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## COMMENTARY: WOMEN'S RIGHT TO HEALTHCARE

For centuries women's healthcare and reproductive rights have been extremely limited. Recently, attempts have been made to further limit these rights.

In 1970, Title X was put into effect: a set of federal funds put into place to go towards affordable family-planning providers, and it is the only federal grants of its kind.

In April 2017, President Donald Trump privately signed a bill that allowed states to withhold federal money from organizations that provide abortion services, including Planned Parenthood, one of the largest non-profit reproductive healthcare providers.

Over time, the Planned Parenthood organization has been targeted by conservatives, due to the company providing abortions. The controversy surrounding this decision is caused by how much this bill will actually affect women's healthcare.

The defunding of the organization will take away millions of women's access to birth control, contraceptives, and health screening/tests. Many are not aware that those services, and more, are offered at

**“Women have basically been told from a very young age that chocolate and wine will help them through their hormonal highs and lows.”**

**--Nola Garrison, Jeffersonville High School nurse**

Planned Parenthood.

The bill will push women's reproductive rights backwards almost 50 years, and will disrupt the lives of millions of women in America. It is also necessary to point out that contraceptives such as birth control are not only used for pregnancy prevention.

Many women use birth control for health reasons, and teenagers for hormonal imbalances. A study found that 33-percent of US teens and 14-percent of woman in the US are on birth control for reasons other than pregnancy prevention, such as cramps and other health issues.

For teenage girls, the stigma of being on birth control at a young age can be overbearing, to say the least.

For years ahead women and men everywhere will be fighting for equal healthcare for all, and rights of every kind for every woman.

**“I think we're all fighting for the day in which partisan politics is no longer something that is used to attack women's access to healthcare.”**

**-- Planned Parenthood CEO Cecile Richards**



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# Effects of Mental Illness on Women

By Kristen Jacobs

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She seems happy at school. She talks to her friends, eats her lunch, and does her work.

Unfortunately, it all changes as soon as she opens her front door to return home.

She starts to take off all her makeup, then just stares at herself in the mirror. She sighs and walks to her room, where she just sits on her bed. She has a feeling she is about to cry, but no tears come out.

Instead, she just sits there, staring into the nothingness she lives every day.

This is a normal day for sophomore Riley Brown, who suffers from anxiety,

obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), and depression.

“It feels like when you’re outside on the icy ground and you slip, but you catch yourself, except it keeps happening and it never actually stops,” says Brown. “The medicine helps. Instead of worrying 24/7, (now) it’s more like 12/7.”

According to *mentalhealthamerica.net*, one of the nation’s leading websites on mental health, around 12 million (roughly one-in-eight) women experience some form of clinical depression every year.

Compared to their gender counterparts, women seem to experience depression at twice the rate of men. Specifically, girls aged 14-18 years have higher rates of depression than males around this age.

“Men often display their depression with anger and overworking, while women suffer in silence,” says Allison Puckett, a former Wellstone Hospital employee. “They do, however, seem to experience more support.”

According to Puckett, someone who shows signs of depression may just need someone to open up to.

“It’s really important to talk about depression. You won’t cause someone to commit suicide just by asking if they’re okay,” Puckett said. “If the signs are there, you should ask. People need to know to never give up. There’s always hope.”

Signs of depression include increased feeling of tiredness or insomnia, overeating

