

The Hoofprint

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Photo by Alayna Mills

Silent Demons

How mental illness impacts students at Buffalo High School

| Sydney Rhodes
| Staff Writer

Claudia Staut '22 sits in the Minneapolis airport trying to combat an anxiety attack. Commonly, airports are filled with the excitement of people anticipating vacations, but for Staut, airports have a completely different feel. Staut has been diagnosed by a psychiatrist with a general anxiety disorder for almost a year now. However, she has been dealing with it for about three years.

For Staut, there wasn't an exact moment when she realized she had anxiety. There were small memorable moments where she would be nervous over time and eventually become more noticeably stressed.

"I also knew something was up when I would become anxious for no reason at all, and I would be so confused as to why I was stressed," said Staut. "I would try telling myself everything was okay,

but that did basically nothing."

Feelings of nerves or anxiety can be positive for some; these emotions can help to improve performances. However, for those with diagnosed anxiety disorders, those feelings can cause negative effects.

"I have a huge fear of elevators and planes and will practically refuse to go on either, and when I say refuse, I mean refuse," said Staut. "I get super nervous before drumline or marching band performances even though I know that everything will be okay in the end."

Anxiety disorders affect the chemical balance in the brain, therefore the effects show themselves mentally. There is a difference between being nervous and having a diagnosed anxiety disorder.

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Letter from the Editors

Struggles are inevitable in life, we all face some internal battle or conflict. Whether it be an injured player who's out for the season or struggles with mental illness, we all have to go through difficult times and dilemmas. It's easy to let these struggles consume us and shut us down. It's harder to be honest and admit that sometimes we are going through a hard time.

Many highschoolers shy away from bringing attention to their internal struggles. They either don't want to acknowledge that these struggles exist or they don't want to talk about them

with the people in their lives. What many don't realize is that it's okay to reach out and open up about these things.

Not all internal battles are negative though. Some lead to amazing new positive changes in our lives. Finally coming out to your friends and family and receiving love and support, or finally getting adopted and meeting your new family are positive outcomes of difficult situations.

The Hoofprint has worked hard to shine a light on the silent demons we all face yet shy away from talking

about. We dived into the culture and community of Buffalo High School to reveal the truth about what's on our minds as highschool students. These four years of highschool bring about whirlwinds of change in all of our lives. Many of us get our first jobs during this time, we are in more demanding and rigorous classes, and the upperclassmen are faced with the tough decisions surrounding post-graduation plans. These struggles inevitably transform us into different people, people who are more mature and wise because of the situations we've faced.

"My story is a freedom song of struggle. It is about finding one's purpose, how to overcome fear and to stand up for causes bigger than one's self."

- Coretta Scott King



Kinzie McDowell & Gretta Heinecke

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Go behind-the-scenes and explore student life by observing and interviewing different characters of our schools' culture.

Contact our staff for more information.

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Beneath the Surface

Athletes suddenly find themselves on the sidelines and endure the mental and physical challenges that come with it

| Meagan Henry

Copy Editor

Scoring the winning goal of the game or perfecting the landing to a routine makes the hours of practice an athlete puts in worth it. Then all of a sudden they find themselves sitting on the bench, watching their teammates from afar. An injury not only sets an athlete back in their skillset, but it also rips something they love from their life.

Madilyn Peters '21 has been dedicated to gymnastics since she was four years old. When she began club, practice was four hours a day, five days a week. Nowadays, Peters is involved in school gymnastics, which takes up about two and a half hours a day, five days a week.

"My elbow started popping and we didn't know what was wrong," Peters said. "Then it started to hurt more so I went to get it checked out. I talked to four different doctors before finally finding out what was wrong. It was frustrating for that year, not knowing, and it constantly hurting and getting worse. I was relieved once we figured it out."

The last doctor Peters went to told her that she has radiocapitellar plica in her elbow, which means the inside of her elbow is inflamed, creating popping noises.

