COVID did not have a major ef-

fect on their mindset and attitude.

Although this may be true, every

student had to deal with the hard-

ships of the pandemic and the

Life for every student in

high school had been affected

significantly from the changes

in lifestyle since the pandemic.

Teenagers lost valuable experi-

ences and had to push through

school and life as a consequence

of it all. Austin Sutton (22) said,

"From July of 2019 to only April

people due to cancer. School kept

of 2020 my family had lost 3

pushing on, without any sort

of backing off with work. I fell

behind at the end of sophomore

to pull myself out of that rabbit

The entire summer didn't at all

and almost failed. I was struggling

hole on top of all the family stress.

feel like a summer, but instead a 3

year of 2020 itself.

## March 5, 2021 redspotlight 9 crazy challenging chaos roller coaster sad pain difficult unique stupid interesting complicated tsunami desolate abomination unbelievable messy eventful worst pandemic traumatic excruciating destructive long bittersweet catastrophe unexpected unpredictable controvers 2020's impact on teenage mental health quality time with my family 6-10. The largest percentage of world. Kids in high school had month period of mental instabiland being isolated from othnation has been altered as a result participants, 15.2%, expressed ity. I wish high school could have Students may feel that teachers to discover ways of coping and ers has allowed me to have

20

First confirmed COVID case in US in Washington state

Kobe Bryant and daughter Gianna die in helicopter crash

26

World Health Organization declares COVID a public health emergency

WHO declares COVID outbreak a pandemic

Mar • 1 1

Pres. Trump declares COVID a national emergency

Breonna Taylor shot and killed in her home

13

3

The CDC recommends face masks in all public areas

Police officer filmed while pressing his knee on the neck of George Floyd



State of emergency declared in Minneapolis as protests spread

California fires spread over 100 million cres of land.

Aug • 2

First presidential debate, was considered as "90 minutes of chao"

Election day, Trump announces he won but no news declare a presidential winner Nov •

Electoral college confirms Joe Biden's victory over president Trump

> abigailvondy editorinchief

Mental Health of America, and the American Academy of Pediatrics, the mental health of youth has dwindled drastically in the last year. 2020 was a rollercoaster for everyone. From the global pandemic to the political uproars, emotions were low for the majority of teens. Data shows that 9.7% of youth in the U.S. have severe major depression, compared to 9.2% in last year's dataset. This rate was highest among youth who identify as more than one race, at 12.4%.

Not only that, but the data shows that youth between the ages of 11-17 have been more likely than any other age group to show severe symptoms of anxiety and depression during the COVID-19 pandemic (Mental Health of America). A survey sent to the EHS students and staff helped the Red Ink understand the mental health at EHS after COVID-19. Students were asked to rate their mental health on a 1-10 scale with one being great mental health and ten being relatively poor mental health over the last year. Exactly 50% of the respondents were between 1-5,

their mental health as one, meanbeen normal; playing pep rallies in marching band and having ing since the pandemic, their mental health has been favorable. the ability to go to school dances The second highest, 13.3%, was and/or just hang out with friends without having to wear a mask an eight, suggesting somewhat poor mental health. Interestingly into every building we enter." enough, many of the students According to the data coland staff at EHS expressed that lected by the Red Ink, the major-

> ity of the students explain their mental health as relatively good. Although this may be true, 50% of the students are still struggling. Half of the student body and staff have witnessed a change to their mental health and that percentage alone is significant. 27.7% of EHS students said their grades and school work took the biggest hit from the pandemic. Jaeli Lewis (23) said, "All the teachers and everyone talks about how crazy the world is, but they're still treating this year like it's normal. We don't get any slack in classes about missing and being quarantined." Online student, Jessica Guerra (21), shares the same emotion towards school work and the impact of the last year. "I've never really struggled this much in school before. I'm online this year and I've been behind in my classes for almost the whole school year,"

are not necessarily helping them cope with the abrupt change in their lives, but teachers also have similar feelings toward 2020.

Math teacher Kayla Johnson said, "At school, it takes a lot of energy and passion to develop and facilitate an interesting and engaging math lesson. I feel like my 'energy bar' has been on low all school year long, and I see it impacting my students' learning sometimes too. I know I can't always expect them (the students) to be the best versions of themselves like I normally do if I'm not the best version of myself either. Then it all cycles back - I see that I'm not doing my best, and it makes me sad to know that my 'why' as a teacher is not evident on a daily basis." The pandemic has been just as hard on the teachers as it has been on the students. "What keeps me going this last year is what always keeps me going- my family and the students I teach," history teacher Andrew Jorgensen said.

