Social Taboo Contributes To Spread of STD's

The Recent Increase in STDs Among Teens Can Be Attributed to a Lack of Conversation With Teens

Rudi Burns
Staff Writer

Time has consistently proven that teens are more likely than any other group to engage in, and be negatively affected by a slew of activities.

Underage drinking, drug use, sex, and rock 'n' roll all work their way into the massive list of activities that some teens engage in. A problem that seems to have remained largely unchecked has recently risen to the forefront of the battle to keep teens healthy. This problem is the prevalence of Sexually Transmitted Disease's among our teenage population.

Information about STD prevention is more accessible today then it was a short time ago and the means to stop the spread of STD's are becoming cheaper and more effective. However, the problem does not seem to be stopping or even slowing down. According to a new study released by the Center for Disease control 1 in 4 teen girls has an STD. Recently, Dr. Arthur James, the chief of gynecology at Western stated STD's are an "epidemic" in our community and called it a "persistent, growing problem."

"Humans are sexual being's" said Rebecca Klott, a member of the Health Promotion and Education Committee at the Sindecuse Clinic at Western Michigan University.

The problem is not teens' inherent sexuality, but their inefficiency in dealing with it in a safe, responsible way.

"Teens sometimes have a hard time asking their parents or other adults for information on protection because of a multitude of reasons- admitting you need protection may feel to the teen that they are admitting to wanting to have sex and this can be scary. Our society has a difficult time talking about sex, especially teens having sex. Teens know this and may avoid the topic to keep everyone else comfortable," said Klott.

According to Klott, the uncomfortable atmosphere that surrounds sex in our society could be the very thing that is allowing STD's to remain largely unchecked. By making the subject taboo, we put negative connotations on getting tested or even bringing the subject up. Women may avoid having condoms available because it would make them seem "easy." Men might not wish to hurt their partner's feelings by insinuating that they think of them as unclean by asking them to get tested.

Combine these awkward situations with a lack of general information and support, and teens often don't think it can happen to them.

However, these statistics rely on information gathered from those who have been tested. Less than half of adults aged 18 to 44 have even been tested, and with 1 in 2 sexually active people getting an STD by age 22, the masses still seem to be ignoring the problem.

To combat the problem efficiently, sexual health needs to be considered as important as mental and physical health.

"One view we try to promote is that like eating right, exercising, using a condom is about taking care of your health so that you can live a long, healthy life," said Klott.

But until our communities change their outlook on sex the problem will only get worse with time. It doesn't matter how much we know, it matters that this knowledge is shared and discussed in a public forum. As long as sex is considered a moral issue and not a physiological one, the uninformed will suffer.

Letters to the Editor:

Student Comments on "Jordan Shoe" Article

Dear Quintiene Campbell,
I think that the "Legacy of the Jordan Shoe" is good. You shared about the history of the Jordan shoe that Michael Jordan created. But it's cool to know the history of many brand names because we wear them all the time. Jordan's, Nike, Reebok, all of them.
Sincerely,
Dominique Essix, freshman

Student Reacts to "Holocaust" Article

Dear Editor,
I was reading "Knight Life," and the Holocaust Museum. One Article interested me so I read it. What the students said was kind of like "WOW!" I went there last year and it was also emotional to me but it seemed more like the history of the Jewish [people], not the Holocaust. What I mean is there was more than just Jewish people that were killed, it was [everyone] Hitler believed to be less human. I won't say it was a bad experience but I will say that I learned more there about the Jews than the Holocaust.
Sincerely,
Cristina Bryant, freshman

Student Shares Opinion on "Sex in the Media" Article

Dear Editor,
I read the article by Kayliegh Sholes "The Overflow of Sex in the Media Brainwashes the Exposed." I think this is a good article. I think young people today are way too influenced by the media. I hate when I see girls wearing way too little mini skirts, and putting their body out instead of their personality. Girls need to respect themselves and not underestimate the other great things they have going besides their bodies.
Sincerely,
Briana Merrow, freshman

Students React to "Storytime with Sihji"

Dear Editor,
"Story time" with sushi, I mean Sihji, was probably the best thing in this "Knight Life" issue. Okay, not really. But I really enjoyed reading it. While going through it I thought is there any point to this? Nope, it's just good entertainment.
Sincerely,
Christina Brown, freshman

Dear Editor,
I read the article "Story Time with Sihji" by Sihji Hicks. I thought the article was very funny and was a good break from the other, more serious articles. I love how he tells his stories like he is talking to one of his friends. I believe he actually talks like that. Continue to write funny stories please!
Sincerely,
Abbi Schreck, freshman