"If I didn't have gymnastics, I don't know where I would be today," Peters said. "It's shaped me into who I am, so it's a very big thing in my life. It has been hard and frustrating because I just want to do my skills, but I can't because it hurts. After I get this injection, I should be good to go, knowing it's more my pain tolerance and knowing that my elbow isn't getting worse."

Brooke Bergeron '21 also endured an injury that ripped her away from a sport she loves.

"I hit the ground pretty hard, and I knew it was my knee," Bergeron said. "I was like, 'Great. I'm going to hear this long speech from Kip and my mom and dad about taking a break. Then I'll have to sit on the bench. Or I can just try and get back up and pretend like it's fine.' So that's what I did. I got up and I was like, 'It's okay, it's fine.' I took a couple steps and I was weak. The third step I took I went down again, and then I couldn't get back up."

"I got up and I was like, 'It's okay, it's fine.' I took a couple steps and I was weak. The third step I took I went down again, and then I couldn't get back up," said Brooke Bergeron '21.

Brooke Bergeron has had tendinitis in her knee since it flared up when she went hiking three years ago. Playing a contact sport, Bergeron has gone down before, but this hit sent her into the longest break from soccer in seven years.

"I'm not in my best shape like I normally am," Bergeron said. "Soccer brings me so much joy and having that ripped away from me was really hard. In the past, I always thought, 'It sucks now, but it will be fine in a day. I'll push it off a day, I'll push it off a week, I'll push it off a year.' That year turned into three years and now I'm here."

Walking the halls with crutches, Bergeron was unable to play the last four games of her junior year season.

"I've learned my lesson," Bergeron said. "I feel like my mindset has done a complete 180. I see it more as a challenge now. My knee needs to get better? Well, what can I do to make it the best sooner? I've been working harder to get it better faster, and it's like, 'Let's get it done and get it fixed now so it will be better and I can get back to playing.'"



Photo by Molly Hedden

Does a 4.0 Really Matter?

How much does having a high Grade Point Average matter beyond high school?

Avery Thompson
Spotlight Editor

The stress placed on students to get good grades is at an all-time high. Now more than ever, students feel the pressure to sacrifice their health for good grades. For many high school students, the ultimate goal is to maintain a 4.0 grade point average (GPA), or all A's, throughout their secondary school career. However, does a perfect GPA matter when applying for higher forms of education?

A 4.0 GPA means earning an "A" letter grade in all classes. Many teachers have different grading scales, but in most cases, the lowest "A" that can be received is 90% in the course. This means that as long as a student has a final grade of at least 90% in all classes, an unscathed GPA can be maintained.

Keeping a 4.0 becomes increasingly difficult as you progress throughout high school. As courses escalate in complexity a 4.0 can be ruined simply by one class or test. This puts a lot of pressure on students to consistently succeed.

When applying to colleges, many people believe that grade point average is the most important thing on a transcript, but that is false. Although admission officers use a grade point average as a starting point, they look at many other factors, including courses you've taken and extracurricular activities.

"Learning through struggle is a lifelong tool that everyone will have to learn," said Ms. Cox.

BHS Counselor Christina Cox says, "The importance of having a 4.0 really depends on the college you are applying to. Those that are highly selective are going to look for a combination of a high GPA and difficult classes that you have taken across all four years of high school."

From a stress standpoint, Cox says that,

"...[P]erfection sometimes comes at a cost."

A study done by Jean Twenge of Western Reserve College found that high school kids today have higher stress levels than psychiatric patients in the 1950s, and much of this anxiety comes from the desire to be perfect.

For trade schools, it is a similar story. Students applying should have a combination of challenging classes and good grades.

"Trade schools look at the classes you have taken," says BHS Technology Education Teacher Ben Wandmacher. "I would rather have the student, not necessarily have to struggle, but have to work to get their grade up. They have those problem-solving skills, that fortitude to fight through some difficulties. That mentality is important when it comes to many trades especially."

Anna Engbloom '21 is in her third year of the Arts Magnet Program at Buffalo High School.

