

*Journalism and Mass Communications, College of  
Nebraska High School Journalism State  
Contest*

---

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

*Year*

---

Dillon Brown, Matthew Christner, Alec  
McKillip, Tyler Rehbein, Larissa Wach

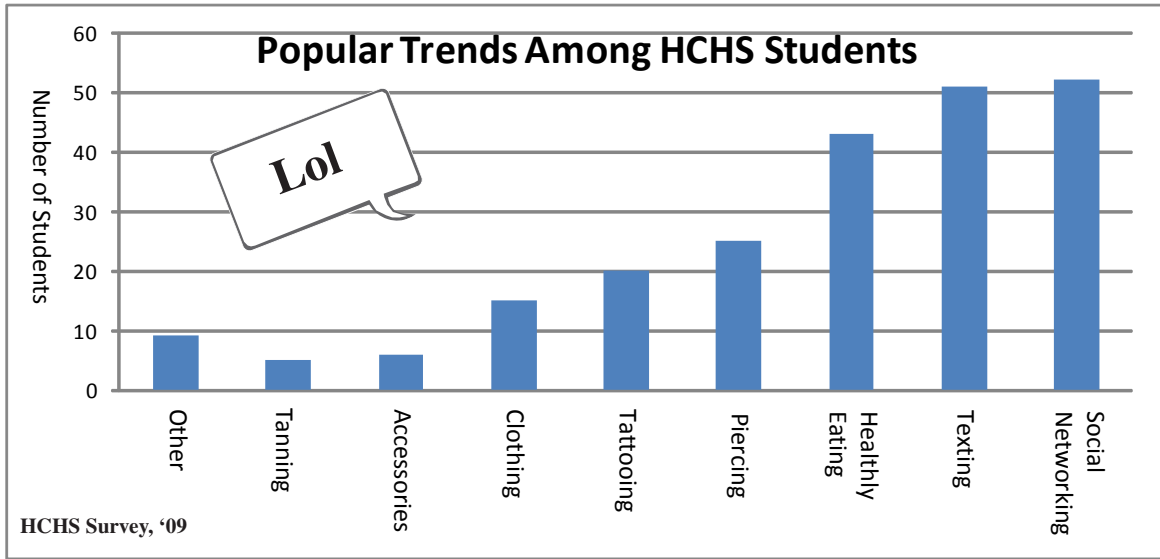
Ann L. Fornoff  
Hayes Center High School, [fornoff@esu15.org](mailto:fornoff@esu15.org)

# Trendy Teens?

## How Trendy are HCHS Teens?

Dillon, I wrote on your wall last night.

Did you see Alec's tattoo! It's cool!



I can't wait to get my belly button pierced!

I've got an apple and some cheese for the bus ride!

Reporters Dillon Brown, Matthew Christner, Alec McKillip, Tyler Rehein, and Larissa Wach take a closer look at the top five trends that not only interest themselves but most HCHS teens.

# Junk Food: a Love of Teens

## Yet Some Make Healthy Choices

by 1st-Year Reporter Larissa Wach



Teens love junk foods. Burgers, fries, cookies, chips, pop, and candies. It's almost impossible for teens to live without them. They want to eat all the time.

"Oh man, I am so hungry, I could eat three pigs and a horse! Is it lunch time yet?" says sophomore Alec McKillip on a regular basis.

For starters teens feel hungry a lot because their body is demanding more nutrients. Because of lack of time its easy to eat junk foods before healthy food. Busy schedules filled with after school activities leave teenagers with little time to get in three square meals a day. Junk foods are the fastest way to satisfy their hunger and teens do not think about the sodium, fat, and calories loaded in each bite.

Junk foods are also always available and can be purchased for just a small amount. It is just a little cash for a lot of calories.

Considering most junk foods do not need to be prepared they are very convenient, in addition to tasting good. They are easy to just grab on the go. Although average teenagers know junk food is unhealthy, teens still choose to eat them.

In a recent survey 37% of Hayes Center High School students were most likely to be caught eating junk foods in the afternoon, in between regular meal times. Most students chose pop and candy as their favorite junk food.

