

EMBRACING PIERCINGS

JOHNSON SHOWS THAT STEREOTYPES DON'T EQUATE TO REALITY

When junior **Avonna Johnson (11)** decided to get a nose piercing, it wasn't to make a statement to anyone else.

It was simply something that felt right. "Ever since I was little, I've wanted piercings and whenever I saw people with them, I thought they were so cool," Johnson said. "Now that I am older, I still feel they make people look awesome." For years, piercings have carried stereotypes — that they are done for attention, rebellion or to follow a trend. Martinez said those assumptions miss the point.

Another common myth suggests piercings

signal insecurity or a lack of confidence. Students who choose to get pierced often describe the opposite experience.

Many say the act itself feels empowering, a small but meaningful way to take ownership of their appearance. For some, a piercing marks a first step into self-expression; for others, it is a way to break from the usual and embrace individuality. Piercings also are not always permanent, but their impact can be lasting. If someone decides a piercing is no longer for them, it can be removed, while the confidence gained from trying something new often remains.



Avonna Johnson (11)

FACIAL PIERCINGS BOOST CONFIDENCE, INDIVIDUAL STYLE FOR MANY STUDENTS

STORY BY
MARGARET HERRMANN-ARMSBURY

When **Josephine Rickett (10)** looks in the mirror, she doesn't just see jewelry — she sees confidence.

Whether tied to confidence, personal style or cultural roots, piercings hold different meanings for each student. For many, they are more than accessories — they are a reflection of who they are.

"I do feel more confident with my piercings," Rickett said. "I feel like I get more confident with the more piercings I get."

At school, piercings have become more than a passing trend. Rickett said her first piercing beyond her ears — a nose piercing — marked the start of that journey.

"It was my first other than my ears, and I definitely think I would get more," Rickett said. For **Keaton Johnson (10)**

(10), piercings are closely tied to personal style and influence. Johnson said they decided to get a lip piercing after seeing how common it had become. "I saw a lot of people have it and thought it was cool," Johnson said.

Although Johnson is not planning on getting another piercing right away, they already have future goals. "My goal is snake bites," Johnson said, adding that piercings fit well with the music they listen to and the style they like.

Christian Jandreau (11) said piercings are something he has wanted since he was a child and sees them as a way to stand out.

"I've always wanted piercings since I was a kid, and I was just bored," Jandreau said.

Jandreau said piercings boost his confidence because they are different from what most people have. He hopes to get his lip pierced, redo a tongue piercing despite the discomfort and add more ear piercings.

Piercings go beyond fashion and hold cultural meaning for **Kyndall Rios (11)**.

"I got my piercings because I love jewelry and I thought I would look good with them," Rios said, noting she wants more in the future, including an eyebrow piercing, a dermal and additional ear piercings.

One piercing, however, carries deeper significance. "I got my septum for a different reason," Rios said. "It's a big part of Mexican culture, like Indigenous Mexican culture, so I was like, might as well."

MORE THAN JUST jewelry

"I never thought I'd get facial piercings, but I always got made fun of because of my nose. I would get called Gru or a witch or a troll just because my nose. I tried everything to make my nose less noticed by people and nothing worked until I got to high school and saw all these people who were different and I got that and did the same thing by getting my septum."

CHRISTOPHER HERRMANN (11)

ABOUT THOSE ACCESSORIES

What is your feeling on facial piercings and whether you'd want one.



"I got piercings because I like how people they are and I just really like jewelry. Yes, I definitely feel confident with them. It adds an accessory to my face."
JORDYN OSBORN (10)



"I don't like facial piercings because I think they distract from the beauty of people's face, but I think they look good to others. Just to me and my culture, I don't like them."
KAKASI KABALA (11)



"People were telling me to get my eyebrow pierced. They thought it would look good, and so did I. Even if I didn't, I could just take it out. It doesn't really change my confidence."
LUCAS GILL (09)



Christian Jandreau (11)