She believes that, "Every student should work hard and be pushed to be successful by

their teacher and other students."

Despite working her hardest in all of her classes throughout high school, Engbloom does not have a 4.0. She values her mental and physical health more than her grades and makes sure that she takes precaution to not run herself into the ground.

"Students shouldn't have to sacrifice their health for good grades," Engbloom said. "As long as you do your best, you and your teachers should be happy with the grade you receive."

Overall, having a high GPA does help students get into colleges and trade schools. Striving for a 4.0 is a struggle, especially if taking challenging classes. However, dealing with hardships in life makes a stronger student and person, as long as it doesn't compromise physical and mental health.

"Learning through struggle is a lifelong tool that everyone will have to learn. Now is the time to learn how to struggle and fail, and then learn how to prevail through your failure," said Cox.



Are People Distracted by Technology?

Brianna Smith
Guest Writer

To many people, technology has been a great distraction. Some believe that it isn't a distraction while others believe it is a distraction. Many people have grown up with technology, it has become a part of their lives and a day without it would be very different or boring. There are lots of people today who probably can't stand a day without their technology. Mostly young children and teens are the ones with the biggest problem in becoming distracted by their devices.

Many schools face this problem of phone usage throughout the class periods.

"On some occasions I know I am very distracted with technology," said Joakima Smith '20. "Most of that time for me is losing that self-motivation and effort during school."

Technology is a common distraction for many people worldwide. Everywhere you go, you would see so many people using their phones or any other type of technology. Raymond Smith says "I believe it's a lot easier for younger

people to get distracted by technology because it is so flashy." During the year 2014-2015, about 94% of teens that go online using a mobile device do so daily. "I can easily find myself going hours with technology, but in this day and age, how can you not, as far as using it for taking care of business," Charles said.

A major issue when it comes to technology and distractions is texting while driving. According to Edgar Snyder & Associates, cell phone use while driving leads to 1.6 million crashes each year. Nearly 390,000 injuries occur each year from accidents caused by texting while driving. 1 out of every 4 car accidents in the United States is caused by texting and driving. While driving, it's very easy to pick up your phone because you've received a call, or text message or any other reason for you to pick up your phone. The hands-free law in MN prohibits motorists from holding a cellphone or other wireless devices while driving. Although the law had been

passed that doesn't change the fact that many people will still ignore this law.

There are many cases where technology can become a major distraction to students, drivers, or just anyone in general, really. Many people will always keep their technology right next to them at all times. If they've received a text message or call, it's almost as if they would have to pick up their phone to see what's going on, and even drivers do that without thinking. Charles says, "Start leaving these distractions out of sight and out of mind. Ways we can do that is turning them off, leaving them upside down and on silent, or not even bringing them all together."

How are Teenagers Influenced by Social Media?

Teens today are not only getting the majority of their news online, but they are turning away from traditional media organizations to find out about current events on social media sites and YouTube, often from online influencers and celebrities.

It's good to have someone to look up to that displays having a positive attitude and being a good role model. 70 percent of teens trust online influencers more than celebrities and 6 out of 10 teens actually follow their advice according to Zariance reads.

With that said, more than half of teens (54%) get news at least a few times a week from social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter and 50% get news from YouTube. Getting news and other information on social media can

have both a positive and negative affect on teenagers.

A survey conducted in Buffalo High School shows that the majority of teens don't keep up on the news (53%). However, when students want to be informed 80 percent choose to use social media as their source for news. Compared to a survey conducted by Common Sense about teens in the United States, Buffalo and U.S. teens had similar answers. Instead of getting news from actual news channels or sources, teens choose to listen to an online influencer, where they may or may not have gotten their news from an actual source. Also, teens at Buffalo High School think that news doesn't have a bad effect on teens but social media has a bigger affect.

Social media is a vital aspect of teenagers' and children's social and creative lives. They use social media to have fun, make and maintain friendships, share interests, explore identities and develop relationships with family. It's an extension of their offline and face-to-face interactions.

