad?

Teens say competition can help or hurt. It can help drive them toward their goals, but also may tear friendships apart. Some successful teens will use their achievements to taunt others, creating a fissure between them.

Richard Huang, 14, from Boston Latin School, disagrees with the idea of competition in school.

"How are students supposed to learn anything when all they care about is beating their friends?" he asks.

Andy Hui, 15, from BLS, doesn't mind competing.

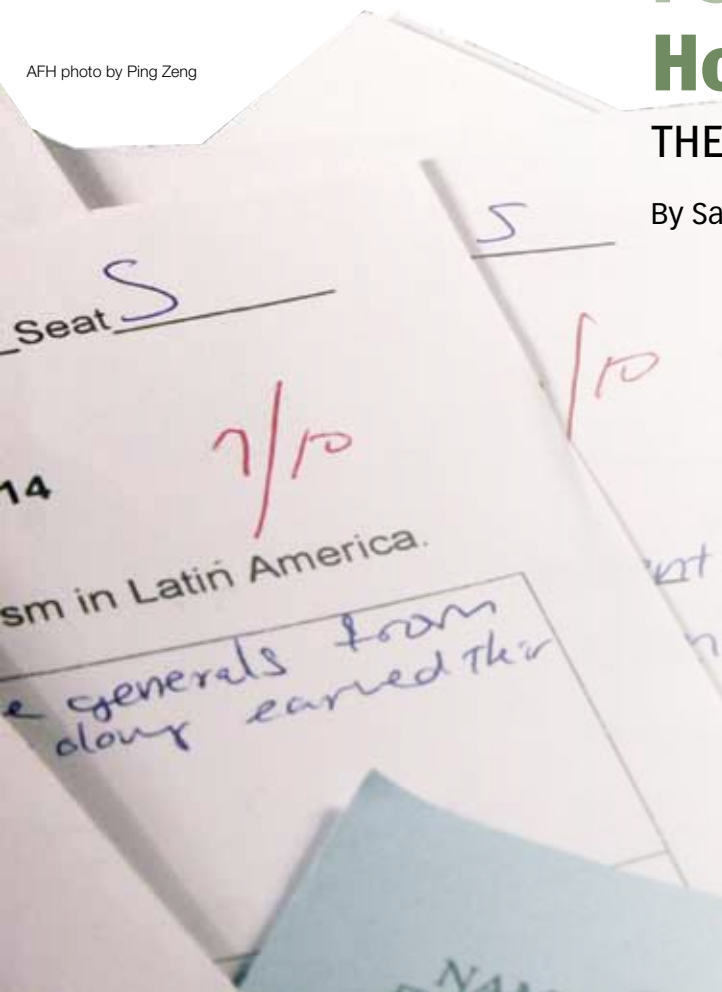
"As long as it doesn't hurt me or any of my friends," says Hui.

But he says that when he fails to do better than another student, he feels the need to achieve.

Leland Wu, 14, from BLS, says he likes to compete, but doesn't take it too far.

"Competition is good if everyone maintains a healthy rivalry with each other," says Wu. "Even though it may hurt your feelings, it's helping you to get better in this competitive world." ■

AFH photo by Ping Zeng



Facebook fame

By Keyana Therildort // Staff Writer



AFH photo by Lena Yee

You don't need to be a singer or rapper to be famous anymore. All you need is Facebook. You can go from being a plain Jane or Joe to a somebody overnight.

Kevon Smith, 16, who attends Urban Science Academy, says he created his Facebook account in the eighth grade, starting with only 20 friends. After adding students from his school, he noticed a major increase and soon he had more than 1,000 friends online.

"I'm not Facebook famous, but I in fact have [female friends] on Facebook," Smith says.

Akeem Barrows, 17, who attends the Community Academy of Science and Health, says he knows the formula.

"Getting up to 160 likes on a single photo boosts your Facebook ego," he says. "More people take an interest into looking at your profile."

But there's a downside to the fame. Smith says he's lost friends due to jealousy, online drama, and derogatory comments on his page.

"Having to always take precautions is annoying," Smith says. "You have to watch what you say due to all the friends you have because statuses can cause pandemonium."

Barrows says he unfriends people who blow up his news feed with emotional, dumb, and pointless posts.

Being misjudged is also a big part of the fame game,

but Smith wants his fellow Facebook friends to know: "I'm cute, not stuck up. Take the time to have a conversation with me before you judge me based on a status."

Asisa Simmons, 16, from Dorchester, thinks your appearance doesn't matter when it comes to Facebook; as long as you have a great personality, fame is bound to find you.

There are times when Smith doesn't want to be found.

"I go MIA at least once a month," he says, "and every time I come back, a new generation of people want to be my friend." ■

Doggin' her on the catwalk

HOW HE REALLY FEELS ABOUT WHAT SHE WEARS

By Alexandra Zuluaga // Staff Writer

All a woman really needs to get a man's attention is a flashy smile, a pop of color, and a bubbling personality...right? Think again. The clothes you wear may scream louder than what you say.

After years of primping and grooming, women may come to ask themselves, "Does it even matter? Do they even notice?" The answer: yes. A man's perception of a woman can change drastically with just a glance. With watchdog attentiveness, they see more than women think, reading into wardrobes, hairstyles, and even makeup.

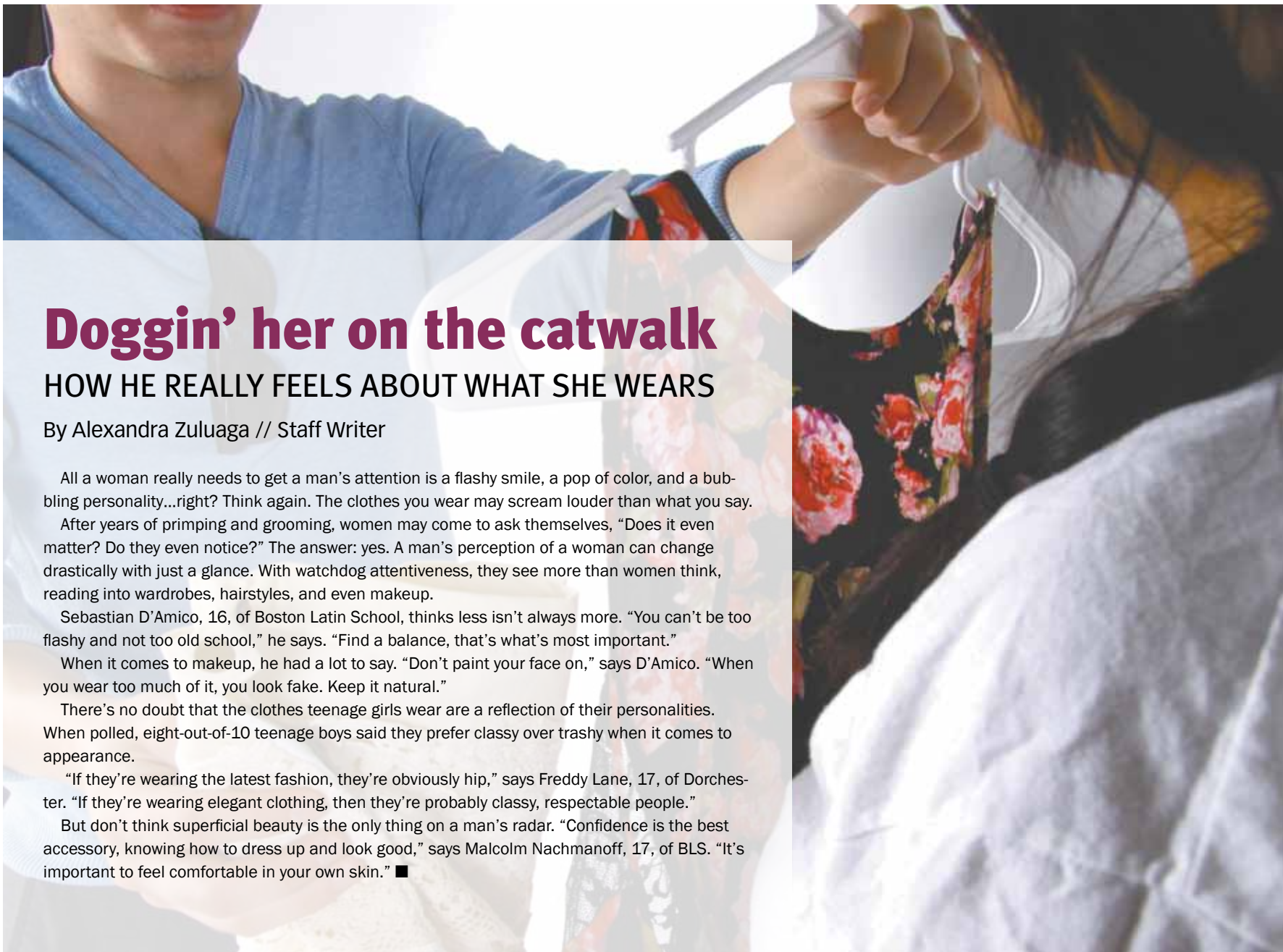
Sebastian D'Amico, 16, of Boston Latin School, thinks less isn't always more. "You can't be too flashy and not too old school," he says. "Find a balance, that's what's most important."

