

Opinion & Review

The Plight of Daycare The Need for "Speed Kills"

By Amy M.M.P. Hurley
Lion's Eye Staff Writer

At the leadership retreat this past fall (a PSU-sponsored annual overnight event for anyone who wants to become or is already a "campus leader"), I became a first-hand witness to what I believe could turn out to be a crime against this beautiful PSU campus of ours. I was just there to get some free food, a free stay at a hotel and to report on my observations of the entire event for this very paper. So, I was less than happy when I figured out I would actually be forced to *think* during the course of this leadership workshop.

The clues to the "crime" I alluded to above were not readily apparent - I had to pay close attention; I overheard one of the "campus leaders" in a hushed voice say she knew for a fact that the construction of dorms was already in the works. Also, when it came time to volunteer by show of hands to particular committees, I noticed that even the Campus Redecoration Committee caught more interest than the Daycare Committee. Some of you might ask how do these two things relate or you might say, "Have you seen the pictures on the way up to the Career Center in Commons? They demand to be replaced" or "Most of us don't have kids anyway so why would we care about daycare on campus" or "We need dorms if only for the keg parties they promise to bring with them." That's one way to look at the situation, here's another.

Even though I haven't been attending the Monday SGA showdowns, I've still managed to get an idea of the plight of daycare on campus. Picture a brick wall and a Ford Explorer going eighty crashing into it over and over again and we will be on the same page. I have been told second-hand that the opposition's major ammunition includes statements like, "The insurance is just way too expensive" and "We would have to hire an entire staff" and my personal favorite: "Where would we put them for goodness sake!"

Now, I don't have kids of my own and I don't plan to for at least a decade, but I do feel responsible to, where I can, help out those among us whose life is quite a bit tougher than my own. The opposition, from what I've heard seems to have some degree of reason on their side, but caring and justice are certainly lacking. After all, it's not like we would have to construct a new building or anything. Come to think of it, we just did that and the university didn't go bankrupt. Isn't that interesting?

What I'm trying to suggest is that instead of focusing on how to make our campus fit in among other college campuses across the country, why don't we buck the norms and instead, put our efforts into becoming 'Nittany Lion in the Rough' of PSU campuses. Just think about it; the vibes of both active learning (due to students working hard in and out of school) and real interchange across economic, generational and ethnic boundaries here on campus would be virtually eliminated if we let dorms become the end-all be-all. Anyway, President Spanier himself said on his campus visit this fall that dorms will not be built here at Delco in the near future. So why not focus, instead, on the positive change we could act to achieve?

We have the chance to make a place where young mothers and fathers alike could feel comfortable leaving their children while they get a chance to become educated and more skilled to enter an ever-changing workforce. In case you haven't checked, the cost of being a parent is rising much faster than the cost of college tuition (and we all know how fast that is). So, in some small way, by not supporting daycare on campus, we are all pushing education just out of the grasp of those who need it most urgently.

But hey, if you still want dorms on campus, go ahead and focus on what we don't have. Just don't expect me to fill up the other half of your glass.

By Sarah Stover

Lion's Eye Staff Writer

Speeding is a crime taken too nonchalantly by many people, especially by the youth of colleges and high schools alike. Too many young adults speed and don't understand the full reality of danger that can accompany such an act. Speed is action that when put together with a car can easily and unknowingly become a deadly combination.

Too often, motorists drive at excessive speeds, putting themselves and others on the road at considerable risk. When I was a freshman in high school I learned a hard lesson about life. Five teenagers died because they were speeding down a hilly and curvy stretch of roadway that I had traveled a thousand times and have traveled a thousand more since the accident. This road was one I knew well because my high school and middle school were on it. None of the five students went to my school, but the area high schools that they attended seemed much closer then. Although I didn't personally know any of the five teenagers, I felt the effects through friends that knew them and a community that was left hurting. I attended one of the boy's memorial service at his school because a close friend asked me to accompany her. They had been good friends. That was my first lesson with speed, and I wasn't even old enough to take a driving test.

Since then, through high school and now as sophomore in college, I have seen my share of friends in speeding accidents caused by speed. Most were lucky, and came out of the accident with minor injuries and a lot of unwanted financial experiences. There was one, however, that was not so lucky. He was a friend of mine through high school and he left to go away to college. The last I saw of him was at his graduation party two and a half years ago. He had a smile that could light up a room and a personality that could brighten any one's day. During the summer after his freshman year of college, he died on a stretch of highway while on vacation. Speeding nearly 40 miles over the speed limit, he hit an unsuspecting curve and not only lost control of his car, but lost his naive conception of immortality also. It was an asinine mistake, one that is perfectly avoidable. He was stupid, and because of his decision, he lost his life.

Now I'm not going to write this and be a hypocrite and tell you that I never speed. I know how 95 is a death trap if you don't keep up with traffic and let's just say that I don't always feel obliged to follow those annoying 15 m.p.h. flashers when they go off around schools. But, I don't speed excessively to the point of stupidity on the roads. The road where those five teenagers lost their lives by my high school was not 95, and neither is Route 1. A young lady by the name of Allison Leah Solum graduated from my high school a year ahead of me. I knew her and used to say high to her in the hallways. In 1996 she lost her life on Route 1. Another motorist traveling northbound tried to avoid a rear end collision and crossed the median, hitting her head on. The driver was speeding and Allison was killed. This is just one of the many fatal accidents that have occurred on Route 1 over the years.

According to PennDot there have been 11 fatal accidents along a nine mile stretch of Route 1 between 1993 and 1997. That stretch is from the Chester County line to Route 452. Most were caused because the motorist lost control of their vehicles due to speed. I bring this to your attention because my friends, my family and myself travel Route 1 and neighboring roadways everyday. As a safety message to everyone, think before you hit the gas and always remember that a life is much more invaluable than the consequences of being late. Lateness can be fixed, a lost life can not.

WRITERS WANTED

The Lion's Eye is always looking for creative news writers. If you wish to contribute, please contact our editors Rob Coyle (rhcl14@psu.edu) or Aimee Stone (carmilla3@hotmail.com).

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