

# Siblings: A blessing or a curse for Whirlies?

By Brian Schiller  
Staff Writer

Brothers and sisters, both younger and older, have a large effect on the lives of many students at Grimsley. Siblings are often cited as the main difficulty in a teenager's life whether it be because a sibling had to be driven somewhere, refused to drive you somewhere, or was just making life hard.

Despite the troubles they can cause, many people say that the benefits of having siblings outweigh the negatives.

"Siblings are able to learn from each other, in some instances protect or support each other, as well as being a companion," said Dr. Dorothy Johnston, a child psychologist.

One of the most common complaints of an only child is loneliness in a world full of adults. "Only" children often latch on to another family with more children in order to become part of the group. Children that do not spend time around other children usually don't pick up on the definition of a child very early. They often carry doubts about how other chil-

dren think, dress, or act that can hinder their first experiences in school and make the transition to being surrounded by many kids difficult. Studies have also shown that "only" children turn into more self-centered adults that are sometimes less adept at fighting for their needs. Johnston said that tendencies such as these can be curbed if parents make sure that their child has contact with other children.

There are also several negatives to having siblings. Sibling rivalry often develops to a serious level in families with multiple children. The children feel a need to compete for anything from material possessions to the attention of their parents. Common items that are fought over are the front seat, the phone,

the television, and anything on which there are differing viewpoints.

Seawell photo



Lacy & Meredith Seawell stick together.

"We fight about clothes, the phone, and different views," said Niesha Douglas, a junior, of her arguments with her sister.

The Douglas sisters have an unusual relationship since they are twins. The closer together in age siblings are, the more they fight when they are younger, and the less they fight when they are older. This trend is due to having similar interests at all ages. In high school, teenagers can become very appreciative of having a sibling of a similar age as they are goods sources of advice on things like clothes and relationships.

"I like having my sister in the same

school," said Sameeya Ahmed, a junior whose sister, Shabnam, is a senior. "If I ever have a problem she always sticks up for me, and I do the same for her. Sometimes we eat lunch together if she doesn't go out."

One down side of having a sibling who is almost the same age is that they are also about the same size. While that is bad enough for those siblings who are close in age, it is even worse when your sibling is a lot younger.

"My sister is three years younger but is almost the same size, so fighting with her becomes much more difficult," said Kelly Youngken, a junior.

Generally, every situation has its pros and cons. "Only" children often get more attention and more gifts but have to enjoy the toys alone. Older siblings usually have more freedom which they can hold over younger siblings. Younger siblings are able to stake claim to the majority of their parents' protection as well as the experiences of those children that are ahead of them. The only thing that people agree on is that the benefits of being a middle child are hard to pick out.

# Gossip, rumors often a part of life for high school students

By Nikia Jones  
Reporter

Whether it's a compliment, an observation, or an insult, most of us love to hear a juicy tid-bit of gossip. But is gossip healthy?

"People gossip out of curiosity about other peoples' lives. Sometimes people tend to gossip for lack of something else to talk about," said Ariel Niles, a junior. It doesn't matter whether the comment is about a celebrity, a person who already graduated from high school, who is doing what this weekend, or what someone is wearing today; most of us love to hear something, believable or not. There are also some of us who like to hear gossip, but we never pass it on. "Gossip should never be an important part of a discussion," said Andrew Jordan, a senior.

In a populated place, gossip is unavoidable. "Making up rumors and talking about others occurs in middle school. But gossip in the sense of talking about others, their actions, and lives occurs more in high school," said Niles. Here is the average gossip cycle in a school atmosphere: In elementary school, no one really cared what the other person was doing. We were too young for that. In middle school, gossip began to have somewhat of an effect on us. We were basically curious during this stage. In high school, gossip is extremely "important." What everyone seems to do makes a difference to everyone else. "Gossip tends to make ill-informed judgements and classifications of individuals.

One can never know the truth about someone else or why they did what they did.

Motivations and intentions can not be summed up in gossip," said Jordan. Gossip runs some people's lives, ruins others, and doesn't matter at all to some. "Gossip can make or break a reputation," said Niles. In college, a person starts off with a clean slate (usually). By this stage, people have hopefully matured and realize they are talking about someone else's life. "If it's about something that is extremely personal and no one should know about it except the person, then it can be really harmful," said Niles.

However, gossip is sometimes irresistible and sometimes true. It can be both positive and negative. Positive gossip can help a person feel good. "If gossip relates facts or constructive criticism, there is no harm," said Tara Brinkley, a junior. For example, the rumor of an improved academic record or an athlete's talent may circulate around, making him want to improve even more. "Gossip can benefit a person if it is praise or flattering. Gossip can also benefit a person by asserting a need for self-improvement or improvement in certain areas," said Brinkley.

In contrast, negative gossip can hurt a person's pride, courage, and self-esteem. "Gossip can hurt a person when it maliciously strikes at a person's life, goals, dreams, or aspirations," said Brinkley. If a rumor is going around that Tommy stood up Susie on Saturday night, one of the two may feel a loss of heart and self-esteem. "Gossip is negative when it gets out of hand," said Niles.

Gossip may have a positive and negative effect, also. "Gossip can be positive or negative depending on the situation. It depends on what people want to take as the truth," said Niles. For instance, if a girl is dating a guy, and she hears he is cheating on her, she may become suspicious. If she asks him and he responds "No," she may feel slightly reassured. If she continues to hear things, especially from reliable sources, she may choose to break it off with him. In this case, the gossip is both positive and negative. It helped her to make the right decision even though she may now be suffering. "Gossip can have both positive and negative effects on a person. It depends on the gossip and how the individual person chooses to react and respond to the gossip," said Brinkley.

"Gossip can be the basis for peoples' opinions of others. Someone could get the wrong idea about the person in question," said Niles. On the other hand, when it comes down to gossip affecting our lives, we must look at our sources. Here are a couple of questions you may want to ask yourself when seeking the truth about a rumor: Who would I more readily believe,

a friend or a foe? Why are they telling me this? Have they been truthful in the past? If you can answer these questions truthfully, you may have an idea who your most reliable sources are. "A rumor should be believed if and only if the rumor is confirmed by the person or person whom the rumor is about," said Brinkley.

Many people think that before believing any type of gossip, it is important to know and understand why we want to believe it. "People want to believe gossip because it gives them a false sense of importance and superiority over their peers," said Brinkley. It is also important to remember that when gossiping about a person, think about his reaction when he hears it. It may or may not be healthy for that person. Remember, we are all human beings. We only have one life to live. "People should not gossip unless they're willing to be gossiped about," said Niles.

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