

## WONDER women

students identify the most important woman in their lives

"The most important woman in my life is my mom because she's always pushing me and she's given me everything I have."

**Ben Johnson, 12**



"The most important woman in my life is my mom, because she raised me and made me into the person I am today."

**Luke Hampton, 11**



"I would say my mom is the most important woman in my life, because she is a big role model and someone i really look up to."

**Molly Steed, 12**



*Bouncing with joy* through the team, junior **Charlotte Henry** runs along the sidewalk lined by cheerleaders meant to greet incoming freshmen on their first day of school Aug. 15. "I was really excited to welcome the freshmen," Henry said. *photo by madi russell*



# like a GIRL

aspects of girlhood impact how teenagers grow up

**a**t eight years old, I walked proudly into third grade wearing my Carolina Panthers shirt. Later that day, the boy next to me in math looked me in the eye and told me "Girls can't like football." I didn't understand why he said that. I knew just as much as he did, so why couldn't I like it?

This recurring feeling of not understanding carried through life. Over time I would be told countless times that I couldn't do something because I was a girl or if something happened it was because I was a girl. Perception was engraved into my brain the second I was old enough. I was told to act right, only speak up if you're asked, and if a boy was mean to you it's because he likes you. I would later learn the extent of just how mean girls can be and how harsh the intentions of some people are.

These kinds of things are drilled into our minds and they force so many girls to live for other people rather than themselves. As America Ferrera's character in *Barbie* says, "I'm just so tired of watching myself

and every single other woman tie herself into knots so that people will like us." Seeing the *Barbie* movie made me cry in a way of relief. Before then, I thought I was alone, I never realized the not-good-enough breakdown is universal. It's unfortunately something every girl understands and has been through or will go through.

Girlhood is filled with so much misunderstanding. From the classic "Why doesn't my crush like me back?" to wondering why your body looks the way it does, misunderstandings are something all girls know all too well. We learn to pick up on mixed signals faster than anything. The question "Are you mad at me?" is a constant among friendships. Little things here and there turn into massive, friendship-ending fights. Girl Code becomes more important as you get older.

While being a girl can suck, you cannot forget about the most important parts, the ones that leave a permanent mark. Things like looking down at your wrist and seeing a hair tie that doesn't

belong to you or driving around to Taylor Swift when you have nothing to do. It's things like the glances your friends give you in the hallway when you walk past your crush or sitting on the curb at homecoming because your feet hurt from your heels. It's also the excitement of getting dressed up for a birthday dinner and the hour-long FaceTime that goes along with it filled with "Wait what about this outfit?" That, is girlhood.

To every girl reading this, you are not alone. Everything you are experiencing has been experienced by someone else at some point and time in the universe. Do not let them get to you. Do not spend that time in front of the mirror poking and prodding at your flaws. They are what make you, you. Without them, you would not have met your best friend or experienced your favorite food, or gone to the beach. Your flaws are what make you human. And you are so lucky to be alive and have them.

*story by leila henderson*



*Looking at their recent photos*, senior **Emily Willhite** shows **Elise Harrell** pictures that they took together on Sept. 9 senior sunrise. "[Senior Sunrise] was a really fun experience and I'm really happy that Hailey got to put it together," Willhite said. *photo by avery tilley*



*Setting up her presentation*, senior **Jordyn Francis** laughs as her friends try to get the display to load for the BSU's Mar. 6 celebration. *photo by asra june*

## big THINGS

"I'm just a teenage girl, I like getting ready with all my friends."  
**Charlotte Henry, 11**

"I like to go shopping a lot. I feel like girls have more of a relief to shop than guys."  
**Natalie Hohman, 11**