Some risks of social media include being exposed to inappropriate or upsetting content like mean, aggressive, violent or sexual comments or images.

Using social media may have good and bad aspects to it but it allows teens to relax and have some downtime away from their heavy

class work, possible jobs, and extracurricular activities. Most teens claim they don't have enough time to watch the news or they aren't even interested in the news. While they are using social media they just happen to get informed about current news events. About 55% of teens claim that getting news on social media helps them better understand what is going on rather than long articles from news sources.

Natalie VanTassell
Guest Writer

Memorable Moments

A look at photography featured in Hoofprints throughout the past decade



Photo by Meghan Cahill



Photo by Leonie Dre



Photo by Caitlin Black



Photo by Aric Haluska

New Year, New Decade.

What will be remembered about the 2010s?

Hailiey Vail & Sydney Rhodes
Staff Writers

A decade of innovation, with many discoveries and pop culture trends taking the spotlight throughout these past ten years. The 2010s were a decade of people learning more about themselves and how their reactions affect others around them. The 2010s were filled with memorable memes technological advancements.

French teacher Jason Swanson reflected on the past ten years of his life and the memories made during this time.

“My favorite memories of the last decade will always be the birth of my three children, and watching them learn and grow,” said Swanson. “I will miss my children being toddlers, and I will miss students whom I taught.”

Swanson explained a lesson he learned over the previous decade.

“It is more important than ever to make decisions based on sound fact,” said Swanson, “and not based on emotion or fear.”

Clara Holmberg '21 shared her thoughts on the small things that she thought made this decade

memorable.

“I think style trends were a major part of this decade. If you look back at the style from 2010, you will cringe. If you look at 2019, you will see style all the way back from the '70s to the '90s,” Holmberg said. “I will miss what it was like before technology started to advance. In the last ten years, major technological developments have happened. This decade will be full of very modern advancements, and we will never be able to go back to what it was like before.”

Holmberg reflected on her personal experience with the previous decade.

“It’s hard to know what I will do differently this decade because I have no regrets from the last one,” Holmberg said.

The 2010s were a decade of personal growth and social development. These past ten years have shaped every one of us and taught us lessons that are invaluable. Once we have taken the time to reflect on this previous decade, it’s time to look to the future to see what this next decade has in store.



Photo by Bryce Bishop



Photo by Ben Lepinski

Coming Out of the Silence

Buffalo High School students break the stigma surrounding sexuality

Grace Steinmetz
Social Managing Editor

In recent times, more members of the LGBT+ community have been “coming out,” or stating who they are and who they love. Coming out is not something everyone has to deal with. Not everyone understands how nerve racking it can be. With increased awareness of sexuality and gender, it is becoming more recognized that different expressions of love and gender shouldn’t be silenced or shamed, but celebrated. Our differences are what bring us together.

Alex Pfeifer ‘20 shared his experience with coming out to one of his close friends.

“I told her and she was super sweet about it. When I first said I’m gay out loud, it was a moment of relief, because it was like I was holding it in,” Pfeifer said. “I started crying. She started crying. It was just this emotional moment in seventh grade in the lunchroom.”

Pfeifer has received support throughout his life. He also knows the importance of standing up for beliefs.

“I think it’s really important just to keep up with supporting the fight for gay rights, even though we shouldn’t really even be fighting at this point, because we’re all human. Just fight for human rights in general,” Pfeifer said. “I like going to Pride to show support. Anything you can do just to help normalize it.”

At BHS, the LGBT+ community has a safe space to openly express their thoughts. Everyone is invited to show their support, whether they’re a part of the community or an ally. One way students show support for the community is by once a year, making the choice not to speak during school to stand up for LGBT+ members. Emily Mart ‘20 explained her experiences with being an ally in the Gender and Sexuality Alliance.

“Every year I do the Day of Silence,” said Mart. “Every participant is quiet all day to help people recognize the voices they aren’t hearing.”

Allies of the LGBT+ community can help break the silence. Maddie Christensen ‘21 shared how she supports her LGBT+ friends.