When it comes to makeup, he had a lot to say. "Don't paint your face on," says D'Amico. "When you wear too much of it, you look fake. Keep it natural."

There's no doubt that the clothes teenage girls wear are a reflection of their personalities. When polled, eight-out-of-10 teenage boys said they prefer classy over trashy when it comes to appearance.

"If they're wearing the latest fashion, they're obviously hip," says Freddy Lane, 17, of Dorchester. "If they're wearing elegant clothing, then they're probably classy, respectable people."

But don't think superficial beauty is the only thing on a man's radar. "Confidence is the best accessory, knowing how to dress up and look good," says Malcolm Nachmanoff, 17, of BLS. "It's important to feel comfortable in your own skin." ■



AFH photo by Seijah Drake

Flying solo? Just say YOLO

By Marmarin Nasirahmad // Staff Editor



AFH photo by Cynthia Ginnett

Sixteen-year-old Klea Hima, who goes to the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, does not believe in the popular saying, YOLO.

"People use YOLO as an excuse to do stupid things, thinking that tomorrow won't matter," she says.

For many teens, You Only Live Once has become the rallying cry to do risky things. However, others take the YOLO slogan as motivation to make something out of

their lives -- not to party and do drugs.

It was Drake's 2011 song, "The Motto," that helped spread the YOLO philosophy after he sang: "Now she want a photo/You already know though/You only live once: that's the motto...YOLO."

Mike Rivera, 16, thinks the YOLO viewpoint is better represented by older people than younger ones.

"They should be doing whatever they want and enjoy

their last moments of life," says Rivera, who attends Boston Community Leadership Academy. "Teenagers have a lot of living to do."

Zusex Romero, 16, from BCLA, feels that teens should not be so quick to buy into YOLO.

"If you know you're going to wake up tomorrow," says Romero, "you shouldn't use YOLO as an excuse to do something crazy because it might affect your future." ■

Demanding Disney diversity

TEENS PUSH FOR LATINA PRINCESS

By Amarielis Morales // Staff Writer

It began with the fairest of them all, Snow White. For 75 years, the Walt Disney Company has produced these perfect princesses from different nationalities and ethnicities, like German, French, and Dutch. They've added Native American and African-American princesses; a Chinese one; and a Middle-Eastern princess.

Now, teens and others are clamoring for a Latina princess. There's an online petition for a Disney Latina princess, and a Facebook group asking for Latina representation.

"Having so many princess movies with just white princesses, it is also right to have more princesses [of color]," says Chyna Morales, 15, from Dorchester. "It's just like with the United States presidents -- we had 43 white presidents and one [African-American]."

Latinos make up 16.7% of the U.S population, the second largest group behind whites, according to the U.S Census Bureau.

"I think another princess, especially a Latina princess, would show my cousin and other Hispanic children that we are a part of the same world as everyone else," says Yasmine Lopez, 16, from the Snowden International School.

By deadline, Disney had not returned several messages seeking comment.

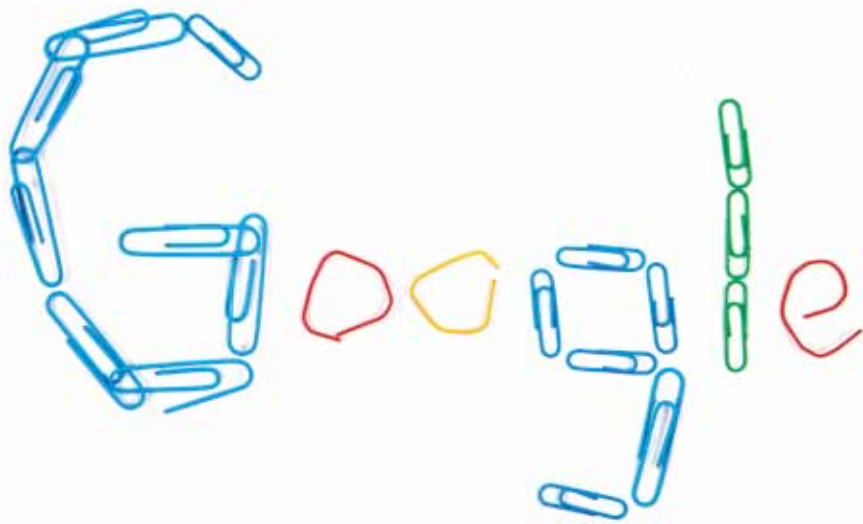
Erica Villareyna, 17, from Urban Science Academy, says that while having a Latina princess would be important, it has to be accompanied by a different story line.

She and others believe it's not only about changing the skin color of a princess, but bringing a message of Hispanic pride to a new generation.

"This world," says Lopez, "is filled with many groups of people with different cultures." ■



AFH art by Uka Agwu



AFH photo by Bill Le

Google this!

WHICH SEARCH ENGINE PLAYS A MAJOR ROLE IN TEENS' LIVES?

By Bill Zhou // Contributing Writer

For many Boston teens, Google is a big part of their daily lives.

Edward Wang, a 15-year-old student at Boston Latin School, uses Google Search, Google Images, Google Maps, and Google Mail. He regularly relies on Google, especially for schoolwork.

"Google has saved me on a lot of school projects," he says.

Thanks to Google's search engine, many students no longer have to go to libraries to find books for research, because they can find much of the information on the Internet.

Kevin Su, 15, from BLS, says that life without Google would be very difficult.

"I wouldn't have a good email or search engine," says Su.

However, Olexander Kuzmenko, 15, from BLS, feels that although Google excels in some areas, it lacks in others.

"Google is known for their software, not their hardware," says Kuzmenko.

Nevertheless, teens believe Google will remain a powerful player in the never-ending tech war. ■

Don't be fooled by ads selling back-to-school

By Xhorxhia Papa // Staff Writer

Cassandra Ortiz, 16, from South Boston, said that those ever-present back-to-school commercials can be helpful in pinpointing sales, but she feels they begin airing on TV way too soon.

"I just started my summer," said Ortiz.

Other students, like Anna Chen, 15, enjoy watching them even as they fly fast and furiously during the middle of heatwaves. She believes in taking advantage of sale prices.

"Sometimes I go and I buy school supplies, which are cheaper," said Chen, who was interviewed at the Boston Public Library.

Edwin Ortiz, 16, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, said he doesn't enjoy these ads airing at all in the summertime.

"It reminds me of going to school," said Ortiz.

Aunique Jones-Smith, 15, from Charlestown High School, said she gets so annoyed watching these commercials that she wants to turn the TV off. ■

AFH photo by Jenny Mui



Fingernail fetish

By Odelyne Lamour // Staff Writer

In this new generation of teenage girls, nail fashion is taking over. They're not just doing basic colors anymore, but more dramatic and expressive designs. These young females take their nails quite seriously.

Paris Iovanna, 17, from the Jeremiah E. Burke High School, says: "My nails impact my personality because I'm talkative. Usually you'd see me with bright colors, diamonds, sparkles, and humble nude colors. It's just like a bang."

Three nail designs that are taking teens by storm are tribal, Crackle Overcoat, and acrylic.

Tribal designs are influenced by African art, which is projected onto the nails. This consists of mixing and matching lines, dots, and zigzags.

With Crackle Overcoat, the look can be like breaks in a sidewalk.

Acrylic nails form fake tops that are

then painted.

Janisel Hernandez, 16, from Boston Community Leadership Academy, says, "I feel like doing my nails completes me and helps everything else. If my outfit looks bummy, then my nails make up for it. Also, by doing my nails, people can tell that I'm a perfectionist."

