

## Technology is not good in all cases

By Anna Lee  
Staff Writer

Although teachers and parents have thought of students only using cell phones to text *lol*, *brb*, and *ily* in school, cell phones can be used for much more than these small communications. The answer to a test or assignment question can be passed in the click of a button.

The fear that most teachers have when talking about cell phones in school is students using them to cheat in class.

"It is a concern, and I try to pay attention to students doing things like that, but so far I haven't seen any potential problems with them in my class," said math teacher Gary More.

For Freeman teachers, who do not allow cell phones in the classroom, it may not seem like a problem, but students will do whatever they can to sneak a text during class.

Technology has gotten to the point that students don't know how to live without it. Even if a teacher that says "I don't

allow phones in my class," that does not mean that students won't have them in their pockets, ready to press send when the teacher is faced the other way.

"I use my phones a lot during school," said freshman Colbi Smith. "In the last week, I have used it at least once in every class; I'm not going to lie."

If students aren't using their phones to cheat, does that make knowing students have them any better? Even if they are texting

"What are you up to?" or "Hey!", students are still being distracted from learning. The use of cell phones may not be to cheat, but there is always a chance that some students are using their phones for something other than sending a message that says "TTYL."

"Students will argue and say that their parents are texting them or need to talk to them," said Freeman offi-

cer Ron Nye. "If their parent needs to talk to them that badly, then they can call the office. I am sure that all of the parents have the office number and can call the school if they need to talk to their kid."

The affect that cell phones have on teachers during school is huge, but the affects on the students are just as high. Being able to spread rumors is a huge risk, and the fact that students can spread them three

times faster with a cell phone increases this factor dramatically. If a rumor where to go around without cell phones, it would take maybe days to spread around to every person in the school. With cell phones though, a student could send one text message and in an instant everyone in the school could know. Risking the spread of gossip is not worth the few positive

things that cell phones do bring.

"My biggest fear with cell phones in school is bullying and sexting," said officer Nye.

Cell phones have become the new aid for bullying. Instead of having to face the person themselves, students can send a message and not have to worry about what the person's actual reaction is.

"If a student was caught bullying with their phones they wouldn't be allowed to have them," said principal Dave Smith. "We would check their phone into the office every morning."

Technology can be good when in need to talk to parents or plan an activity, but cell phones are not needed in school and should not be used.

No matter why a student is using their cell phone in school, it is most likely being used for a reason that is not helping them learn anyway. Cell phones do not help students in getting a good education and should not be allowed in school.

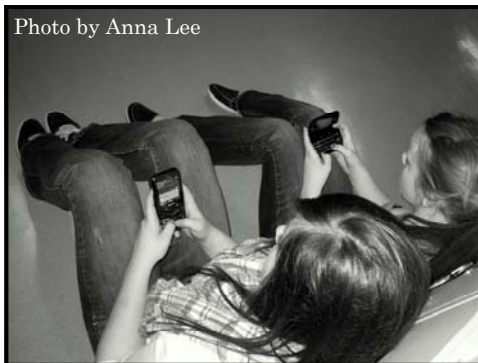


Photo by Anna Lee  
Freeman High School freshmen Hannah Williams and Hope Mathews sneak in a couple of texts during school hours.

## At what point is skinny is too skinny?

By Kindra Malloy  
Staff Writer

In today's society, girls are constantly surrounded by images of tall, beautiful, skinny girls. The pressure to be thin is greater than ever.

According to [www.state.sc.us](http://www.state.sc.us), 50% of girls in America between the ages of 11 and 13 see themselves as overweight. Girls ages 11 and older will go to any lengths to lose weight. Plastic surgery and extreme dieting are some of the most common strategies that girls use to lose weight. But, do these strategies do more harm than good? As a matter of fact, they do.

Extreme dieting such as not eating, and over-exercising are very harmful for growing bodies, especially when put together. When someone doesn't eat

or eats very little, they are not giving their bodies the nutrients needed to stay healthy. They will become fatigued more quickly, and have a lack of energy.