*"I like eating junk foods occasionally because they are so convenient and delicious, but I enjoy eating the right foods to look and feel healthy!"*

--Larissa Wach, sophomore

*"Healthy eating keeps up our immunity and keeps you away from illness. Healthy eating can help keep your weight under control. Teens also should limit sodas and sweet drink consumption."*

--HCHS nurse Delores Lawson

"I love junk food because it is convenient, tastes amazing, and makes my life complete, especially Pepsi," said junior Blaine Richter.

Energy drinks are popular among teens also, but they contain lots of sugar and caffeine providing teens with a short burst of energy. The results can be damaging though as teens can end up putting on weight, feeling anxious, having trouble sleeping, or maybe even becoming addicted.

Teens may be selecting poor eating choices at school lunchtime. When they go to the salad bar, most teens are likely to select pudding or dessert over salads or fruits.

"I get pudding and desserts when I go to the salad bar because I am not a big fruit fan," said freshman Morgan Harouff.

Poor nutrition content in unhealthy foods can affect teens in their appearance more than they might think. Frequently eating unhealthy foods does not provide the body with the vitamins and minerals it needs and causes weight gain. Lack of vitamins can result in poor skin, breakouts, and paleness. Fingernails can become brittle and hair can appear dull and lifeless as stated at [associatedcontent.com](http://associatedcontent.com).

A diet lacking in nutrition can result in sleepiness and poor performance at school. When the body does not get the vitamins and minerals it needs, it can shut down to conserve what it has. It especially affects teenagers because their brains and bodies are working overtime to develop properly.

Although it may be hard, it is possible to switch from junk foods to healthy foods. The best way is to do it gradually though and develop new eating habits slowly. For example, teens can start by drinking one or two more glasses of water a day. They can start eating one piece of fruit each day or spreading less butter on their bread. Teens can have smaller portion sizes or even eat more slowly to allow their bodies to tell them when they

are full.

"It is important to eat a variety of foods and concentrate on fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Healthy eating keeps up our immunity and keeps you away from illness. Healthy eating can help keep your weight under control. Teens also should limit sodas and sweet drink consumption," said school nurse Delores Lawson.

A healthy diet will make teens feel better, look better, and perform well at school and in sports. It also can affect the emotional side of a teen. According to [guidanceassociates.com](http://guidanceassociates.com) foods high in nutrition lead to shiny hair, strong teeth, good muscle tone, and clear skin.

In a recent survey at Hayes Center High School 59% of males consider themselves healthy eaters and 61% of females do. "I eat healthy because I wanna stay thin and because I don't participate in extracurricular activities. It also makes me feel healthy," said senior Joslyn Large.

Breakfast is also important to a healthy diet. Although it does not seem like it is the most important meal of the day. Teens who eat breakfast on a regular basis think faster, clearer, solve problems more easily and are less likely to become irritable.

Twenty-two percent of Hayes Center High School students eat breakfast on a regular basis compared to the national average of 24%.

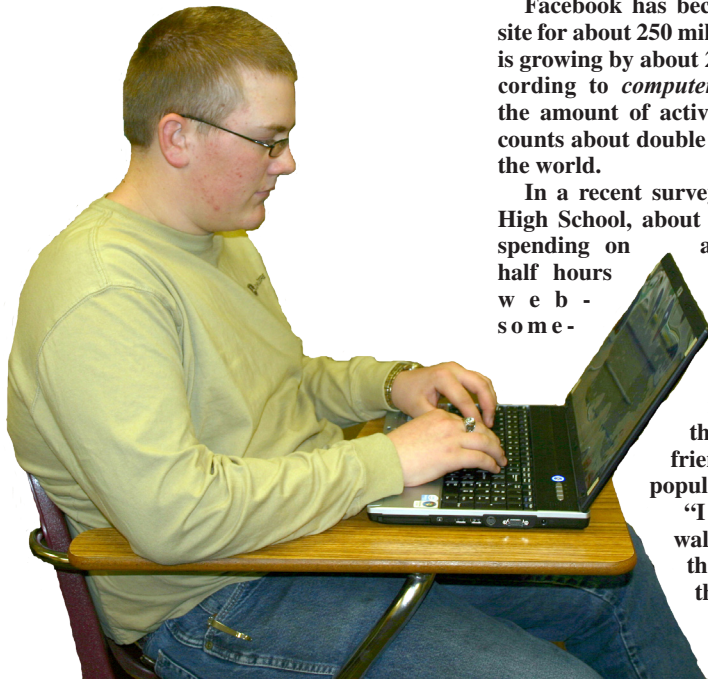
"Although adolescents may think that skipping breakfast seems like a good way to save on calories, findings suggest the opposite. Eating a healthy breakfast may help adolescents avoid overeating later in the day and disrupt unhealthy eating patterns, such as not eating early in the day and eating a lot late in the evening," said Dianne Neumark-Sztainer, Ph.D., principal investigator of Project EAT.