When people do their nails, it tells a little bit about them.

"It's like having earrings and never leaving the house without them," says Iovanna. "It's a must."

But girls aren't the only ones who do their nails. Some dudes are jumping on this bandwagon, as well.

Francisco Castillo, 16, from BCLA, says, "I paint my nails clear. I feel regular when I do so. It doesn't make me feel any less of a man." ■

Mermaids: truth or tall tale?

By Perla Lara // Staff Writer

Humans with tails for feet, truth or myth? Leanette Capo, 16, from New Mission High School, is a firm believer in mermaids.

"I don't think they're myths, they're real," says Capo, who is surrounded by a sea of skeptics. "Because there's so much speculation and facts that make sense and there's so much ocean that hasn't been seen."

The website marinebio.org says that 50 to 80 percent of all life on Earth is under the ocean surface, with less than 10 percent of the deep sea having been explored.

Throughout history, there have been many so-called sightings of mermaids or mermen.

In the earliest days, there were drawings inside caves of mermaids interacting with humans.

In 1782, a merman was allegedly spotted along the coast of Ireland – with stubby arms, a sharp nose, and a brown tail.

More recently, in 2002, according to blogger KittytheDreamer, what some claimed to be mermaids were seen in Zimbabwe, where men working on a reservoir were driven away by them. But the men appeased them by bringing the mermaids traditional beer as a gift to work again.

In 2009, there was a craze in Israel on a small beach in Kiryat Yam, where locals and tourists said they witnessed a mermaid appear and then vanish into the ocean. They said the mermaid was a woman with a tail who played eye games with humans, never allowing them to get too close as she would dive into the water at sunset and disappear.

Earlier this year, after Animal Planet aired a two-hour special science fiction episode entitled "Mermaids: The Body Found," conversation stirred up again about the possible existence of the creatures.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration then issued a statement, saying: "No evidence of aquatic humanoids has ever been found."

Nevertheless, there are still believers, and some not so much.

Cliff Freeman, 19, of Dorchester is a true skeptic. "I don't understand why we haven't seen one yet," he asks.

Jordan Augustus, 16, of New Mission High School, says he doesn't need first-hand proof to be convinced that mermaids exist.

"Since most people believe in the Bible, which is mythology, like mermaids, then who's to say mermaids aren't real?" he asks. "People believe in religion – so what's stopping them from believing in mermaids?" ■



AFH art by Jennie Tran

Waterworks: tap vs. bottle

By Alice Xiao // Staff Writer



AFH photo by Seijah Drake

Andrea Novelle-Ruddy, of the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, says she refuses to buy bottled water.

"It's wasting money," the 16-year-old says.

The expense, however, doesn't keep Amari Smith, 15, of Hyde Park, away from it.

"I just always thought that bottled water was cleaner," says Smith.

Many years in, the battle over H₂O still rages. Some environmental groups argue that the bottled variety is nothing more than fancy-packaged tap water, while industry representatives say that even when their water comes from municipal sources, and not springs or wells, it is still purified.

Despite the back-and-forth, some teens still prefer

bottled water.

One major reason, they say, is the taste.

Van Nguyen, 16, of West Roxbury, says he avoids tap water.

"It tastes kind of weird," says Nguyen. "Bottled always tastes crisp."

The psychological effect of twisting off the cap to open a new bottle of water may lead people to perceive the flavor to be cleaner and better.

Other teens have solutions to make tap water taste better.

One option is to attach a filter on the faucet.

Novelle-Ruddy has a different strategy.

"As long as I put it in the fridge," says Novelle-Ruddy, "it tastes normal." ■

Battling teen obesity

By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer

Shantal Uwimana, 16, from Boston Community Leadership Academy, believes teen obesity is high because many stores sell junk food.

"I love candies, but I also like to eat healthy food," says Uwimana, who adds that she is five-foot-four and weighs about 120. "Teen obesity is a serious problem because when teens are overweight, they don't like their own body."

According to an article published this summer by Boston University, which is joining with the city to fight the urge of young people to pack on the pounds, 30 to 40 percent of Boston's school-age youth are overweight. A child between the ages of 10 and 13 who is obese has an 80 percent chance of remaining so as an adult, according to the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry.

Some risks of obesity, specialists say, are high blood pressure, diabetes, and trouble breathing.

Fedner Frederic, 15, from Charlestown High School, says he tries his best not to put on too much weight.

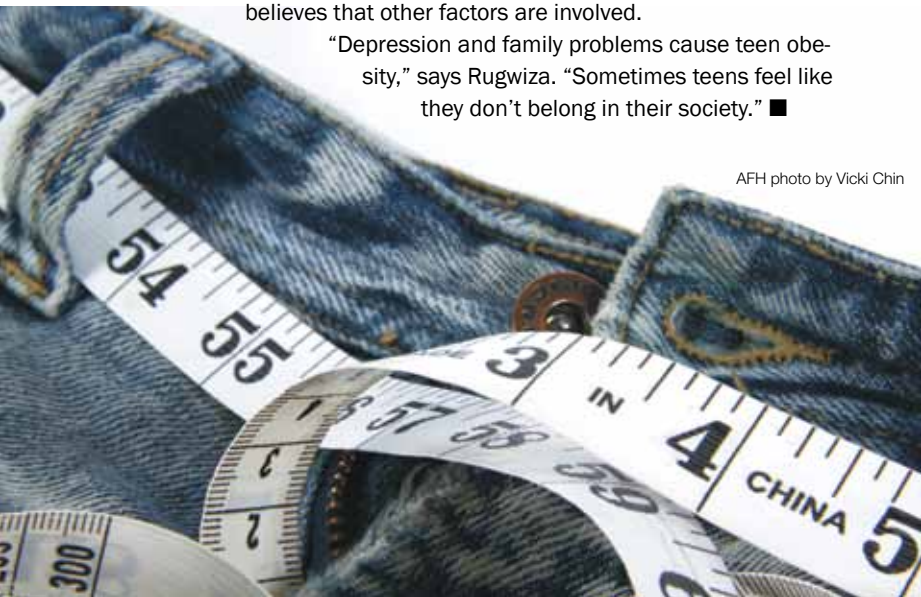
"Being obese is not a good thing because it is too much pressure on your heart," said Frederic.

Playing sports and eating healthy foods are some ways to reduce teen obesity, specialists say.

Karl Frederic, 14, from the Rogers Middle School, agrees. "In order to maintain my health," says Frederic, "I play basketball and I eat fruits."

Sonia Rugwiza, 17, from Boston International High School, believes that other factors are involved.

"Depression and family problems cause teen obesity," says Rugwiza. "Sometimes teens feel like they don't belong in their society." ■



AFH photo by Vicki Chin

The city moves to a healthy beat

By Alice Xiao and Alexandra Zuluaga // Staff Writers



Crispy fries, golden Twinkies, and a big chocolate shake. Who doesn't love a decadent indulgence every once in a while? The problem is when these treats become a regular occurrence. Unhealthy eating habits may not seem like a pressing danger to teens, but the habits they develop in their formative years follow into adulthood, specialists say, often leading to diabetes, heart disease, and other health complications.

Around 30 percent of Boston public high school students seriously struggle with keeping their weight down, according to the Boston Public Health Commission.

A big factor in this mega problem is the modern lifestyle, when many kids are sitting around on their phones or playing video games.

Making matters worse, tempting commercials lure teenagers into buying low-cost, high-fat foods.

"I'm easily persuaded by junk food on the street, it's just easy," says Kenneth Cruz, 17, of Boston Latin School.

Ramikah Colimon, 16, of Dorchester, wishes there were more organized activities in her neighborhood.

"If we had a series of exercise sessions at the park every week," says Colimon, "I would go."

This spring, Mayor Thomas M. Menino decided to take action, says Nick Martin, Director of Communications for the Boston Public Health Commission.

Working with the commission, the mayor in April founded Boston Moves for Health, a program dedicated to getting Bostonians in better shape by having residents collectively move 10 million miles and lose one million pounds. This monumental goal is set for 365 days, but Martin notes that this program is a long-term endeavor.

Boston Moves for Health has offered free, physical activities for Boston residents, including yoga, intense boot-camp workouts, and organized neighborhood walks.