“I show my support by letting everyone know that no matter who they are, no matter their identity, and no matter their orientation, I still see you as a wonderful human being who deserves so much of the world, and if they need anyone to talk to, they can talk to me,” said Christensen.

People should be welcomed, despite gender identity or sexuality. A safe space has been created through GSA, but at the end of the day, support should be ongoing growth.



Photo courtesy of Alex Pfeifer



Photo by Matthew Scherber



Photo by Lucy Johnson



Photo by Lucy Johnson

Finding a Forever Home

Sophomore Brandon Uecker and social studies teacher Tara Rosh detail their personal experiences with adoption

Abby Bertsch
Copy Editor

According to the U.S. Department of State and the Bureau of Consular Affairs, 1.8 million children in the United States have been adopted. Each year, approximately 135,000 children are adopted domestically (within the country), and about 20,000 children are adopted internationally. Behind all of these thousands of people are very special, very unique stories. Adoption is an incredibly personal experience, and there is much value in sharing these stories.

Brandon Uecker '22 entered the foster system in 2015, when he was eleven years old. He spent roughly a year in foster care, as opposed to the average stay of two to five years, before his adoption process began.

"The foster system was quick, but getting adopted took a while," Uecker said. "It was about a year before we even got a court date for my adoption."

Uecker recalls meeting his family (consisting of two parents, three kids, a dog, and a cat) for the first time.

"I remember the first time I met the Ueckers, they were very nice. My first impressions were, 'What nice people,'" said Uecker.

As is typical in most cases of change, their first meeting was a little hesitant starting out.

"When I first met my family, it was kind of awkward," Uecker said. "The parents were very open, but the kids were more skeptical."

This initial awkwardness quickly went away, replaced with comfortable and strong relationships. Often, it can take time to build these strong relationships, but for Uecker, the transition felt natural.

"It seemed really normal, and it didn't take long before I felt at home," said Uecker.

In considering adoption and all its positive aspects, it's important to acknowledge the difficulties and challenges that are faced as well, which are different for everyone.

"The hardest part about [being adopted] was being separated from my biological siblings," said Uecker.

Of course, adoption truly is a transformative process. Uecker looks back and recognizes some of the ways his experience impacted him.

"The most rewarding part is how much I've changed and grown," Uecker said. "I know my life is a lot better than before, and I'm grateful for that."

The adoption process is very different and personal for everyone. Social studies teacher Tara Rosh and her husband ended up adopting their daughter from Ethiopia.

The Rosh family learned that when you go through an international adoption, as opposed to a domestic adoption, you have to go with a country that is currently allowing children to be sent to the United States, a list that is constantly changing. At the moment, there are roughly 47 countries willing to allow U.S. citizens to adopt from them, according to the Rainbow Kids Adoption and Child Welfare Advocacy.

"The process is pretty brutal. There is not an easy way to go about going through an adoption. It's an emotional process. So that's one element of it," Rosh said. "It's also a legal process. There's a lot of paperwork that you have to file."

The process for international adoptions is very long and tiring. There are a lot of other components to be aware of and work through. This is especially difficult considering how few countries are currently doing international adoptions with the United States, and how long the time frames are.

"When you do an international adoption, you are dealing with two different governments that have two different rules," said Rosh. "You're navigating the

immigration process for a child and making sure that all of that paperwork is taken care of. The process is difficult and it can take a very, very long time. Our adoption, we were initially told would take nine months. And then by the end of it, it had taken three years. And those time frames have only extended right now for anyone wanting to do an international adoption."

Rosh easily remembers how incredible it was to see her daughter for the first time.

"Any parent that has seen any of their children for the first time, it's miraculous," said Rosh. "The reward is really all ours. I mean, every parent thinks that their child is exceptional. My children really are exceptional."

While Rosh recognizes that her experiences with adoption are very valuable to share, she also understands the importance of letting the kids who have been adopted tell their stories.