Most importantly, it is vital to eat breakfast on a regular basis, and although it is completely fine for growing, active teens to snack throughout the day, they should be making smart snack selections.

# The Growing Facebook

## Teens Spend Hours on Social Networking Sites

by 1st-Year Reporter Dillon Brown



Facebook has become a social networking site for about 250 million people. This number is growing by about 250,000 people a day. According to *computer.howstuffworks.com*, and the amount of active users on Facebook accounts about double every six months all over the world.

In a recent survey taken at Hayes Center High School, about 74% of the students are spending on average about one and a half hours on a social networking website every day. Is there something behind all of this?

Facebook comes with many features such as the user's information, friends, photos, and the most popular, the user's wall.

"I enjoy writing on people's walls to leave a message for them that they can see all the time. It is another way to communicate to them on their birthday just to tell them 'Happy Birthday,'" said sophomore Matthew Christner.

A person can do many things on Facebook. Some of the options the user has are to add applications, play games, take quizzes, and join groups. For example, the application for the pictures allows you to view your friends' photos. Many people upload photos every day. According to *blog.socialmaximizer.com* about one billion photos are added worldwide. That is about 333,333,333 pictures every day!

Games is one the most common applications. "I like to play 'Wild Ones' because it is a great way to pass the time while you are chatting with a friend," said junior Cody Wright.

Another fun activity to do on Facebook is the quiz application. This application allows you to make a quiz about yourself that your friends can see how well they know you. You

can also take other quizzes that either your friends made or some that other people have posted to Facebook for all to take. These quizzes that anyone can take are mainly just for fun and can vary from what celebrity are you most like to what kind of vehicle best suits you.

"I think that the quizzes are fun, and yet they can be interesting because of some of the answers you can get," said freshman Morgan Harouff.

Facebook along with other social networking sites have privacy options. On Facebook the user can set their privacy to their information, wall, photos, and other information to different degrees. For example, if you only want your friends to see your wall you can set your options to that. If you want friends of friends to see your wall that is another option, and the last is either letting no one see it or letting everyone see your wall.

"I like the privacy options on Facebook better because I can set my own privacy levels un-

like on MySpace other people can not see my page unless they are my friends," said sophomore Haley Tyan.

Since Facebook can be misused, many schools and even work places have blocked or banned Facebook and other social networking sites.

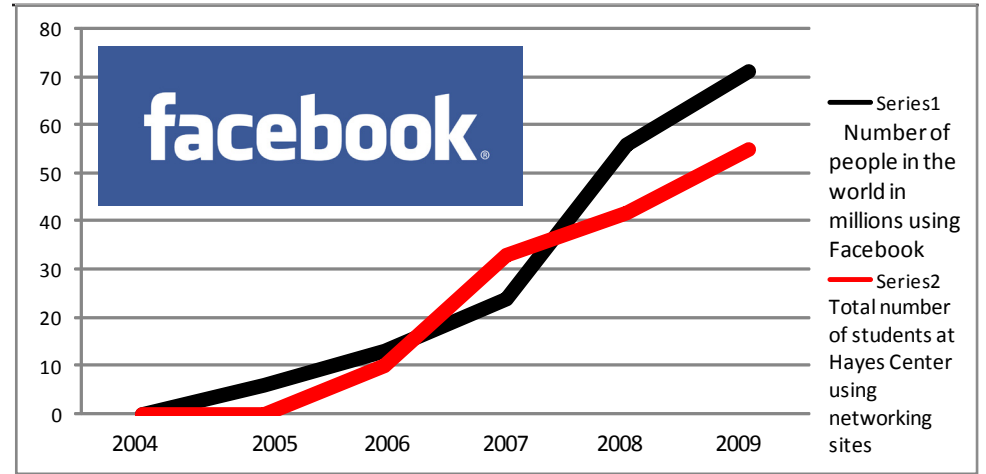
"Over the last three to four years as an English teacher I have noticed writing skills have deteriorated. I honestly feel that MSN Messenger, Facebook, texting have all played a hand in this decline," said English teacher Ann Fornoff. "I have even had employers say they have a hard time finding someone who can write complete sentences."