Making it easy and accessible, Boston Moves for Health allows people to track their progress and weight loss online. Teens and adults alike can make their own accounts and log their activities.

"It is one of the central goals of the Boston Public Health Commission," says Martin, "to focus on addressing obesity." ■

For many immigrants, it's not working

By Amadou Barry // Staff Writer



AFH photo by Lena Yee

Mariama Diallo is an immigrant from Guinea living in Roslindale. She is 42 years old and she has four daughters. Diallo is struggling to get a job.

This woman is also my mom.

"My problem is how to get a job because I am responsible for my children and I want the best for them," my mother tells me in our living room in our native language.

My younger sisters, Aissatou, 17, Bilguissa, 12, Saoudatou, 3, as well as my mother and I, emigrated to Boston on April 4, 2011. My father, Boubacar Barry, remained in Guinea because he could not get his papers. That left my mother to take care of us.

She says, "When you apply for a job, they call you for an interview. And when you go to the interview, they reject you because you don't know how to speak English. That's everywhere you go."

In this fact, my mom is not alone. Many other immigrants have the same problem.

According to the Boston Redevelopment Authority, about 28 percent of Boston's total population is foreign born.

In 2011, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that unemployment for immigrants nationwide was 9.1 percent.

The stress of new life in America does not just affect parents. Teens are also having a hard time watching their parents struggle.

My mom means everything to me. Times have changed since we moved to the United States for better educations. I see her tears, despair, and sadness because she is not able to satisfy her own daughters as she used to.

However, thank God we are growing up now so I am mature. I have to be a good example so my sisters can follow my direction. For that, I have to make her happy by studying well, being a good girl, and respecting my family. ■

Turning the page FROM ALBANIA TO AMERICA

By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer

I will never forget the day I had to leave behind my home country, Albania. Three years ago, I said goodbye to my cousins, grandmother, and friends. I was really sad because I didn't want to leave the land where I had lived for 12 years of my life.

Getting used to life in America was really difficult. Everything was different: the food, the culture. Hearing people talking in another language didn't make me feel comfortable. I didn't have any friends. The only thing I wanted to do was go back home.



AFH photo by Lyz Campbell

As the days passed, I started to feel better. In the summer of 2009, I tried my best to learn my new language. Reading books in English and watching TV really helped me improve my skills.

When September came, I was feeling nervous to go to school; even though my English got better, it wasn't perfect. But the students and teachers were really nice and the lessons were much easier than the ones in my country.

Now I am a sophomore at the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, and I am trying to do everything to keep my grades up. I hope to go to a good college. I want to achieve my goal of being a businesswoman.

I know I can do it if I keep working hard in school. Though I still think about Albania, coming to America was the beginning of a new chapter in my life. ■

"We are all connected"

MY SUMMER IN COSTA RICA

By Audrey Ngankam // Staff Writer

My first week in Costa Rica, I volunteered to help local people on a farm in the city of Cartago. We planted only organic food and ate only vegetables. We all ended up being vegetarians.

Whatever we did there, we did with love and caring because our purpose was to help them save their environment. Doing this reminded me so much about being back home in Cameroon, because I thought African people were the only ones who lived off the land.

I spent a month-and-a-half in Costa Rica through AFS Intercultural Programs and Summer Search. The second week, I volunteered in a high school in the city of Liberia. The weather was very hot and dry, and it was frustrating,

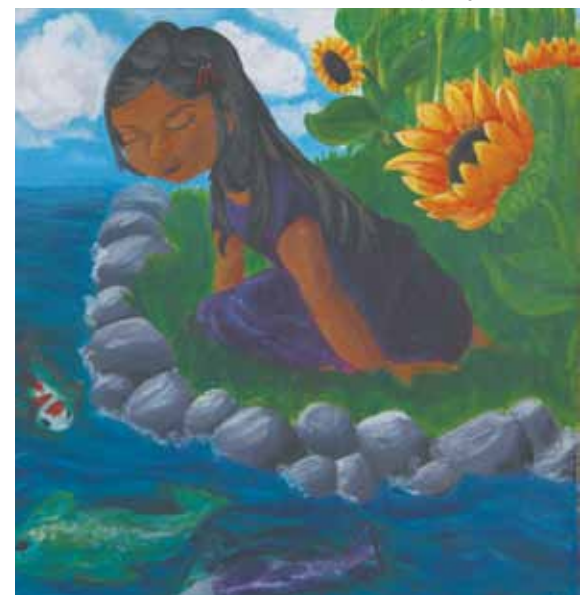
but I remembered that I was there to help the community.

It was just an amazing experience because I also had the chance to live with another family. I experienced a father and a mother in the same house at the same time. It was the most beautiful thing that ever happened to me. It is something that I never had.

I also visited the National Park in Carara. They had poison snakes, birds, and lots of white-face monkeys.

This trip made me realize that people are all connected to each other. It's just our language and cultures that make a difference. When I came back to Boston, I wish I could have taken everyone I met in Costa Rica with me. ■

AFH art by Jeung Soon Takeda



A family divided

IT'S NOT EASY LIVING WITH JUST A MOM OR A DAD

By Jalene Sanchez // Staff Writer

Devontae Blakely, 18, from Brighton High School, is being raised by his mother. His parents separated before he was born, he says, and the split-up still affects him now. “If my dad was here when I was growing up,” he says, “I feel like I would have a better life and I wouldn’t mind having a family.”

According to familyfirstaid.org, more than one in four children in the US is raised by a single parent; 23 percent of kids live with just a mother, and four percent live with a father.

Single parenting can severely affect teens’ school progress.

A 16-year-old student from a Boston public high school says her life hasn’t been the same since her mother passed away in April. She’s had a hard time in school, she says, letting her grades drop and isolating herself from others.

“When I lost my mom, I didn’t know what to do,” says the girl, whose name and school are being withheld for privacy reasons. “I felt like, ‘Why keep trying?’ if my mother wasn’t there to support me anymore, and my father was always working.”

While Claudio Teixeira, 18, from Madison Park High School, is being brought up by his mother, he says, he wishes that his parents were together – but he tries not to let it show.

“I feel bad,” he says, “I just forget about that stuff.”

Teixeira says he finds a way to keep moving forward.

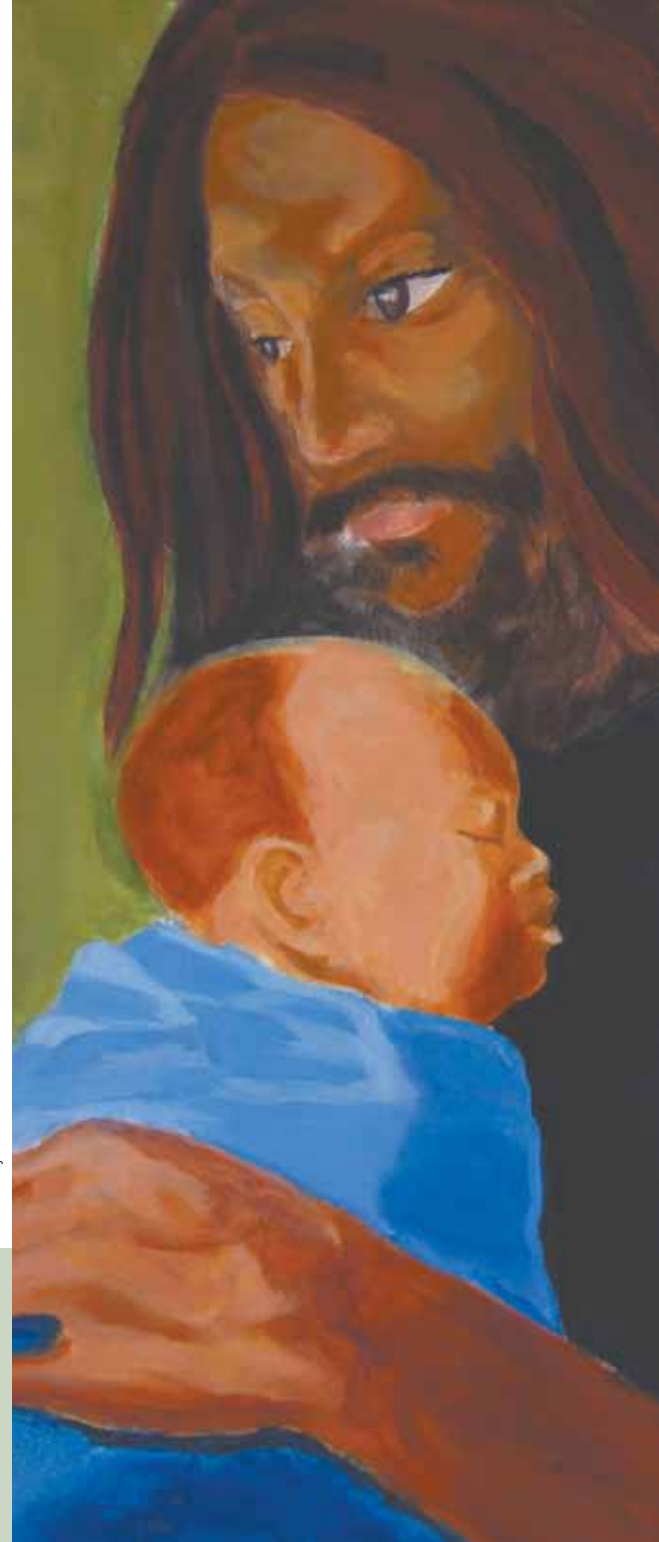
He says: “I just do what I have to do.” ■

