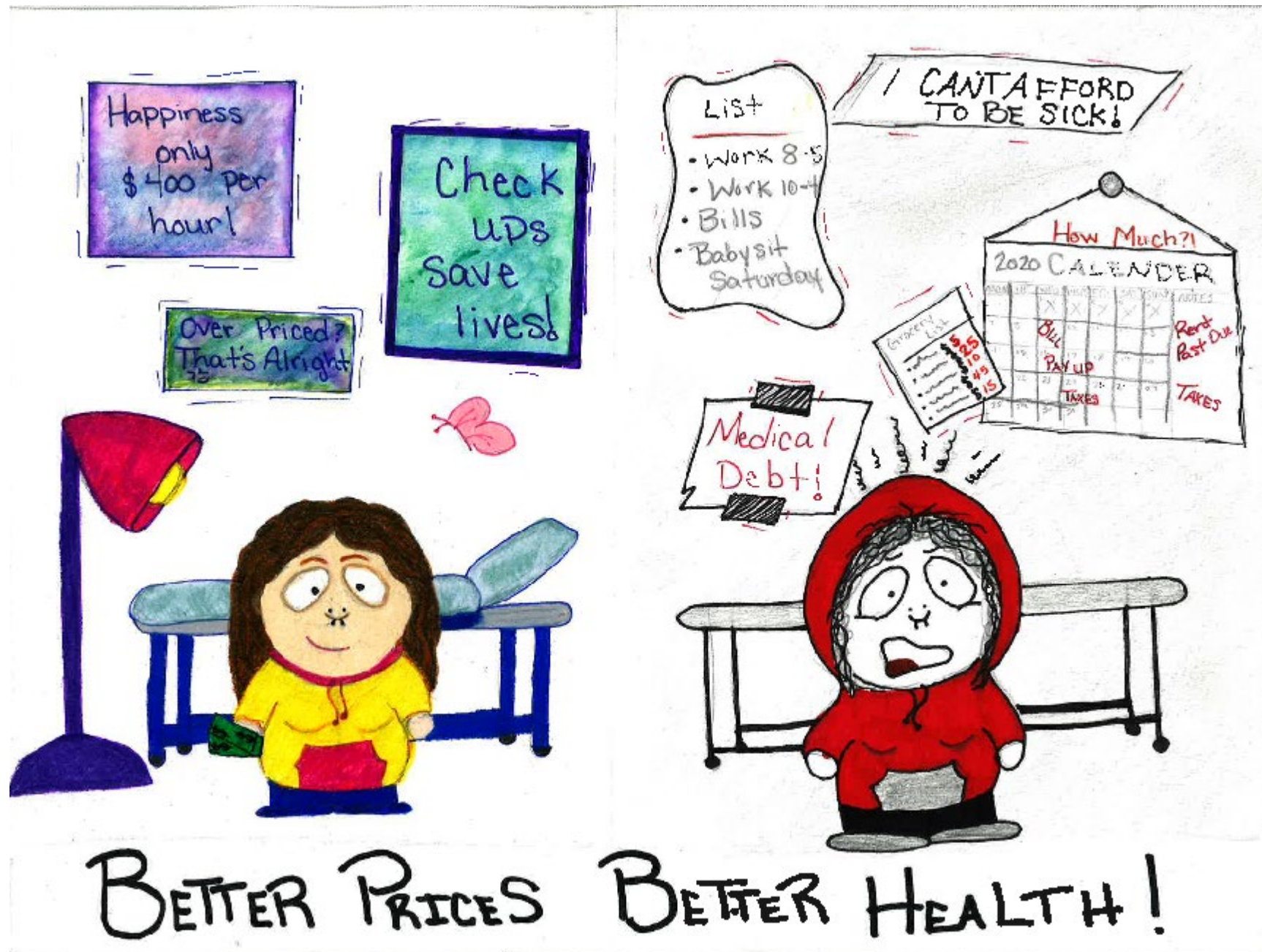




Artistic Statement

When creating my editorial cartoon, I started with a blank page to create a rough draft and looked up cartoon characters for ideas. I knew that I wanted one side of the page with someone who is wealthier and can afford medical care, while the other side struggled with poverty. This is to show the true difference between levels and help create a visual of how important medical care is. I was further interested in how eye-catching South Park characters are. This inspired me to create my own character from this style and create myself as one of these characters. I wanted the character to have a wider body build, with messy, wavy hair. Furthermore, I used my own physical features to create this style. This includes adding the nose piercings I have, the clothing options I typically choose from, and also my hair/skin coloring. After my character was sketched, I began working on the background. I decided to show them in a doctor's office. The right side is chaotic and full of anxiousness to show how struggling to afford medical bills can make an individual face many challenges. I emphasized the bills due, taxes, and worrying about the money needed to survive. On the other side, I made it cleaner and more put together for those who do not have to worry about the debt medical care can leave behind. This side emphasized how bright and healthy life could be if everyone got the medical care needed. The more chaotic side was dull, sad, and messy, which was shown using the colors red, gray, white, and black. In comparison, the peaceful side is full of color and happiness. Once this rough draft was created, I began bringing the cartoon to life on a separate page. I began with the character, then moved onto the details in the background, and finally finished it by coloring the image in. To color in the images, I used mediums of colored pencil, pencil, ink, and watercolor.

Published Editorial Article

Medical and Mental Health Care Should Be Cheaper

Did you know that in Ancient Greece and Rome, doctors used cobwebs as bandages because they had natural antiseptic and antifungal properties? This just shows that people as a group have been using medical care for centuries. Not only that, but we have also been evolving to try to solve mental illnesses. Everyone, at some point in their lives, needs medical assistance. As stated by <https://www.cdc.gov/>, about 90% of adults, 65 and older, need medical care for chronic illnesses, and 75% of adults between the ages of 35-64 also require medical care. When referring to <https://www.kff.org/>, 23% of adults receive mental health treatment. With that being said, <https://www.kff.org/> also states that about 36% of people report avoiding or even refusing medical care due to high prices being overwhelming. This doesn't even include medical and mental care for children. This brings me to the argument that medical care and mental health care should be cheaper.

When discussing the importance, medical care is used to conduct experiments, diagnose illnesses, and treat illnesses. Also helping to heal injuries and keep the mind, as well as the body, healthy. Seeking regular checkups can prevent illnesses and manage them before they worsen. This also lengthens the life expectancy of individuals. Medical care is important for human safety. Some people can go months with an illness or a life-threatening disease without even noticing that they require care.