Many people think that because exercise is good for their bodies, the more they do, the better for their health. Well...that's wrong. The truth is that too much exercise could actually do you harm. You could get "exercise bulimia," a similar eating disorder to bulimia.

Exercise bulimia is a subset of the psychological disorder called bulimia in which a person is compelled to exercise in an effort aimed at burning the calories of food energy and fat reserves to an excessive level that negatively affects their health. The damage normally occurs through not giving the body adequate rest for athletic recovery compared to their exercise levels, leading to

increasing levels of disrepair. If a person eats a normally healthy and adequate diet, but exercises in levels they know require higher levels of nutrition, this can also be seen as a form of anorexia ([exercise.about.com](http://exercise.about.com)).

Exercise bulimia can have devastating results, like an increased risk of injury and suppressing immune systems.

So what else can you do to lose weight but still stay healthy? The answer is actually quite simple. Eating right and exercising. With the right diet and daily exercise you can lose weight and keep it off! If you are looking for some ex-

tra help to lose weight, there are many programs out there, such as Weight Watchers, Jenny Craig, and Nutrisystem.

"Seeing models that are stick thin, make you feel like you need to be thin in order to fit in," said one sophomore.

So next time you look at yourself in the mirror and



Photo by Kindra Malloy  
Freeman students hit the weights as part of their physical education classes.

think, "All I need to do is lose weight, and then I will finally fit in," think again! You're beautiful just the way you are, and if you want to lose weight for you or for your health, then good for you! But keep in mind the healthiest and most effective way to lose weight is by eating right and exercising!

## Equal rights for all couples

By Maddie Keebler  
Staff Writer

The issue of gay rights has come back into the news. Many new laws have been passed, either enthusing or outraging people. Homosexuals are slowly, but surely, earning their rights to get married throughout the US.

"I am not attracted to the same sex, but if someone is gay or lesbian, I am accepting," said junior Felicia Jackson.

Some people think that a woman loving a woman or a man loving a man is wrong. There are also people that are neither gay nor lesbian, but are accepting of that choice. We're all human here; we all fall in love. You can't help who it's with.

There are many people in the media that are gay or lesbian. Ellen DeGeneres is a comedian, and talk show host who also lent her voice to the character Dory, in the Disney Pixar movie *Finding Nemo*. Rosie O'Donnell, Neil Patrick Harris, Melissa Etheridge, Elton John, Wanda Sykes, and Lindsay Lohan have all been in same-sex relationships. When we see famous people coming out, it seems more real. If our favorite star is homosexual, we wouldn't stop liking them, would we? Probably not.

The media influences how we look at situations. It's easy to judge when it's just some random person on the street, but when it is someone we are familiar with, things change.

"I think the media glorifies the gay and lesbian community," said Jackson. "TV shows make it seem normal and okay. It makes people more comfortable with the idea of seeing gays and lesbians."

There are many popular TV shows that feature homosexual characters. *Modern Family* features a gay

couple that adopts a little girl. There are both gay and lesbian characters on *Glee*. *Desperate Housewives* and *Brothers and Sisters* also have gay couples. These shows portray the wonders of acceptance and the torment of rejection.

In Washington, same-sex marriages are now legal. Washington joins New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont and Iowa as states that legally recognize same-sex marriages.

In April 2011, Governor Christine Gregoire signed a law treating out-of-state same-sex marriages as do-

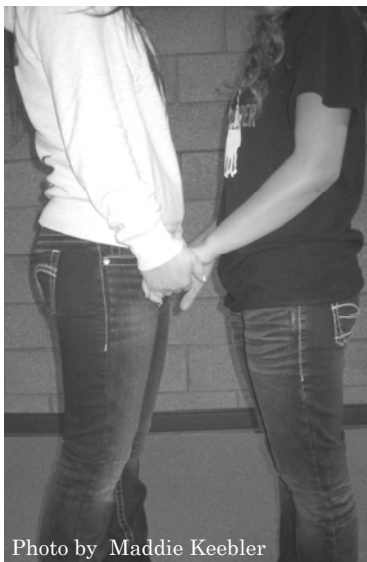


Photo by Maddie Keebler

Same-sex relationships are now being more widely accepted by society.