Advice for single parents

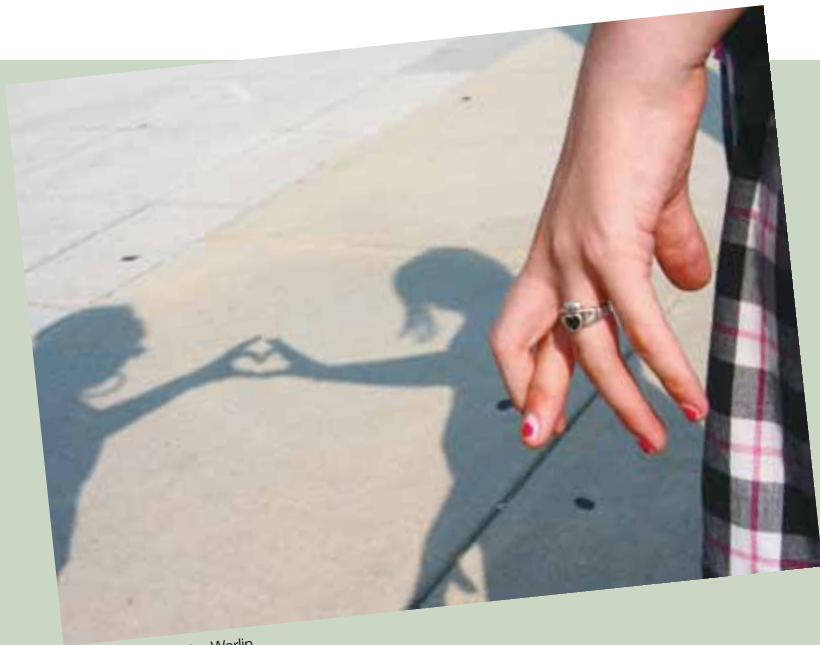
- **Remind your children how much you love them every day.**
- **After a split, don’t badmouth the other spouse around any children.**
- **Make time for your kids.**
- **Listen to what they have to say.**

– Jalene Sanchez

Source: familyfirstaid.org



AFH art by Joel Diaz



AFH photo by Coby Werlin

Frenemies for life

By Teanna White // Staff Writer

Although many teens look for great qualities like loyalty, trustworthiness, respect, and support in their friendships, they don’t always get it. They’re often likely to come across frenemies who have traits like backstabbing, negative attitudes, and hatred towards the good things they do.

“Most times my friendship [with my frenemy] feels like a big competition,” says Shatara Wimes, a 14-year-old from Dorchester. “We recently got into a big disagreement because I had Toms and she didn’t, but once she got hers, everything went back to normal.”

Teens say it really hurts once a friend becomes an enemy, too.

“At the start I was mad,” says Damayah James, 15, of Dorchester. “But then I became

more distressed than anything since I never thought my friend would betray me.”

Frenemies can be hard to distinguish from real friends. They make you believe that they’re your best friend, even though, in reality, they may truly hate you. Teens say it’s important to watch out for certain signs, such as them gossiping when you’re not around.

Wimes said she discovered her friend was a frenemy after seeing this bad behavior.

“She was talking about me and acting funny sometimes,” says Wimes.

James says she completely cut off her frenemy. Wimes had a small struggle with letting her frenemy go. Now she keeps her distance.

Akeirah Woodard, 15, a student at Fenway High School, says she’s lucky: She has yet to have a frenemy. ■

One heart, two loves

By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer

Aunique Jones-Smith, 15, believes you can fall in love with two people at the same time. “You could talk to two people...and catch feelings for both of them,” says Jones-Smith, who goes to Charlestown High School.

She says that if something like that did happen to her, she would try to figure out which person she liked the most and stay with that one.

Being in love is part of life, and it makes teens stronger and more secure. We love our family, our friends. But the kind of love we feel in a romantic relationship is unique. It is part of growing up and developing. If you are in love with two people, though, you may be confused about your feelings.

Malik Morgan, 16, from New Mission High School, says that double affection makes you find out who you love more.

“I would see which one is better,” says Morgan.

Ross Garrity, 15, from Boston Latin School, has a different love test.

“If I would fall in love with two people at the same time,” says Garrity, “I would choose the second one, because falling in love with the second person meant that I didn’t love the first one enough.” ■



AFH photo by Cynthia Ginnett

Love is...

By La`Neece Byrd // Staff Writer

Sixteen-year-old Caroline Depina of Dorchester believes that if you are always there for a person then you love him or her.

“To me, love means finding that special person who cares for you endlessly and brings out the joy in you,” says Depina.

Different teens seem to have their own definitions of love.

Chavez McKenzie, 16, from Dorchester, thinks that love at first sight is true but that it depends only on a person’s appearance.

“There is more than one kind of love, friendship love and relationship love,” McKenzie adds.

Describing the word love depends on a person’s feelings. The singer Chris Brown tried to figure out what love is. In “Young Love,” he sings, “Tell me what’s the definition of love/It seems like everybody thinks they done figured it out but every time they fall up in it/They fall out, in and out it again.”

Teens think they know what love is, but sometimes they mistake it for lust.

Shani White, 18, from Mission Hill, has been in love with someone in her life.

“Love means that you have strong feelings for someone,” says White, “and you would be willing to do anything for them.” ■



AFH art by Michael Davis

Cheating is believing

By Robert Hines // Staff Writer

Alchanice Sharpe, 17 who attends Urban Science Academy, knows the meaning of cheating.

“If you’re going out with somebody and they’re still messing around with another person,” she says.

Though cheating is a main issue in young relationships, many teens have different descriptions.

Tatyana Gavin, 16, from the John D. O’Bryant School of Math & Science, sees it this way: “Couples start to have trust issues, no honesty, acting sneaky.”

Shani White, 18, from Mission Hill, has her own list of possibilities that start with kissing. Some believe flirting is cheating, and some don’t.