Student Discusses Security Cameras in School

Dear Editor,
I am commenting about the article "A Matter of Security." I think that by putting better security cameras in our school, they will help solve some problems with behavior. If the administration tells the students where the cameras are, I think that students will not be as tempted to do bad things. It is also a good thing that the cameras are not going to be put in classrooms, because that would be going too far with security
Sincerely,
Haley Pfeil, freshman

Students Express Their Views About "Day of Silence" Articles

Dear Editor,
I really like all the Day of Silence articles. Both sides make very strong arguments. I believe that if people are doing it for the right reasons then they should go for it! All the articles are very well written and have extremely good points. Great Job!
Sincerely,
Karylle Hillard, freshman

Dear Editor,
I liked the article about the Day of Silence. It lets gays, lesbians, bisexual and trans-genders know that they are recognized. It lets them have sort of their own day of the year. It is okay to be what you are. It is a day where no one can make fun of them. A day where they do not have to hear people make fun of them.
Sincerely,
Collin Martin, freshman

Dear Editor,
I thought it was very interesting to read the different points and opinions people have about the Day of Silence. All of the different articles on it were written very well, and really makes you think about how this topic should be addressed.
Sincerely,
Hannah Fleming, freshman

Dear Editor,
The article "The D.O.S is Not for School!" By Xi'ange Shannon was good. It made sense unlike some of these articles. Xi'ange wrote about the Day of Silence and sexuality and how is should not be brought to school. I like how she said your sexual preference is not anyone's business because it is true and during school your sexuality should not matter. I like that article and the paper was okay. Good job "Knight Life," and Xi'ange Shannon.
Sincerely,
Madison Luckett, freshman

Student Commends "Knights Fly Like Comets" Article

Dear Editor,
I really liked the article "Knights Fly Like Comets," about Kalamazoo Christian. The article really opened my eyes to the differences between our two schools. The smallness of K-Christian was not apparent to me. The article made me appreciate going to a relatively large school such as Loy Norrix. It seems that going to a good sized school helps to prepare me for college. Thanks for writing such an enlightening article.
Sincerely,
Brighid Morse, freshman

"Knight Life" Staff Member Reacts to "Day Of Silence" Article

I just wanted to state my personal opinion on the "D.O.S is Not for School" by Xi'ange Shannon. Most of the students in the school who supported the Day of Silence are not gay, lesbian, and bisexual or transgender, most of them are heterosexual. These students did not stress there sexuality and neither did the students who just so happened to be homosexual. I do agree with Xi'ange when she stated that "we enroll in school to move forward, graduate and continue on to the job market and become successful." Yes students enroll for this reason, but everyday I see a student making out in the hallway or holding hands and it needs to stop, but none of those students are doing that with the same sex. What I am trying to say is I have never seen a homosexual "stress" their sexuality on anyone in the school as much as heterosexuals do.

I do like this article, it is very well written. Xi'ange gives her opinion on this topic very well. This topic is just a very touchy subject to me, so keep up the good work Xi'ange.
Sincerely,
Madison Kay, junior

Student Responds to the "Knights Speak" Regarding Quiet Halls

Dear Editor,
I don't like having Quiet Hallways because then you feel like when you walk in the hallways to lunch or class you have to be quiet. So the quiet hallway is not a good thing because if you can't be loud in the hallways then students will be loud in class instead.
Sincerely,
DeChelle Jones, Freshman

Students Discuss the Comics Section

Dear Editor,
I really think the people who do the comics should draw some sports or something of a rapper.
Sincerely,
Demetrius Greer, freshman

Dear Ryin Zummach and Friends,
I really enjoyed your disgusting comic about Loy Norrix bathrooms. It is so unfortunately true. I think that you guys have the right outlook on our school; disgusting.
Sincerely,
Hunter Lee, freshman

Dear Ellen Vandermyde and Teshia Treuhaft,
I thought that your comic was very funny and brought back many Loy Norrix parking lot memories. It is also very true. Nice addition to the newspaper! And I hope you make more.
Sincerely,
Hunter Lee, freshman

Teacher Comments on Staff Editorial

Dear Editor,
As a "teacher new to the AP program" next fall, I am deeply touched by your concern for my preparedness as described in the Staff Editorial in Issue 5. Trust me, I'll be ready.
Sincerely,
Anne Bowser, English Teacher

Student Speaks About "Online Social Networks" Articles

Dear Editor,
These web sites are actually fun. I have both of these web sites, but I am usually on Myspace for some reason. It gets real old once in a while, but it is because no one happens to be online, or at least those that you actually know. I have had my Myspace since I was twelve years old and always try to get on and check what is new.

