

Can spoiled children face reality?

By Kaela Dominguez
3rd Place tie, Opinion Writing
Division: Middle School

Are your kids spoiled? Will your kids be able to survive in the real world? Can kids carry on without their parents? iPods! Cellphones! Computers! Some people say that kids are way too spoiled. Personally, I think that kids are way too spoiled and that when they see the big picture, will they be able to face it. When kids go off to college or leave home, will they be able to survive without their parents? Way back when, there were no fancy computers or iPods; all they had were lame

boomboxes and cheap cell phones. Also back then, they were satisfied with what they got. But nowadays, kids are more spoiled then ever and always get what they want. Parents always use the excuse: Their grandparents spoil them. But is that the truth? Do you even realize you are spoiling your kids? I think that parents really don't care what they buy for their child, as long as their children are happy. As practically a teenager, myself, I tend to want more and when I look at the past, I see they didn't have much, so I am



Dominguez

very grateful to have all of the great things in my life. I think that all kids should know that being spoiled, is not the reason for living their lives or for being popular. Kids are the future, but will they be able to take the risk of facing reality? Will your child be able to face the real world? Parents, are you concerned that your children will not be able to leave home? I think that parents have a right to be concerned because they know if their children are too spoiled, they won't be able to go through life. Children going off to college who were spoiled in their childhood will soon see that life all comes down on them when they see the payments and reality in front of them.

Is spoiled the meaning of popular? I think in most schools that people judge you by the things that you have. Kids always think that that if they don't have nice things, that it is as if they don't even exist. Spoiling your children may make them think that they can get anything they want at the snap of their fingers. I think that children are way too concerned about popularity. You know the expression, "Don't judge a book by its cover." Life is not about popularity, but about what kind of person you are on the inside.

The author was a seventh-grader at Holy Spirit School in Fairfield at the time this article was submitted.

Shades of reflection ...



Not too cool to eat lunch at school

A group of friends at Buckingham Charter Magnet High School hang out to have lunch at "the pole," as reflected in someone's sunglasses in this image by Samantha Snow. It earned her an honorable mention in the Campus Star photojournalism competition. She was a junior in Jarden Austin's classroom at the time the photo was submitted.

Death penalty is wrong choice on many levels

By John Dolan
3rd place tie, Opinion Writing
Division: 5-6 Grade



Dolan

The worst death I could imagine would be dying because of the death penalty. My chance of experiencing such a terrible death is not very big. According to the Death Penalty Information Center, since 1976 California has only had 13 executions and we currently have 657 people on Death Row. Of that number, only 15 are women. Before 1976, when there were changes in the laws, California executed 709 people. According to a Sacramento Bee study, the California death penalty system costs taxpayers more than \$114 million a year beyond the cost of just keeping the convicts locked up for life. Another study done by the San Jose Mercury News argued that California would save \$90 million per year if it abolished the death penalty.

group of countries with which we should be proud to be included. On Dec. 13, 2006, Angel Diaz was executed by lethal injection in Florida. The botched procedure took more than twice as long as usual, and was horrible. Diaz was conscious but paralyzed for most of the 34-minute execution. Could this be cruel and unusual punishment? Isn't that something that our Constitution says nobody should have to go through? The death penalty is wrong. I think that two wrongs do not make a right, and that killing is always wrong. Life in prison without the chance of ever getting out is a horrible punishment, but is not a wrong thing to do. Locking someone in a cell and allowing him or her to live out their life without the freedom they took from someone else, in my opinion, is a fair punishment. We should get rid of the death penalty. Because a criminal killed a person doesn't mean we should kill the murderer; it means he should go to jail for the rest of his life. This approach will cost us less money, make the United States' legal system like most other countries, and show that our country can treat people humanely and with respect.

The author was a sixth-grader at Notre Dame School in Vacaville at the time this essay was submitted.