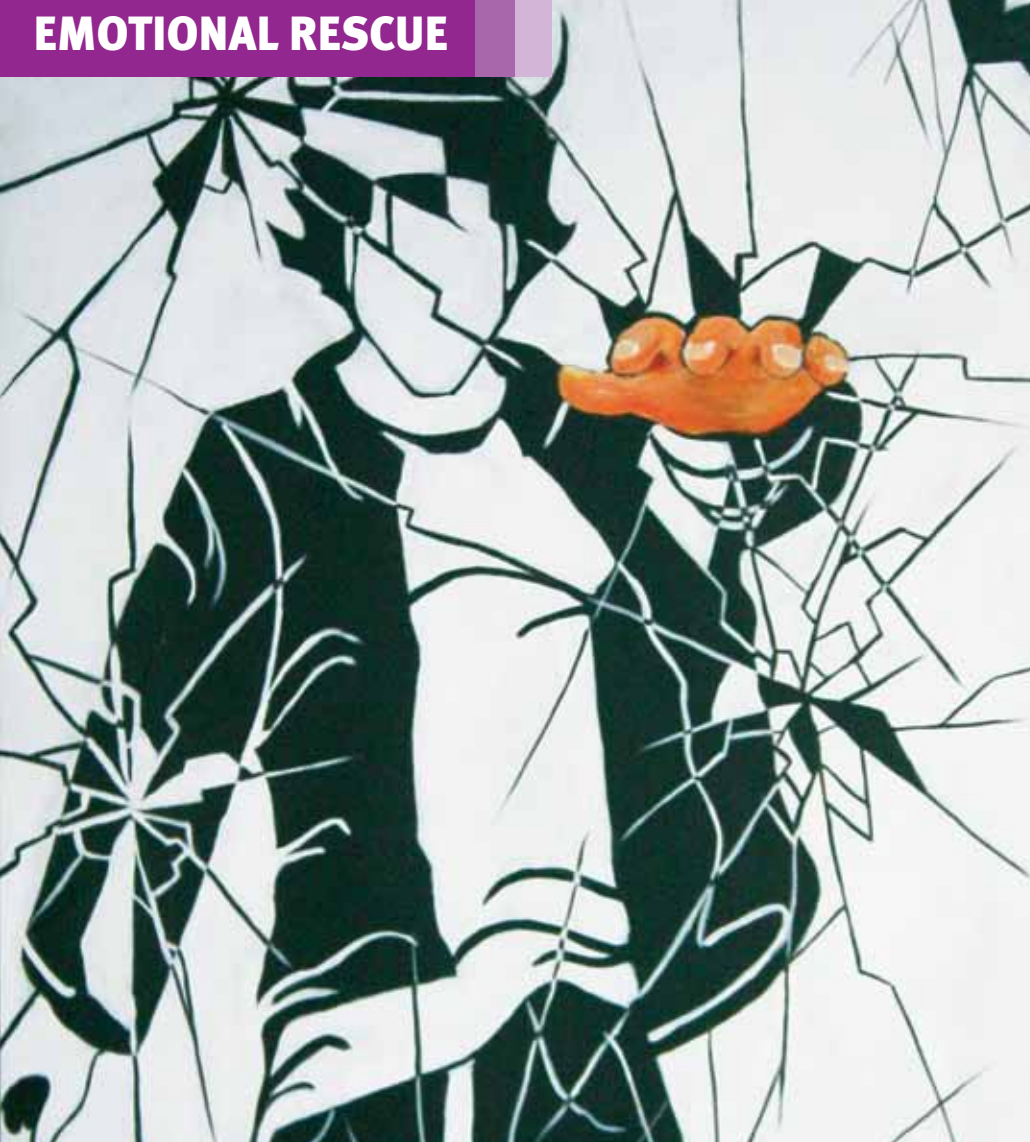
“Flirting is not cheating,” says White, “because everyone does it.”

Kordell Harris, 16, who attends New Mission High School, feels that men cheat more than women.

“But females talk to more of the opposite sex while in a relationship,” says Harris, “which sometimes makes the male think that they’re cheating.” ■



AFH photo by Christina Vivada



AFH art by Jose Guadarrama

Anger management

By Zeyu Zheng // Contributing Writer

As a teenager scrolls down the Web page, he finds a site called “Rage Comics.” By arranging many different facial expressions, he is able to use the comic to express his anger. People online can also comment and share ideas on his creation, making him feel less alone.

The Internet has increasingly become a means for teens to communicate their emotions and connect with others. It is not the only way, however.

Vivian Yu, 15, from the John D. O’Bryant School of Math & Science, prefers to think things through to calm down.

“I would talk to the person who makes me angry,” she says. “If it doesn’t work out, I will try to stay out of it somehow.”

Fifteen-year-old Brenda Nguyen, from the O’Bryant, says she hardly ever loses her cool.

“I try not to think about unhappy things, and if I do get angry,” says Nguyen, “I will eat ice cream.”

Like Yu, Robert Murray, 15, from the O’Bryant, thinks practicing patience is a useful way to solve problems.

“I often try to calm myself first,” he says. “If you find something irritates you, simply tolerate or ignore it.”

Murray often listens to music to remain at peace. He considers melody to be the remedy of fury. ■

Drawing strength

By Sandy Nguyen // Staff Writer

When I draw, I feel happy. Drawing helps me show how I really feel about life. The things I draw are based on what’s going on around me. This world is all over the place, and a lot of youth don’t have hobbies to occupy themselves.

By drawing, I’m able to stay off the street and focus on what I love to do. When I draw, I want people to understand the way I feel. I always have a message, because I want to tell a story about what’s happening and how it affects my life. Also, I want to show people I can do a lot with just a paper and pencil.

Everybody has art inside; they just need to look deep down for what they’re good at. It can be anything: dancing, singing, writing. My work comes to life based on my emotions. Whether I’m mad, sad, or happy, I can make pictures without thinking. I feel like I was created to draw because when I draw, it becomes magical. My work is special because I put my heart and soul into it. When I’m sad, I use art to express myself rather than just crying all the time.

I once drew a picture of a little girl sobbing and her parents going in opposite directions. That little girl represented me. One day about seven years ago, I saw my dad packing his things and he left without saying goodbye.



TiP art by Sandy Nguyen

AFH photo by Timmy Nguyen

Ever since that day, I started to draw more because that was the only way I could convey things about myself without saying much.

When I’m happy, I like to draw in graffiti style. Graffiti is my way of displaying my joy and happiness, because I like to add lots of large, lively characters and designs to show my good mood. ■

Having a blast

HUMONGOUS HEADPHONES ARE BACK

By Darien Vazquez // Staff Writer

Big, bulky, and louder than ever: Big headphones are back! As the years have gone by, headphones have made a transformation. In the '80s, big headphones were in. Then, headphones got smaller and were made to fit in your ear. Now, headphones have gone back to large and loud all over again, with music performers once more setting the trend.

Beats by Dr. Dre have become a big thing. They come in different colors, and the bass on them will have your eardrums doing a little dance. Some of their main customers have been teenagers. Yes, they have caught our eyes – and ears.

Kordell Harris, 16, from New Mission High School, says the company targets young people.

“Teenagers are sucked in by the ads,” he says.

Jahniece Reynolds, 15, says headphones are a must on her commute.

“I’m always taking public transportation to school and work and I love to listen to music without disturbing others,” says Reynolds, who attends Boston Community Leadership Academy. “I don’t want to be like those other people who just play the music while people on the train try to read a book or newspaper or take a phone call.”

Still, not only are the Beats headphones high-priced – starting in the \$200 range – but there are other costs as well, such as being robbed.

“Beats are very expensive and cause a lot of attention,” says Harris.

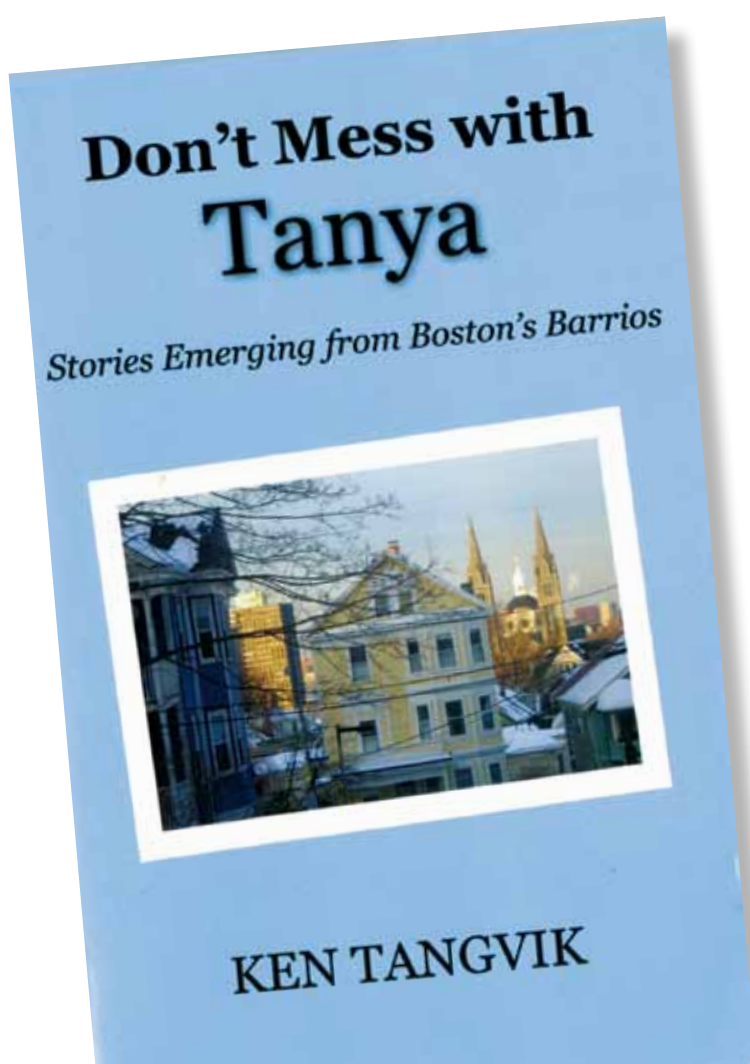
No one really knows how long this trend may go on. It went out of vogue once and it may happen again.