Even because Facebook has grown from about one million users in 2004 to about 250 million users in 2009, it is still planned to keep on growing in the future years.

"I love Facebook because I think it's a good way to keep track of friends," said senior Kirstin Kressin.

"I love to spend my time on Facebook. I find myself on it sometimes up to six hours a day!"

--Dillon Brown, sophomore



Hayes Center High School students fit right into the world-wide growing trend of joining Facebook year after year. (HCHS Survey, January 2010)

"Hey wats up? ben wile! u wanna go 2 a movie 2nite n hang out"

# Tappin' Out Texts

## Teens Text More than Call

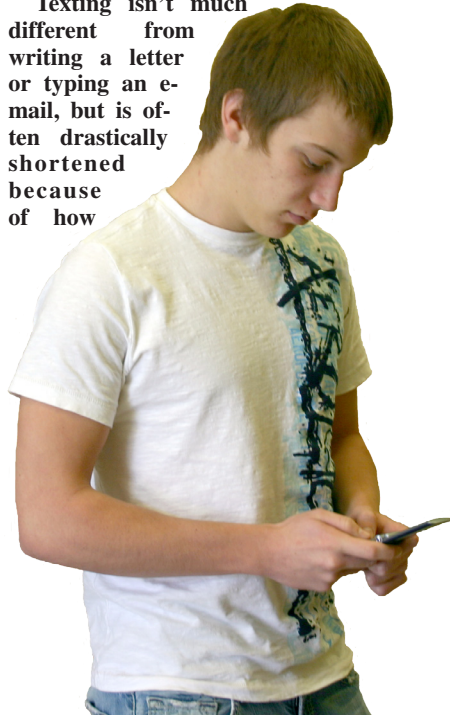
by 1st-Year Reporter Matthew Christner

For almost everybody, texting has practically become a way of life. Whether just a way to say "Hey," or to secretly transfer the latest gossip, texting has completely changed the way all teens today communicate using a new language of shorthand. Students and even adults use the conveniences of quickly typing out a short message to get a hold of someone rather than just calling them.

In a recent Hayes Center High School survey a little over two percent do not have a cell phone to themselves which is only one out of 43 students. Kids nationwide in 2009, 66 percent now own their own cell phones compared to 33 percent from five years ago, according *Kaiser Family Foundation* survey conducted in October 2008 and May of 2009.

Of those many people who have their own cell phones they seem to make the most of it by staying connected with each other. "I send about 300 text messages a day," sophomore Haley Tyan said, "and usually only text my friends." According to the same survey of the student body of Hayes Center 23 percent send more than 100 texts a day. Throughout each day 2.5 billion text messages are sent, according to *www.textmessageblog.mobi*.

Texting isn't much different from writing a letter or typing an e-mail, but is often drastically shortened because of how



compact the phone is. Multiple letters are normally on one button. Most words are either abbreviated or just left out. Usually abbreviations such as "U," standing for the word "you," are used. As well as "2," for "to." "I abbreviate in texts because it's shorter and quicker and also can make it funny," sophomore Annie Deaver said.

The most common abbreviation is "lol" for "laugh out loud," according to the HCHS survey. Also teens commonly leave out letters felt unnecessary in words like, "jus," for just. However, these abbreviations could also catch on too well and become a habit for teens and in result drop their writing skills. "Students are becoming lazy with their writing skills, and many do not care about proper spelling and punctuation. Texting is an excellent tool, but not for school work," English teacher Ann Fornoff said.

Many parents always ask the question of "Why can't you just call them?" Obviously though kids love texting. "I prefer to text more than talking on the phone, because it's a lot easier to do other things while texting than it is to talk and do other things. I can also text more than one person at a time," junior Tierney Tyan said.

Nonetheless, keeping in touch isn't free, and somebody has to pay the bill. Only two of the 43 students pay all of their cell phone bill and only 12 help which leaves the rest of the 27 who pay none for their cell phone use according to HCHS survey.