mestic partnerships in Washington. In a domestic partnership, the government recognizes the relationship between two people who cohabit and share a long-term sexual relationship, giving them some rights as a couple under the law. Washington used to honor lawful out-of-state domestic partnerships and civil unions, but out-of-state same-sex marriages were not recognized in any way. Washington now recognizes same-sex marriages, giving them the same legal rights as straight married couples.

In a way, history is repeating itself. The Civil Rights movement of the 1960's was similar to this. African-Americans were not given the same rights as everyone else. They were not given equal rights in all parts of the country, such as the south which limited the legal rights and humane treatment of African-Americans.

Homosexuals get harassed, they can't get married in most places, and they aren't accepted by part of modern society. It's sad, really. America is supposed to be a free country. As a nation, we need to do everything we can to make sure everybody has the same rights.

## Do we blame TV for the increase of teen pregnancies?

By Maddie Richardson  
Staff writer

Some TV shows these days are about teen parents. The idea of the shows is to try and prevent teen pregnancies. On *16 and Pregnant*, MTV is trying to prevent teen pregnancy and to show young girls what it would be like to get pregnant in high school. However, what it's really doing is glamorizing teen pregnancy as a means to become famous. Girls watch these shows and think that if the girls on TV have a show for getting pregnant, then maybe they can too. There is a disconnect on the show between the reality of being a pregnant/teenage mother and the world MTV portrays.

Some students think this show is ridiculous and should just get rid of them and find a better way to communicate about sex with your parents.

"Some people think that parents should have a more proper sex talk with their children and maybe allow them to have access to protection," sophomore Kirsten Fuchs said.

Parents should take more responsibility with their children's actions. Don't be afraid to talk to your parents about sex.

"Most parents are afraid to have the sex talk with their children because they think that they are going to become sexually active," said sophomore Shelby Bliessner. "But really, every parent should have the sex talk with their kids. You

might be afraid to sit down and discuss sex with your parents, but in the long run, it's going to help you out. Just like the commercials for these teen

pregnancy - Pregnant by accident or purpose? MTV makes girls desperate to get on TV.

shows tell you."

Think about it: Do you want to spend your teenage years changing diapers and staying up all night taking care of a crying baby? The answer is no.

Being a teen parent is not as glamorous as MTV makes it look like. The reality of having a baby is not just making thousands of dollars for an episode; it's about having responsibility of taking care of another life, paying bills and possibly being alone.

*Seventeen Magazine* ran an article with facts about girls who purposely got pregnant. 20% are planned pregnancies, 59% never finish high school, and almost 50% end up on welfare.

As soon as you become pregnant, your whole life turns upside down. No more going to parties, or hanging out with friends all the time. Your teenage years are supposed to be about having fun and planning for your future, not taking care of a baby.

Our generation is growing up way too fast. With all these shows about teen pregnancy and teen moms, girls want to be just like them and have their very own show. Some girls decide to follow that example, becoming pregnant because they want to be famous. They overlook the difficulties that these young women face on the show.

Why would you want to become a teen parent and have all the responsibilities that most adults don't even have?



Photo by Maddie Richardson

## Texting and driving-a lethal combination

By Hannah Williamson  
Staff Writer

Since when is “LOL” or “OMG” more important than someone’s safety? When did it become a higher priority to read a simple text than to pay attention to the road while driving? Texting while driving, especially for teens, has become an expanding problem and it’s getting out of hand. Is a one-word text really worth sending if it jeopardizes someone’s life?

According to the National Safety Council, cell phones were factors in 1.3 million car crashes across the United States last year. Of these accidents, many are fatal. Considering the fact that teen drivers already don’t have that much driving experience, there is no way that they can always pay full attention to the road and safely control their vehicles while preoccupied by a text message or phone call.