“Yes, Beats will soon go out of style,” says Tayjia McCall, 14, of Dorchester, in a Twitter interview, “because people are going to stop buying them.” ■



AFH art by Takii Samuels

BOOK 'EM, DANNO



“Don’t Mess with Tanya”

SHE DOESN'T BACK DOWN FROM ANYONE!

By Cherae Kersey // Staff Writer

Ken Tangvik’s book, “Don’t Mess with Tanya: Stories Emerging from Boston’s Barrios,” has a short story where the main character, Tanya, goes through a lot of obstacles. These include: Tanya acting out, dealing with very racist environments, and getting accused of being a thief.

An example of her troubled past, and Tanya not backing down from anyone, is shown in an excerpt from the story when her neighbor groped her. She then sucker-punched him and left him bloody, with a scar on her knuckle.

Tanya dealt with racism during her sophomore year, when her social studies teacher crossed the line, calling a group of black students “animals.” She pushed him against a group of lockers and told him off.

Tanya was also accused of being a shoplifter by an elderly white shopkeeper because of her age and race. I think this is true because store owners do watch kids like hawks, and it’s not right. Many teens, including myself, have had this assumed about them. If store owners need to watch a person that hard, it’s a problem. There is a reason they invented security cameras.

This book is one where you have many different stories throughout. It is annoying because it’s like getting sidetracked again and again. It didn’t make me feel anything at the end. But it really all depends on what you like.

However, I think Tanya’s story was interesting because of all the challenges she faced. ■

They've got it bad for "Bad Girls Club"

By Brianna Bannister // Staff Writer

Akeem Barrows, 17, who attends the Community Academy of Science and Health, finds the TV show "Bad Girls Club" changing the way that young girls act. He sees that some of his friends resemble and behave like the characters from BGC, yelling, brawling, and being mean.

"It's like putting seven rats in the same cage and watching them interact with each other," Barrows says.

Among the common phrases from young talented women these days are, "I want to be 'America's Next Top Model' " or "Book me as the latest 'American Idol' winner." But how often do they say: "I'd love to be the new misbehaving star of 'Bad Girls Club' "?

If they did, they'd have quite the audience. The Oxygen Network show has set ratings records with over two million viewers. Many teenagers tune in to watch women who like to party, create drama, and fight.

Samantha Scantlebury, 18, from Mattapan, finds "Bad Girls Club" most entertaining.

She says: "I love 'Bad Girls Club,' but I do not look up to anyone on there. Sometimes it seems that the participants learn...from their experiences."

However, not everyone's a fan.

Norman Britt, 17, who attends the Quincy Upper School, says, "Honestly, I don't even watch that show. I've seen commercials of it and I think it's trash and ridiculous. It portrays a negative image for our young girls in society today."

Britt thinks BGC should be canceled and that the money used to create that madness should be set aside for a more positive outlook for girls.

"I know some females who act like ['Bad Girls Club' characters]," he says, "and it's not cute, either." ■

"I want my music to have a message"

SINGER MELISSA ISRAEL
VOICES HER OPINION

By Jasmine Mason // Staff Writer

Standing at about five-foot-one, 17-year-old Melissa Israel is a small girl with a big voice. The Boston Arts Academy student sings everything from R&B to the very uncommon style of opera.

She says she started singing at the age of six and was inspired by her mother, who went to the Juilliard of Haiti. With her mother's support, Israel says she went on to perform at various venues around the city.

Israel says she was able to sing in public by telling herself that the audience was hers, and that they had come to hear her sing.

Israel says it is Beyoncé's song "Listen" that most influences her because of

its meaning: "Someone has a voice and shouldn't be afraid to let it be heard."

Israel writes her own music and says she wants to present themes of hope, forgiveness, and fun.

"I want my music to have a message," she says. "I want it to be more than just random words."

Israel believes she knows what it takes to be successful.

"Looks, talent, vibe, connections," she says.

She also has advice for others wanting to pursue a singing career: "Keep doing what you love." ■



AFH photo by Seijah Drake

Moved by R&B

By Tania Duncan // Staff Writer

Clarissa Jones, 16, from Dorchester, says she's drawn to the sound of rhythm and blues because of the combination of the sweet beat and lyrics about love.

"It triggers an emotion," says Jones. "The theme of the song determines that emotion."

Because of artists like Beyoncé, Rihanna, and Chris Brown, R&B music plays a huge role in the lives of teens. Is it the lyrics, the music, or just the genre all together?

Kathy Warner, 19, from Dorchester, says she prefers R&B over all else because it has a special way of reaching her.

"I'm highly attracted to the vibe it sends," says Warner. "It touches the soul."

Sylvester Collins, 18, from Dorchester, says he's personally not a fan of R&B – but he understands its appeal.

"I prefer rap because it's what I relate to best," says Collins. "But I think the way people are attracted to R&B might be similar to the reason people are attracted to rap....Either it brings back a memory or it's similar to how you're feeling at that very moment." ■

AFH art by Stephanie Philippe-Auguste

Musical mood swings

By Jamal Young // Staff Writer

Tiffany Winn-James, 15, who attends the Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers, says she would not be the same without having music around her.

"Life would have no meaning, no culture, and no soul," she says.

Whether you're into classical or metal, jazz or hip-hop, music may play a greater role in your emotions than you know.

According to a May poll by the online music community LetsSingIt, an overwhelming 96.2 percent of those asked said that music can affect your mood, while only 3.8 percent said that it doesn't.

De'shanique De'en Tarkpor, 16, who goes to the Community Academy of Science and

Health, says that the music genre she listens to most is R&B, and that it helps her unwind. "It tends to relax me and calm me down when I'm in stressful situations," she says.

Autumn Ghafoor, 16, who attends CASH, believes rap music causes more angry feelings than any other.

Ghafoor says that pop music is her favorite, and that when she listens to it, she feels energetic and wants to get up and dance.

"I listen to pop music all day, every day," she says.

So the next time you feel down or stressed, try reaching for your headphones and playing your favorite songs. ■

AFH photo by Dominique Cave

On the court

SQUASHING THAT STRESS

By Xhorxhia Papa // Staff Writer

Khalilah Jones, 17, from Boston Latin School, says that being in that special place helps her to leave her everyday stress behind.

"I love the feeling when I'm all alone on the court playing squash and forgetting about the problems I have outside," she says.

Squash is similar to both racquetball and tennis. There are generally two players who hit the ball back and forth to each other in a four-walled court until one loses.

Judging by TV ads, the game is only played by British folks and older businessmen. But today, many teens are into it.

Savannah Bell, a 16-year-old who lives in Mattapan, says that squash is motivation for her. She tries to get good grades in school so

that she can play on the AP Squash team, an elite squad that is part of SquashBusters, a youth enrichment program stressing athletics and academics that is based at Northeastern University.

Joel Gonzalez, 19, from Dorchester, says that playing against others brings out his best.

"I love squash because I like the competitions," he says

Angie Miranda, 16, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, says that playing squash has her feeling good about herself.

"It makes me feel strong," Miranda says, "when I hit the ball at the wall." ■

Xhorxhia Papa is a SquashBusters team member.

AFH art by Gabriela Cartagena

The agony and the ecstasy

SPORTS IS SERIOUS STUFF

By Ralph T. Karnuah // Staff Writer

Madorah Sesay, 18, of the Jeremiah E. Burke High School, says that although many people take sports to be just a game, it is an important part of her life and a way to improve her emotional health.

"Softball makes me happy," says Sesay. "When I'm in a bad mood, softball practice brings back my smile."

According to a 2010 study from West Virginia University, middle-school teenagers who are physically active and play team sports are more content with their lives and feel healthier than those who don't. The study also suggests that sports-team participation by young teens may improve their connections to school and friends.