Although 35 out of 43 students at HCHS have the unlimited texting plan, short messages aren't the only way that students stay in touch and keep together. Phones will also receive multimedia messages such as music, graphics, and even pictures and videos taken by any phone with a camera. These messages generally cost more and include more than just unlimited texting. Because this is transferring data, the more you receive and send the bigger

"I text because it's a simple way to talk to someone without having to disturb them."

--Matthew Christner, sophomore

numbers a person's bill will have.

Cell phones offer even more possibilities to texting rather than just regular texting of just typing only a message and multimedia messaging consisting of data. "I like having internet on my phone because it's really convenient and I can get on Facebook whenever I want," said freshman Sarah Cox. Each new phone developed is most likely equipped with internet capabilities. Companies making smart phones designed just for easy internet accessibility as well as simple applications (apps) on the home page. Some phones have an internet button on the key pad itself and others have apps loaded on the home page to jump right to the site. Teens are now taking this new texting language to the internet with the ability to send e-mail or write on someone's wall on Facebook through a few clicks on the cell phone.

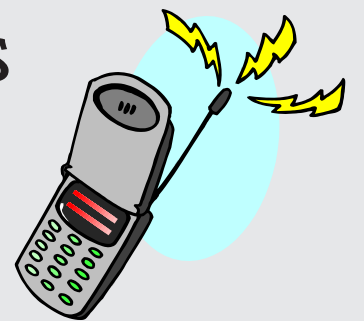
Many adults text daily as well as kids but the first place they look when the phone starts buzzin' is their kids. Lots of parents were taught by teens and said it wasn't easy. "It was hard to teach my mom to text with T9 because she couldn't understand it or the abbreviations. I still have not been able to teach

my dad," said senior Samantha Deaver. Most texting phones have been made easy with full key pads or the app of the "T9," texting. This allows the texter that has multiple letters on a button to only need to push it once per letter. Regular texting requires three taps of the same button to get that third letter on the button, but with "T9," the phone will predict and learn the most used words to finish your message in half the time.

With all the new ideas put into cell phones, the new teen text language is being perfected to make sending that quick text easier. If teens find new ways to shorten it up, the text message numbers are going to keep rising as fast as they can tap it out.

"Yea! that b gr8 id luv 2. wen u wanna meet? after the movie i was thinkin we could get our lips pierced:)"

## Favorite Texts to Tap Out



"Lol"-laughout loud

":)"