“Texting while driving is really tempting, but isn’t a good idea,” said freshman Emily Dearman. “It’s really dangerous, especially for teenage drivers, like me, who don’t have a lot of ex-

perience.”

However, just because a person has more experience does not give them a good excuse to text and drive either, because it is still an interruption to their focus.



Photo By Hannah Williamson

Texting while driving takes the driver’s eyes off the road, endangers everyone.

“The biggest danger,” Officer Ron Nye explained. “Is the distraction. You have to take your eyes off the road!”

Texting while driving isn’t really any safer than driving while intoxicated due to the fact that it takes your focus off of what is important—controlling your vehicle. In 2010, a study was conducted stating that the reaction time for someone texting dropped by 35% while the reaction

time of legally drunk drivers was decreased by only 12% ([www.massachusettsduilawyerblog.com](http://www.massachusettsduilawyerblog.com)).

Newer laws in Washington State have prohibited all drivers from texting or using a hand-held device at all. It is a primary law, which means a cop can pull you over just for texting, without any other noticed infraction. Any violation of this law results in a driving ticket of \$124. ([drivinglaws.org](http://drivinglaws.org))

Texting while driving is an unintelligent, ignorant and selfish act because, not only does it affect the driver’s safety, but it can harm the people around them too.

The best way to avoid texting and driving, according to Nye, is to turn off your phone as soon as you get in the car. If you need to tell a parent about where you are, it’s better to call or text them once you’ve reached where you’re going instead of taking the risk of using your phone while driving.

There are also other ways to be safer while driving, including using a Bluetooth or speaker system that allows you to talk in your car without needing to hold your phone. Any of these alternatives are better than taking your hand off the wheel to use your cell phone for any reason.

## How big an affect do game raters have on sales?

By Teigan Glidewell  
Staff Writer

The people who rate games are a whole board called Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB). The ESRB ratings are designed to provide concise and impartial information about the content in computer and video games, so that consumers, especially parents, can make an informed purchase decision. ESRB ratings have two equal parts: rating symbols that suggest age appropriateness for the game, and content descriptors, which indicate elements in a game that may have triggered a particular rating and/or may be of interest or concern. Game rating can negatively affect the amount of copies sold. Games could be prevented from reaching their full potential due to the ratings.

A video game content rating system is a system used for the classification of video games into suitability-related groups. Most of these systems are generally associated with or sponsored by a government, and are sometimes part of the local motion picture rating system. The ESA says that game players under the age of 18 report that they get their parent's permission 83 percent of the time before purchasing a computer or video game. This is important because kids that are 10-12 could be playing a very graphic game.

“I need them [ratings] to buy my games,” said freshman Billy Sims. “My parents never question the ratings though.”

Similar to other forms of media, video games have been the subject of argument between leading professionals. They focus on whether or not restrictions keep people from

playing the games. Often these bouts of criticism come from the use of debated topics such as video game graphic violence and gory scenes, portrayal of criminal behavior or other provocative and objectionable material.

“I think game ratings are good because they help give people an idea of what they have,” explained freshman Grady Arnzen.

Game ratings can affect games because if the game is rated M for mature, parents, especially those who have young children, will not allow their children to buy or play the game. Those with inappropriate language or gory scenes are often targeted.

“Games with higher level of ratings don’t get as much money as they could” said Sims.

When games are highly anticipated, they usually sell a lot of games. Many of the top ten games of 2011 were rated M. Due to their mature ratings, they did not meet their full potential.

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| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Top 10 Games of<br/>2011</b></p> <p><b>#10- Uncharted 3</b><br/> <b>#9-La Noir</b><br/> <b>#8-Little Big Planet 2</b><br/> <b>#7-Dues Ex: Revolution</b><br/> <b>#6-NBA 2k12</b><br/> <b>#5-Saints Row</b><br/> <b>#4-Bastion</b><br/> <b>#3-Skyrim</b><br/> <b>#2-Batman: Arkham City</b><br/> <b>#1-Portal 2</b></p> |
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