It is true what was written about Myspace. How it loads really slow sometimes and has spam but there is the refresh button and you can ignore the spam. Its all just getting used to stuff. I enjoy Myspace because I have actually met almost everybody on there.
Sincerely,
Lucia Morales, freshman

Students Comment on the Sports Section

Dear Editor,
I think that you should have more articles on men's basketball. We had a winning season this year for the first time since 2004. In one game we broke a school record of 14 three-pointers. Maybe you could talk more about stats and things that those who follow sports are interested in.
Sincerely,
Le'shawn McFerrin, freshman

Dear Editor,
I really enjoy reading the sports section of "Knight Life." I am interested in reading about who won and who lost. One suggestion I have is that they should talk more about what happened in the game. That would be a good change for the sports section.
Sincerely,
Terrell Warren, freshman

Dear Editor,
I like the article "Peak Performers in the Sports," I think it's really cool how they highlight good players. I also think they should write about more then three people. Like I really think Shelby Curwin-Garber, Elizabeth Houghton and Rebecca Sinclair from varsity tennis should be highlighted. I also thought that those comics on Norrix were very true.
Sincerely,
Izamar Zuniga, freshman

Dear Editor,
I really enjoyed reading the sports section. My favorite article was the soccer one though. I thought you did a nice job putting it together. Being a member of the soccer team, it was nice to see. I also liked the golf article; I did not realize how good our golf team really was till I read that article. Keep up the good work up, I love reading "Knight Life"!
Sincerely,
Ryan Jaworowski, freshman

Student Speaks Positively About "Why I Became a Marine" Article

Dear Editor,
I liked the article "Why I Joined the Marines." It shows LN that there are people who are for our country and want to protect us. I think Mateo is really brave, and it is really cool he decided to be a Marine. I hope he has fun and enjoys being a Marine.
Sincerely,
Alexandrea Brewer, freshman

Students Respond Enthusiastically to Project GRO

Dear Editor,
It is crazy how some countries ban games; I would never think of that. I guess they're not trying to expose their citizens to such things. It seems that violence is the main problem. Also religious beliefs have something to do with it which is understandable.
Sincerely,
Janell Nichols, freshman

Dear Editor,
I especially liked the Project GRO section of "Knight Life". It was really interesting to learn about people from other cultures and see how they are similar or different to you. I also thought that the, "Influence of American culture felt worldwide" was very interesting. I did not know that, many "typical American things" originated from other countries. One thing that really surprised me was the laws on alcohol in Saudi Arabia. Many teens think that our drinking age is high but would not imagine getting lashed for taking a drink. I am looking forward to seeing more sections like this "Knight Life."
Sincerely,
Mathilde Moyet, freshman

Dear Editor,
I enjoyed this issue. I believe that the articles were well written. I was very impressed with the project GRO section. Many people do not know how amazing that program is, but now they do! Thanks again!
Sincerely,
Spencer Mckee, freshman

Student Expresses Opinion on Voting

Dear Editor,
We teens should have a right to vote for president. We should be able to pick our president, because they are going to be better then Bush. That is why we should be able to vote. They should have everybody vote. There would be more votes.
Sincerely,
Cle Jackson, freshman

Student Comments on Last Issue of "Knight Life" as a Whole

Dear Editor,
That last copy of "Knight Life" was pretty good. It was more put together then some of the other ones. "Tim & Erik's Awesome Show, Great Job!" is so funny and I am glad you put it in here
Sincerely,
Jared Eckley, freshman

Student Speaks Positively About Peace Jam

Dear Editor,
I really enjoyed the article, "Peace Jam Members Read their way into Change" I like it because it is nice to see people from our school helping others who are struggling. Even if it is helping fourth graders read for an hour, it means a lot to them.
Sincerely,
Amy Youngs, freshman

Students Speak About "Relay for Life" Article

Dear Editor,
I really enjoyed your article about the Relay for life. I had heard about it, but it was nice to be able to get more information and background on it. The Relay for Life is a really good thing and I was happy to hear that so many people from our school participate in it. After reading this article, I want to participate as well.
Sincerely,
Emma McLaren, freshman