"jk"-just kidding

"ttyl"-talk to you later

"omg"-Oh my gosh

"oic"-Oh I see

"thx"-thanks

"btw"-by the way

"brb"-beright back

"gr8"-great

"sry"-sorry

"w/"-with

"b4n"-bye for now

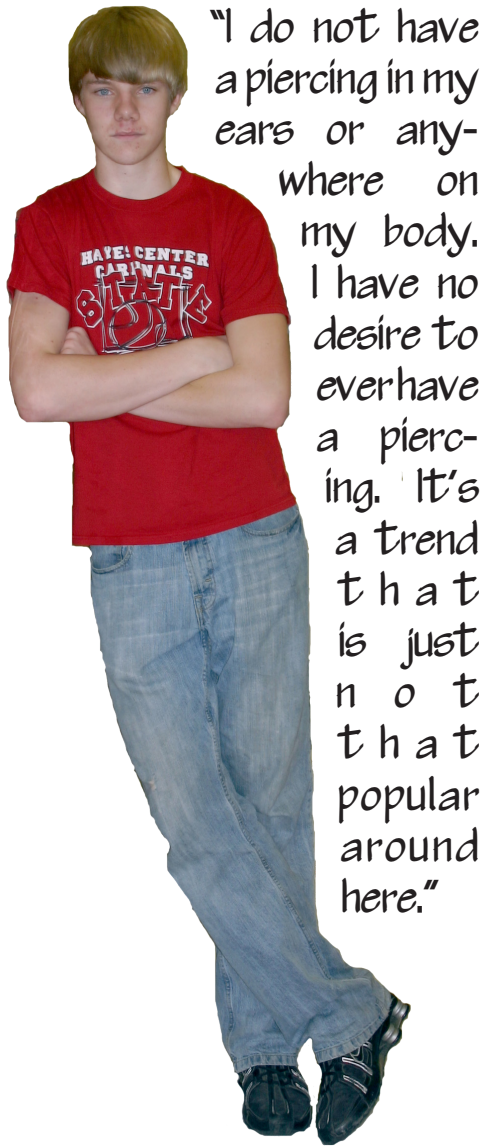
"g2g"-got to go

"wth"-what the heck

# Piercings Trendy Body Flashes

*Few Teens Have Body Piercings*

by 1st-Year Reporter Tyler Rehbein



"I do not have a piercing in my ears or anywhere on my body. I have no desire to ever have a piercing. It's a trend that is just not that popular around here."

--Tyler Rehbein, sophomore

A diamond sparkling from the right side of the nose, a heart flashing from the belly button, or a tongue ring protruding from the middle of the tongue. Nationwide teens are finding it attractive to pierce more body parts than just the ear lobe.

Body piercings have been a fashion trend for a long time among teens. That trend has yet to be popular among teens in the Hayes Center High School.

In a recent Hayes Center High School survey currently eight percent of the student body has a piercing other than their ears. That's lower than the national average. According to *ParentingMyTeen.com* on average 25 to 35 percent of high school students have a body piercing.

"I decided to get a piercing because I thought it would look cool," said junior Tierney Tyan who has a belly button piercing.

Although many teens think it's "cool," harmful damages may occur with body piercings. Before piercing their bodies, teens may want to consider the harmful side affects.

When getting a piercing, teens should go to a professional for help. Going to a professional can decrease the risk of cross-contamination and other minor or serious damages. Cross-contamination is infection from dirty needles. The most common side effect is infections. "Infections can cause other serious health problems like blood poisoning and scarring," said Brian Garcia of New Image Tattoos in McCook. Garcia not only has a license for tattooing but also does piercings. "If someone chooses to get a piercing, having a professional do the piercing will decrease his chance of getting infection later," he said. The chances of being pierced with a dirty needle is less if teens go to a professional for help instead of doing it themselves.

Those teens at HCHS who have a piercing did not use a professional for the piercing.

Infection isn't the only harmful side effect to body piercing. Nerve damage and excessive

bleeding are the most serious effects but the least common. If the piercing is done in an unsafe place, nerves can be damaged and teens can lose feeling in those areas if this occurs.

If a teen plans on getting a piercing and is planning to be a blood donor, he or she will be unable to give blood unless the teen knows for sure that the needle used for the piercing was sterile. If the teen is unsure whether it was sterile or not, the potential donor must wait 12 months before giving blood again.

Most teens think that getting piercings are cool and that's the reason they get one. Others get piercings because they want to feel independent or unique from others.

At first most parents are upset with the idea of their teen getting a piercing, and may hand down consequences.

"My boyfriend convinced me to get a piercing, plus I thought it would be cool," said junior Courtney Brown. "However, my mom freaked out and I actually was grounded for awhile."

Age limit laws for body piercings are very slim. If a teen is under 16, they must have their parents' permission first. Professionals shouldn't allow a teen who's under 16 to get a piercing without their parents' permission. If a professional is caught giving minors piercings, he or she will not receive any criminal penalties but it could jeopardize licensing. "I do require a parental consent form to be signed for piercings," Garcia said.

According to *kidshealth.org* the ears, nostrils, and belly button are the most commonly pierced areas among teens.

"I would never get a piercing because I don't think that guys should ever have piercings," said sophomore Dillon Brown.

A diamond sparkling from the nose, a heart flashing from the belly button, or a ring protruding from the middle of the tongue may not be a common sight among Hayes Center students but the trend is catching on.

## Students Speak Out on Current Trends



"I don't like the tattoo and piercing trend because I don't think it looks good on some people."

--sophomore Alan Parra



"Tattoos can be cool but I would never get one because in the work place some employers won't hire you if you have one"

--senior Joslyn Large

# Tattoos: Trendy, Artistic

*Tattoos not as Popular among Local Teens*

by 1st-Year Reporter Alec McKillip



It is called many names and goes by many aliases: tat, art, ink, Work, Pieces, but most known as a tattoo. Tattooing has been making imprints on our culture ever since its start in the fourth millennium BC. Its impression has stayed permanent and has been growing more and more, especially among teens.