Wilton Zuo, 19, a senior at Fenway High School, agrees that sports is more than just entertainment.

"Honestly," he says, "playing soccer has helped me grow a lot because sports has surrounded me with a lot of friends."

There is no doubt, teens say, that playing sports can have a keen effect on their lives by giving them a sense of belonging.

"With basketball, I found my place, and became socially involved with my peers in the school," says sixteen-year-old Latarsha Neal, an Excel High student who moved to Boston from North Carolina in the eighth grade and had to go to a school where she didn't know anyone. ■





AFH photo by Bill Le

Champs turned chumps?

TEENS ABANDON REELING RED SOX

By José Cardona // Staff Writer

Luis Romero, 19, of Jamaica Plain, says he hasn't been to a Red Sox game this year because of how much they have been slacking.

"I see no point in going," says Romero. "I want to see them do as good as they did the other years."

Joshua Soto, 16, from Brighton High School, used to go to see the Sox once or twice each year. So far, with the Sox lingering at the bottom of the standings at press time, he has only gone once this year, and he began liking the team less.

"I'm disappointed," says Soto. "They should be doing better."

Soto says he'll be back at Fenway, whether the team rallies or not.

"Just to see if they have gotten better," says Soto, "because I still have a little hope in them."

Meanwhile, Sabrina Bello, 14, of Madison Park High School, says that she has even stopped viewing the games on television.

"If the Red Sox are going to be losing," says Bello, "I don't think it's worth watching."

And forget trekking to Fenway Park.

"Sometimes I want to take my nephews or nieces to the games," says Bello, "but I don't want to waste money for no reason and be disappointed at the end of the day." ■

Double Dutch is still a rush

By Bianca Rice // Staff Writer

Double Dutch, the age-old game that involves jumping within two ropes that are twirling simultaneously in opposite directions, is a way that many teens still stay active.

Raul Cardosa, 13, from Dorchester, says Double Dutch is beneficial for youth.

"I am an athlete who plays basketball," says Cardosa, "and [Double Dutch] helps me with my hops."

Some historians trace the name to the Dutch settlers they believe brought the sport with them to America in the 1600s.

Cardosa learned the rhythm of Double Dutch through the MathPOWER education program, which also includes athletic activities.

Kilo Boutwell, a 13-year-old student at the Higginson/Lewis K-8 School, says that Double Dutch helps him stay in shape.

"It benefits me because I like to be...always doing something," says Boutwell.

Cristina Monteiro, a 13-year-old student at the Dearborn Middle School, says she was anxious to learn how to jump when she saw others doing it.

"I encourage other students to try Double Dutch," says Monteiro, "because if you're not active, it gets you exercise." ■

AFH art by Patrece Joseph



Protecting Mother Nature

By Xhorxhia Papa // Staff Writer

Gloria Nwaoha, a 17-year-old student at Urban Science Academy, says she tries her best to keep nature clean. Nwaoha says she does this by joining other teens in cleaning a local swamp and by recycling with her sister.

She says it’s easy for teens to pitch in: “Recycle more plastic, paper, and glass.”

Matt Garrity, 19, a North End resident, says that teens should try to preserve the untouched parts of parks.

While many teens care deeply about protecting the environment, others are not so driven.

Garrity’s brother, Ross, 15, who attends Boston Latin School, says he doesn’t think about nature much, though he recycles paper, avoids plastic goods, and throws out his own trash. He does his part, but says that he’s not willing to clean up after others. ■



Sand storm

TEENS BYPASS BOSTON BEACHES

By Kerry Lydon // Staff Writer

Some young Bostonians, such as Trevor O’Brien, 16, would rather spend their beach time away from the city’s fare.

O’Brien, a student at Boston Latin School, recently traveled to Cape Cod with his family for an excursion. The trip to the Cape can take hours, and traffic can become congested. Still, the teenager believes it was worth it.

“We wanted to go for a swim,” says O’Brien.

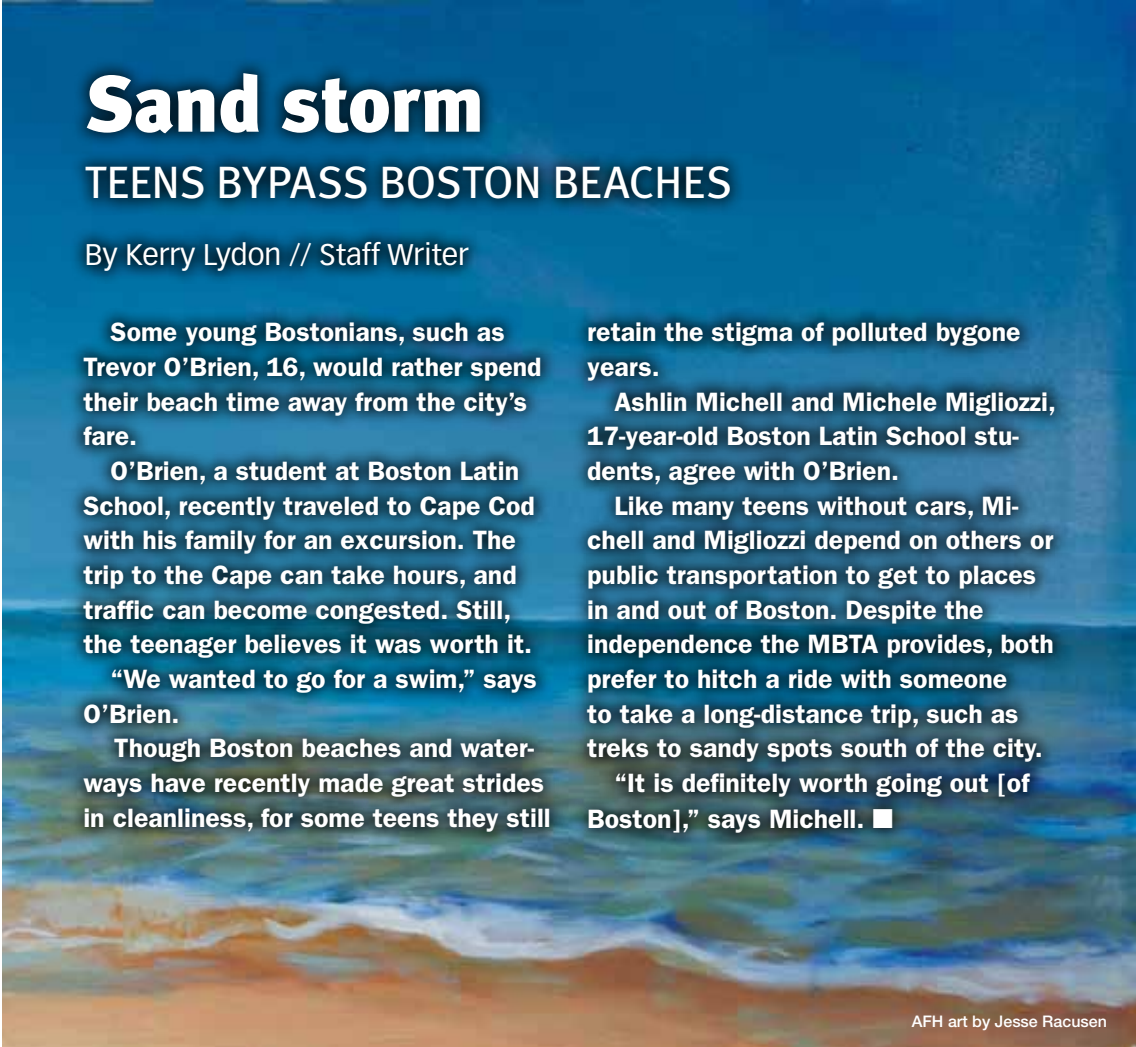
Though Boston beaches and waterways have recently made great strides in cleanliness, for some teens they still

retain the stigma of polluted bygone years.

Ashlin Michell and Michele Migliozi, 17-year-old Boston Latin School students, agree with O’Brien.

Like many teens without cars, Michell and Migliozi depend on others or public transportation to get to places in and out of Boston. Despite the independence the MBTA provides, both prefer to hitch a ride with someone to take a long-distance trip, such as treks to sandy spots south of the city.

“It is definitely worth going out [of Boston],” says Michell. ■



AFH art by Jesse Racusen

AFH photo by Darren Hicks