"I can't be the lone voice. It has to be the voice of kids that have been adopted, that those are the people whose voices need to be heard most loudly, because adoptive parents are not the experts. The kids who have been adopted are the experts," Rosh explained.

According to the MN Department of Human Services, approximately 185 children in Minnesota go into foster care each week. Children's Home Society is a great adoption agency in Minnesota that can help anyone wanting to adopt.

"If you're looking to adopt, do it," said Uecker. "There are so many kids looking for a home."



Competition vs. Entertainment

The difference between competition based theater and performance based theater

Sam Cotton
Staff Writer

Although BHS students are aware of the existence of One-Act, they may not be aware of the details of the program. One big differentiating factor about One-Act is the fact that schools perform in competitions against one another.

Julia Carter '21 explained the differences between One-Act and a regular performance.

"There's a lot more at stake with One-Act being a competition. If it were a normal performance, we would have a given number of performances and we would only be compared to ourselves," Carter said. "With One-Act, if we aren't better than our competitors, that's it. We're done. Season over. It makes it more fun and exciting, but also a lot more stressful at times."

The One-Act performances function a bit differently from the traditional BHS shows. Jillian Elton '21 described what she enjoys about One-Act.

"The competitive aspect of the show might be my favorite thing about One-Act," Elton said. "We have to win, or we are done performing. With a musical or a play, we have a set number of performances and everyone is ready for the end of a show. With One-Act, we never really know when the last time we perform is, so we always make sure to make every performance our best. Everyone is working towards a common goal and we get pretty fierce. We show up

to contests with our matching jackets and act really professional throughout the day. We think the other schools hate us, but we wouldn't change anything about how we present ourselves because that's part of what we do."

The overall competition is broken into three separate competitions: Sub-Sections, Sections, and State. In order to get to Sections, a team must place first or second at Sub-Sections. Furthermore, to qualify for State, they must place first at Sections. In competition, if a team goes over the 35-minute time limit, they will be disqualified. The set and props must also fit in a ten by ten square, with all of it having to be set up and taken down in ten minutes. All of this plus the scoring itself makes One-Act a heavily rule-based competition. Sophia Collova '20 explained the strict rules contributing to the competitive environment of One-Act.

"The rules of One-Act are also very, very strict, which enforces the competitive aspect. We get a time limit for the show and setting up/taking down our set. If we take even a second longer than the time limit, we get disqualified," said Collova.

While One Act is different from the Fall and Spring Productions, it is still just as enjoyable for those who compete, and it is these people who truly make One-Act a competitive performance.

"The rules of One-Act are very, very strict, which enforces the competitive aspect. We get a time limit for the show and setting up and taking down our set. If we take even a second longer than the time limit, we get disqualified," said Sophia Collova '20.



Photo by Alayna Mills



Photos submitted by Jillian Elton



Post Graduation Plans

Buffalo High School Seniors share their plans for after graduation

Alayna Russell
Staff Writer

After graduating from what often feels like an eternity of high school, graduates have a variety of options to choose from when taking their next steps in life. This new-found freedom comes with many different emotions, ranging from excitement to fear and uncertainty.

Post graduation plans look different for every senior at BHS. Looking to the future can be scary, but also very exciting. Not looking too far ahead though, Sydney Polzin '20 talked about her

summer 2020 plans.

"I'm planning on spending as much time with my family and friends as possible," Polzin said. "My past summers have been spent studying for the ACT and doing college visits, so I'm excited to just relax and prepare for college and spend time with my friends and family before I have to say goodbye."

While some have had it all planned out since second grade, others are still figuring out what

post graduation will look like for them. For Blane Lindell '20, he is ready for this next step.

"I'm going to Alexandria Technical and Community College for Law Enforcement," Lindell said. "Reasons why I picked it was because it the best law enforcement school in the state and third in the US. I also picked it because I have a family member that went there and told me it was a good law enforcement program."

Like Lindell, Ella Stevens '20 is

following a family legacy.

