



Brooklyn Santifer--
Column Writing

Burnt at both ends:

The epidemic of stress and burnout among high school students

by Brooklyn Santifer

According to the Understood.org article “Burning out in school: What it means and how to help,” burnout is a state of mental, physical, or emotional exhaustion. For high school students, it is often treated as regular stress from studying or having a heavy workload, but academic burnout is a chronic feeling of cynicism toward school. Eventually, the build-up of stress, work, and exhaustion begins to take a toll. Motivation and interest levels drop, and stress and frustration increase. Unfortunately, I am familiar with this feeling.

The further into school I get, the less I feel like I know where I’m going. Since I was ten, I have been stressed over and over again about where I was going in life and what I was going to do. Yet the more I have thought about it, the less I seem to figure out. If someone were to ask me what I’ve learned in the last three years of high school, I guarantee I couldn’t tell them. I could tell them random snippets of pieces of information I’ve memorized, but not a complete, coherent lesson. Aside from what the teacher was currently talking about, I feel like the information never stuck with me.

I’m not the only high school student who feels this way. According to broadview.sacredsfs.org, 42% of American teens reported they were not doing enough to manage their stress, and 13% percent stated that they never set time aside to manage their stress. Students, especially upperclassmen in high school, cram as much into their schedules as possible. We are often told it will help prepare us for the real world. The talk of college and the real world adds to stress levels leading more students to burnout.

So what can be done about burnout? Growing up is hard enough as is. All the changes and new priorities are inevitable. While you may think it looks nice to colleges to be stretching yourself out thin, it’s more important to value your own well-being and mental health. There is so much more to life than academics, and while they are important to a degree, it’s not more important than your well-being.

Adults always tell you to manage stress, but sometimes basic ideas like keeping a journal to have a spot to just brain-when you have the spare time. If those methods work for finding a way or time to destress can be more stressful, so

The first step in managing your stress and avoiding have a lot of schoolwork piling up? Is your math class feel-Identifying what might be causing your stress can help you

Another important step is realizing that there are just can control is how you choose to respond. You cannot just the fact that you get home late because of cheer or sports music or watching comfort shows. It’s all about how you decide to look at stressful situations.

A very important way to avoid burnout is being able to say no. Do you have too much homework, but your teacher just asked you if you could stay after school to help with a sporting event or concessions? Be honest. People can’t read your mind, and most times, they can’t visually see when you’re stressed until you’re already at your breaking point. Self-advocating is a big thing that I don’t think is taught enough to younger people. It’s not until someone begins to grow and mature that they learn how to self-advocate, but it’s an important skill for anyone of any age to understand. You are not a bad guy for saying no. You are not a bad person for thinking of your mental health.

Part of self-advocating is telling people how you feel. You don’t need to go screaming from the rooftops that you are stressed, but when people ask or if you just need someone to talk to, you can take that opportunity to decompress. Your friends, family, and the loving people around you don’t think it is a burden to listen to you complain. When they truly care for you, they will make time for you, to listen to what you say and how you feel.

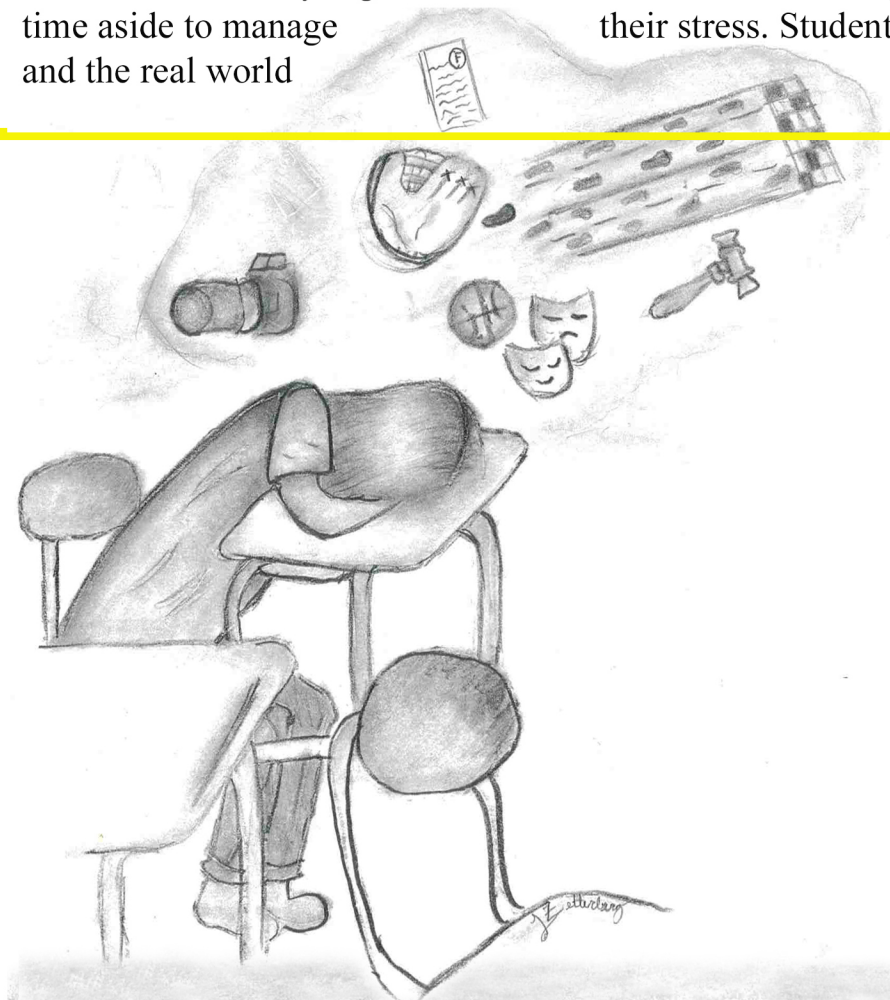
Stress is a normal part of life and a strong motivator for a lot of people. However, burnout is a serious problem threatening the mental health of high school students. Taking the time to take care of yourself, self-advocating, and being able to tell people no are just stepping stones to taking back control of your stress level.

Another important step is realizing that there are just some things you cannot control or change, but what you can control is how you choose to respond.

it’s not as easy as just taking a few breaths. There are the dump all of your thoughts or practicing meditation you, that’s great. But for some people, the process of they choose to ignore it.

burnout is to identify the stress in your life. Do you ing extra hard this year? Is work stressing you out? address those triggers.

some things you cannot control or change, but what you sit there and obsess over things. Maybe you cannot change practices, but you can use that time to relax by listening to



Don't overcommit.
It's okay to say no.