If there is a case where an individual is experiencing discomfort, pain, or an illness, medical care can help lessen the pain and treat the issue. For those who may struggle with disabilities, it is important to manage health care. This ensures that the individual is using the proper medication, is not declining in health, and further ensures their ability to live life properly isn't decreasing. Medical care is to care for others, so this not only includes the body but also the mind. Such as psychotherapy and mental health care.

Mental health care is critical for the human mind. Some individuals may believe that they are not in need of mental care. However, just by attending therapy and strengthening your mind, you can prevent mental illnesses. These mental illnesses include depression, anxiety, and even OCD. For those who may struggle with mental illnesses, it is crucial for the individuals to seek professional care. Psychotherapy can help an individual learn coping mechanisms, get treatment, learn ways of expression, and much more. Not only that, but mental health care can help train the brain's flight or fight mode, along with the nervous system. This can help strengthen one's response to stressful situations.

In today's world, medical care and psychotherapy are expensive and can leave many with debt. Some could argue that this is the reason that we should have insurance, but according to <https://www.ramseysolutions.com>, insurance is typically around \$456 per month. So for individuals living from paycheck to paycheck, this extra bill could be more than they have. When insurance is involved, medical care costs more than it would without it. Those individuals who avoid medical care because of the prices could have underlying issues that aren't treated until it is too late. <https://dollarfor.org/> states that close to 23 million people owe significant medical debt. This is nearly 1 person in every 10 adults.

Even with lowering the cost of medical care, nurses and doctors would still be paid a significant amount, and will continue to grow. By decreasing the cost of medical care and psychotherapy, our economy would slowly grow out of debt. This would also help improve

households due to the increase in household disposable income. It would further ensure households have more money available to spend on food, water, services, and needs. Also, reducing the cost of medical care would most likely decrease inflation. This would be a major improvement for the economy.

In conclusion, medical and mental health care have been used for centuries and is extremely important for everyone. This not only benefits people's physical, but also their mental well-being. With the prices being so high, not only is it straining the inflation in the economy, but it is also lessening the health of children, adults, and the elderly who cannot afford care. These prices should be reduced to benefit the economy and open up medical assistance to those in need. Help should not be this expensive. Help is meant to improve those around us and in our world, not make them wish they could afford it.