Secondhand smoke is a bad thing

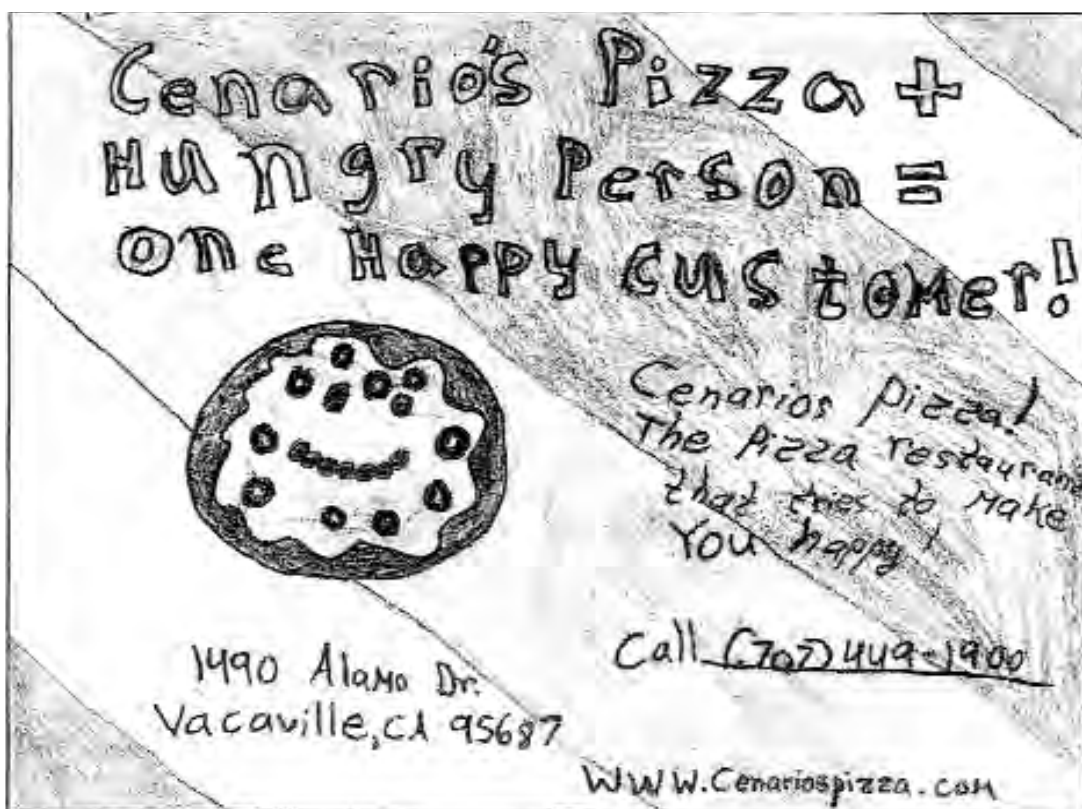
By Mark Mraz
Honorable Mention, Opinion Writing
Division: 3-4 Grade

Smoking around children should be illegal, because of the effects of secondhand smoke from cigarettes. Secondhand smoke is the smoke that comes from the end of the cigarette that is burning and that is breathed out by the smoker. It is full of harmful chemicals. Breathing secondhand smoke is

bad for anyone, but it is especially harmful to children. A child's lungs are smaller and they catch diseases easier than adults can. A child's lungs can be damaged easier because they are smaller, but they take in more chemicals from secondhand smoke than adults do. Children who breathe in secondhand smoke are more likely to get lung diseases like bronchitis and pneumonia. They can even have more ear infections and develop

asthma more easily. When children who have asthma are around secondhand smoke, they can have more asthma attacks. Children and other people can die from secondhand smoke. Second-hand smoke is a really bad thing. The author was a fourth-grader in Wendy Heinz' classroom at Notre Dame School in Vacaville when he submitted this essay.

Design-an-Ad winner



Michaela Gallegos earned an honorable mention in the Reporter's Campus Star Design-an-Ad competition for this advertisement she created for Cenario's Pizza. Michaela was a fifth-grader in Roxann Burn's classroom at Markham Elementary School in Vacaville at the time she submitted this entry in the competition.

Editorial Cartoon winner



This cartoon by Kayla Burley earned her a third-place tie in the 4-5 grade division of the opinion writing/editorial cartoon competition of The Reporter's Campus Star student journalism contest. Kayla was a sixth-grader in Peggy Stone's classroom at Tremont Elementary School in Dixon when she submitted this entry.