Last year brought more than just a pandemic. It brought protests, political controversy, and much more throughout the nation and understanding a divided world in front of them. "Throughout this pandemic I saw many people I liked become hypocritical and it exposed they only care about their own image and power.

This has gotten me to begin applying ideas I like from all over the political spectrum and am creating my own ideology," Micheal Howard (22) said. Especially in a town so small and impersonal, it was hard to see different perspectives, and even harder to understand them. Teenagers had to watch a divided nation, in midst of a pandemic, and attempt to make sense of it all. Teachers also struggled with understanding the nation before them. Online teacher

Deirdre White said, "The Capitol riots undid me. I wept the day they stormed our most precious American institution. 1 have found it so hard to believe that people are actually so angry. There is so much anger and fear in our country--and there are leaders who have pandered over and over to our most basic human emotion: FEAR." The history and fear in the last 365 days has been

Jorgensen saw that fear and anger time to figure out myself in the students during the elecand what I want to do in tion. "So many of our students the future." An anonymous have shown negativity towards student also said, "There one another based off of a Red were a lot of good things candidate and a Blue candidate. that came into the world and I don't understand why so many the community during 2020. of our students are invested in I feel like the community national politics to the point they really united as one to help feel the need to be nasty towards one another and I think we students who have different politiall really discovered the true cal views. Go make a real differmeaning of what a commuence in your local community nity/family is." and stop worrying so much about Teenagers nationwide are

national politics," he said. The

students have witnessed several

historical events in the last year,

and for some, witnessing history

students wish things were back to

Everything bad comes with

some good. Of course, 2020 had

a lot of bad, but according to the

students, the year as a whole was

right in the middle. 53.2% of the

students who took the survey ex-

pressed that the last year teetered

between "good" and "bad". Joseph

Sisneros (22) said, "Although the

pandemic affected everyday life

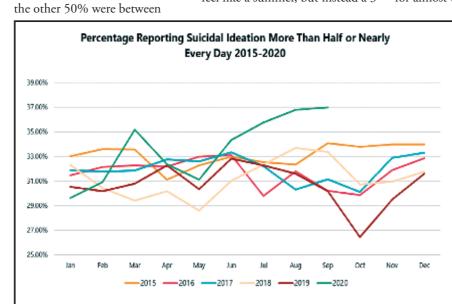
horrible. Being able to spend

for most people, everything wasn't

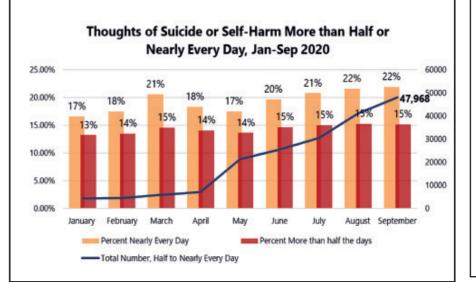
has become exhausting. Many

normal.

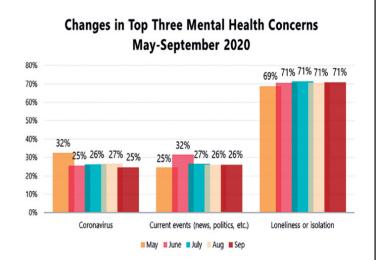
struggling with their mental health after the insane year of 2020. Although several students explained their mental health was doing relatively well, 50% of the students recognized the toll the pandemic took on their minds. After everything that happened in 2020, it is important for students to take care of one another and appreciate the little things in life. An anonymous student said, "The pandemic showed me that I need to live my life to the fullest and not take it for granted like I have before."



Percentage reporting suicidal ideation more than half or nearly every day according to data collected by Mental Health America.



Thoughts of suicide or self harm more than hald or nearly every day according to data collect by Mental Health America.



Changes in top three mental health concerns acording to data collected by Mental Health America.

broken grave terrifying unlucky crazy challenging chaos roller coaster sad pain difficult unique stupid interesting complicated tsunami desolate abomination unbelievable messy eventful worst pandemic traumatic excruciating destructive long bittersweet catastrophe unexpected