Many common tattoos appeal to teenagers' eyes. Hearts, dragons, memorial tattoos, fairies, flowers, team symbols, Nike swooshes, patriotic

and religious tattoos are among the popular ones. Tattoos started out just as simple dots. Now it has turned into elaborate artwork. "I would like to someday get a religious tattoo," said sophomore Rylie Goltl. "Someday I would like to get a cross with wings coming out from it with a sunrise coming up behind it."

Although tattooing may be a regular sight

"Although this is not a real tattoo, I do plan on getting a few and one similar to this one."

--Alec McKillip, sophomore

in larger schools, here at Hayes Center High School that is not the case. Not a single individual in the school has a tattoo.

However that's not to say tattoos are not desired. Thirty three percent of the females in the school do desire to one day have a tattoo. "I hate needles, and they sometimes fade and don't stay as cool," junior Molly Cox said. "They may be cool and relevant to your life when you first get them, but later on down the road when you're 60 it will be dumb, and you will wish you didn't have it." Twenty seven percent of the males in the school also desire to have a tat one day. Rylie Goltl said "I think tattoos have a way of bringing things to life that you never want to forget."

Although tattoos can bring aspects of our lives to life, The oldest evidence of tattoos does not have the aspect of life still. An iceman's body, dating back to fourth millennium, was found frozen in the ice of the Otz Valley in the Alps. His body is the oldest proof found today of the tattoos of long ago. His lower spine and knee and ankle all had carbon tattoos. These tattoos were just simple dots, and it's not known of what they represent. Other bodies, such as mummies of Ancient Egypt also have body art. Tattooing in Japan can also be traced back ten thousand years ago. According to wikipedia.com.

Many tribes in Africa, Indians in North America before European settlement, and many other areas of the world have been practicing body art for years. But it wasn't until the eighteenth century when tattooing was introduced to the western world. Explorers and sailors traveled around the world looking for new lands and goods and they brought back aspects from other cultures. Tattooing was one of these.

Tattoos are puncture wounds. Although tattooing started out with using sticks or bones sharpened to be like needles and were hand punched into the skin, today's procedure is extremely different. Today's tattooists use electric tattoo guns.

The procedure starts out with the tattoo artist (or tattooist) first washing his or her hands with disinfectant soap. "Everything has to be disinfected from the tools used to my own

hands," said tattoo artist Brian Garcia of New Image Tattoos in McCook. Garcia explained that he also wears a glove and a surgical mask. "Next, the area where the tattoo is to be put is cleaned and disinfected," he said. A stencil of the tattoo desired is put on the area desired for approval of the client. "The needles are only used on one individual, and are not reused. This is done to prevent the spread of diseases," Garcia said. "All needles are single use and are disposed of after the procedure."

The actual insertion of the tattoo does not occur until after the stencil of the tattoo is approved and the correct precautions are met, according to Garcia.

The first step of actually installing the tattoo is putting in the outline. Once the outline is placed in the area, it will be washed with anti-septic soap and water.

Garcia went on to explain that the area will once again be cleaned of excess ink, blood, and any other foreign substances with a cloth or towel and bandaged.

A tattoo is a wound, and should be treated like one once a person gets it. "It should remain under a bandage for the first 24 hours. As any wound will do, it will scab over. This is normal and should not be picked off," Garcia said. Picking off of the tattoo will result in the wound not healing correctly. The wound should be washed every so often with antibacterial soap and be dried by patting, not rubbing with a soft towel. Some tattooists will suggest not being in a pool or hot tub for the first two weeks. This will cause over hydration for the tattoo and cause the ink to wash out. Others suggest bathing the tattoo in very hot water regularly. So what one does will be up to the advice one has been given.

It is possible to see some swelling in the tattoo area. If signs of swelling appear, an ice pack should be placed on that area. A new tat should not be exposed to the sun until it is fully healed. If it is, it may result in the loss of color. Ultimately, how well one cares for the tat during the healing phase will effect the final outcome of the tattoo.

No matter what one's view of tattoos is, there is not much one can do to stop this growing trend.



"Piercing is alright to a certain extent."

--junior Edgar Rodriguez



"Tattoos are very unattractive and permanant. Some piercings are cute but some just disgust me."

--freshman Sarah Cox