"I chose business because I've always been interested in running my own business or taking over my dad's. I guess I've grown up with my dad running a business, so that is probably how I thought of it," Stevens said. "CIS College and Career prep helped me make my decision, because the quizzes always gave me business as a result."

This is a time of much change, and high emotions for all students,

regardless of their plans. Polzin said, "I'm a little sad and nervous, but mostly excited. I'm going to miss Buffalo and my high school friends, but I can't wait to see everything college brings me."

Life after high school looks different for everyone. The end of high school is a bittersweet feeling for many, and this period includes many different emotions. With limited time and endless opportunities, graduates all choose to make their next moves



Silent Demons

How mental illness impacts students at Buffalo High School

Sydney Rhodes
Staff Writer

continued from page 1 "I get nervous if I forget to do homework or have to give a presentation," said Staut. "Other times I can become nervous over one super tiny thing, but then it blows up into a panic attack within ten minutes. Sometimes I become anxious out of nowhere, and those can get bad real quick."

Panic attacks present themselves in different ways depending on the person, and can vary in severity.

"When I have anxiety attacks, I have a hard time catching my breath, I forget even some of the easiest things to remember. I can't focus, and in my major cases it's hard to talk," said Staut. "I can't cry even though I really feel like I need to, my throat and mouth become severely dry, I shake a ton, and my legs give out on me and it's hard to walk."

Since being aware of her mental health, Staut has been on various medications for a year and a half. In most cases, medications don't resolve the anxiety and can actually take about two to six weeks to improve your condition.

"You have to find the right medication and give it some time before it starts to help," said Staut. "I've been through about four different medications until I found the right one that I'm on right now."

Some situations are bound to bring anxiety, but other times one may experience an attack just out of nowhere, for no reason at all.

Mr. Mischke and BHS

Principal Mark Mischke reflects on his ten years at Buffalo High School

| Jordan Eby & Sydney Benzer
Staff Writers

As the first bell of the morning rings at 8:45, hundreds of students flood the hallways to get to their first block classes. Amongst the chaos, Principal Mark Mischke can be found in the atrium greeting the students, optimistic that today will be another day of success. Throughout his 12 years at Buffalo High School, Mischke has seen the school grow in many ways.

“The best part has been watching the staff continue to grow and what they want to accomplish with kids as a whole,” Mischke said. “The things we’re doing in our building now are more helpful and more effective with kids than they were 12 years ago.”

Mischke has made great strides to make sure that every student feels like they are part of a community and has the ability to be successful.

“I have helped to work with our teaching staff to create a community where people feel welcome,” Mischke said. “I think I’ve made an impact in that sense and continue to build off what was previously there, and take that next step to

make a school where kids feel safe and have the opportunity to learn.”

While creating a successful community has proven to be difficult, Mischke has learned to push through the difficulties that he is faced with.

“It has taught me to never give up and continue to be a better listener than a talker and to focus on that,” said Mischke. “It’s taught me to just be attentive to people’s needs and yet also make sure you are there to push and challenge them to be successful.”

Each year, Mischke pushes students to learn and grow, and he often finds he does the same.

“I’ve learned a ton in the last twelve years here. It’s helped me to grow and to grow up as a principal, and continue to figure out what I need to continue to work on,” said Mischke. “[Buffalo High School] has helped to create a sense of family in this community where people are drawn to be a part of the school and they feel they can come in and the doors are open to them.”

Photo by Jordan Hutchcraft



“[Mr. Mischke] is very passionate about what he does and it shows because everyone respects him.”

Sam Mahannah '22

“Mr. Mischke always makes an effort to get to know his students. With a school this big, it’s almost impossible to know the names of every student, but everytime I see Mischke in the halls, he’s saying hi to students and calls them by their names. He knows everyone, what they’re involved in, and who they surround themselves with. It’s rare to come across someone who seems to spend every second thinking of how he can make the lives of his students better.”

Delaney Elton '20

“Mr. Mischke’s kindness and dedication is reflected throughout all of the students at Buffalo High School.”

Victoria Viteri '23