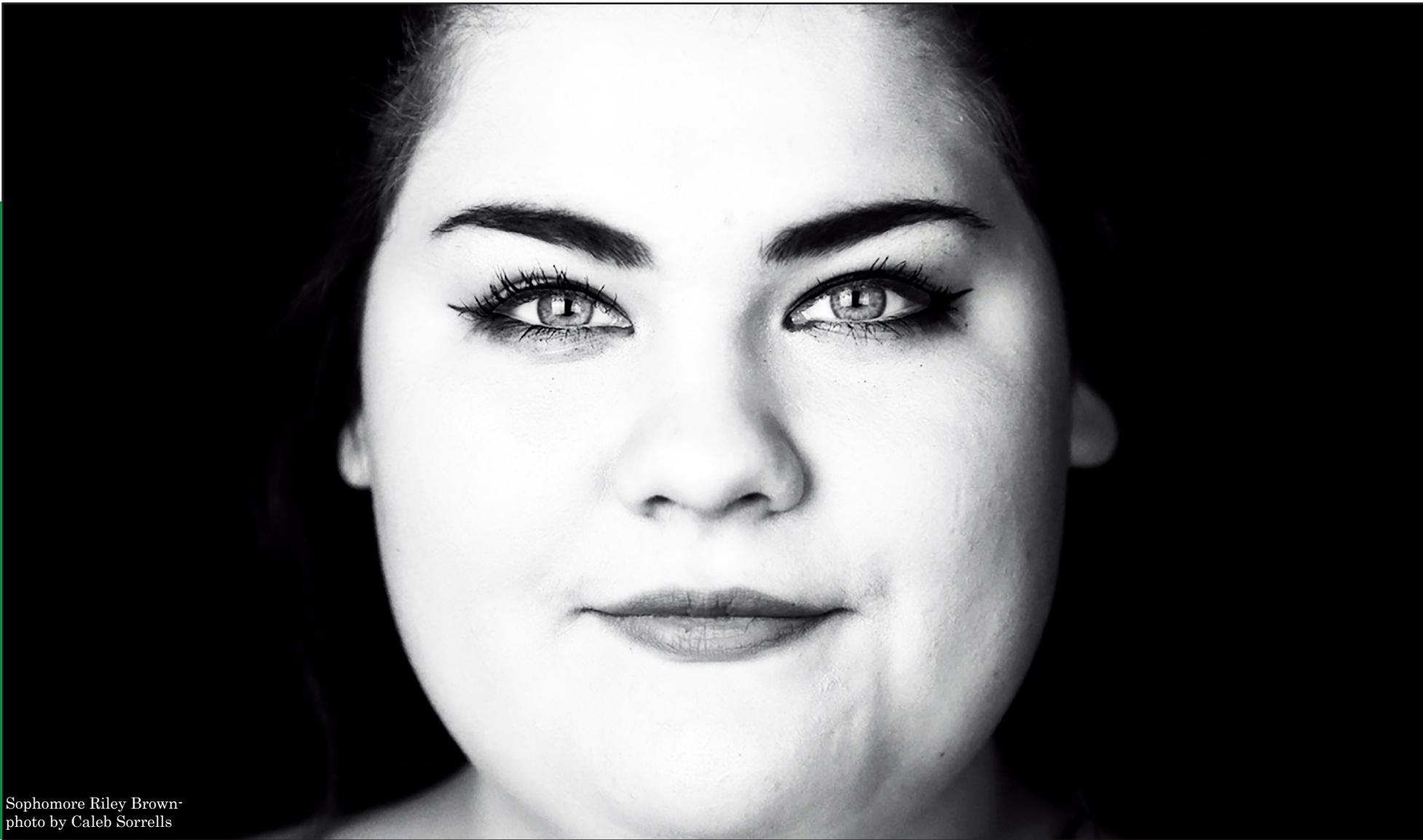
or loss of appetite, excessive crying, loss of interest in activities, and outbreaks of anger.

“I encourage someone who is having negative thoughts to go to a trusted adult, coach, or counselor,” says Jeffersonville High School counselor Tyler Colyer. “If someone is showing signs, be supportive, aware, and tell a trusted adult.”

Now that Riley has started taking her medication she seems happier and less anxious. When she recognized the symptoms she confided in someone she knew cared about her.

That changed her life.

“I promise things do get better,” Brown says. “It might just take some time.”



Sophomore Riley Brown  
photo by Caleb Sorrells