

Nicotine, teens, and change

Age restrictions on tobacco and nicotine use usher in progress

By: April Lawyer @21aplawy

On December 20th of 2019, the legal age to use and buy nicotine changed nation-wide. Now, in order to use and buy nicotine, consumers must be 21 years of age, as opposed to the past age limit of 18 years. Products barred from those younger than 21 include cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and e-cigarettes, a product extremely popular with high-school students. This new regulation has garnered both praise and criticism, due to its benefits and downsides. It is supposed to prevent young adults from buying and becoming addicted to tobacco products, and by extension nicotine products. Luke Kasner, junior, who has never used tobacco or nicotine himself, thinks the law is a good way to curb nicotine use in high schoolers. "Most people in highschools, at least, aren't 21 so hopefully it will cut down on nicotine usage in highschools. It will make it significantly harder to get access to nicotine-related items." Kasner argued that it would act as a barrier between highschoolers and the adverse consequences of nicotine and tobacco products. However, school nurse Mrs. Nancy Alderdyce doesn't think that the law will get rid of nicotine abuse in youth by very much. She explains how her aunt, who had worked for the American Cancer Society, approached then Gov. Vilsack about a proposed tax on tobacco products. "He told her that it was an election year and that several of the people in government's elections were sponsored by cigarette companies so they would not be able to approve the tax." Alderdyce says that this internal

influence from tobacco companies is a huge setback to any meaningful anti-nicotine bills. Alderdyce also warns of the ways nicotine products lure highschoolers in, "When they make cereal flavors and candy flavors and stuff, that's not an adult thing that's a kid thing." By marketing their products as "fun" and using flavors that appeal to a young consumer base, companies of nicotine products are able to exploit an entire generation of new nicotine addicts.

Tobacco products also pose a threat to the health of young adults. Smoking, for instance, can cause numerous types of cancer among other diseases. The mouth is especially affected by tobacco products, and using cigarettes or chewing tobacco can cause browning on the teeth, damage to the gums, and general irritation.

Effective or not, the new tobacco age law has been spurring talk and is just another step in the fight against nicotine abuse in youth. What with it being such a new law, it will take time before the full-effects of its influence can be accurately measured and assessed.



A poster in the nurse's office describing some of the harmful effects of using cigarettes, a nicotine and tobacco product.

Serving more than lunch

By: @jaquan_matthews Jaquan Matthews

School lunch is a huge part of our day. We thrive off of it, and we need it for energy. We eat the lunch ladies food and have no complaint about it. We see the lunch ladies serving food and cleaning the dishes. The kids look like they love the food, but what is a lunch lady's opinion?

The lunch lady Marty Shaffer is the grandparent of Marion students, both juniors, William Shaffer and Jacob Shaffer. She has been working at Marion High School for 38 years now, and she will continue to work here until further notice. In the lunch department, they have five employees, and two more come in from Starry elementary school after lunch. She feels respected by all of the other lunch ladies. Shaffer's main job is to take care of lunch tickets but if she has too she will serve the kids as well. They wear color tops and white bottoms. When working as a lunch lady you are going to have some altercations with kids. "Overall kids are good once in a while," said Shaffer. Marion High School kids are well disciplined and are good for the most part. Shaffer said that she has caught someone stealing before, but not lately. Even after some of the negativity, Shaffer still loves what she does, and also feels as she is very consistent and good at her job. "Kids are very mannerly and I am thanked by just about everyone that gets lunch," said Shaffer. The lunch ladies cannot control what we eat or what they serve us. The Government controls all of that. She likes the school lunch too and she eats it also. Marty loves the lunch and the school and she only wants a

new cafeteria but is grateful for everything she has. So we got a look into what a lunch

lady's everyday life is but what does studentstink??

Marty Shaffer is not the only one who enjoys school lunch. Just like many people who eat school lunch one student that enjoys it is Sam Murphy junior. He enjoys and eats lunch every day. Murphy thanks the lunch ladies every day and thinks it would be rude not to. Instead, he could go home or to a restaurant to buy food if he wanted too. He does not think that school lunch cost too much for him. He highly appreciates the lunch ladies for what they do for us. "Most people thank them enough," said Murphy. "We have a pretty good school for the most part," Murphy said. He thinks a nice gesture to show appreciation towards them is getting them something. The Lunch ladies does a ton for us. They feed us and make sure we have energy. We have respectful kids that thank them and we should keep doing that.



Marty Shaffer works on getting the milks separated while kids are having lunch.