



The High School View

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Babysitting jobs offer flexibility and fun

BY JULIA SAYRE AND GRACE BENNETT-ROCK

The need for childcare on-Island has led many students at Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) to begin babysitting. The flexible schedules, variety of activities, and opportunities to learn responsibility and relationship-building have kept many students working as babysitters for years. Senior Josie Merry began working in childcare when she was in fifth grade by helping with the kids at her great-aunt's daycare. Now, she nannies for two kids as her summer job, and babysits for other families throughout the school year. "I love babysitting because I get to relive my childhood

moments and bring out the little kid in me," she said. "It's so fun to look back to when I used to collect rocks and paint them, or play in the yard, and now I get to do those things when I babysit." Senior Cali Giglio also started babysitting in fifth grade after auctioning off babysitting hours for her school's fundraiser. Now, she is an on-call babysitter for several families on weekends. "I see babysitting as helping your community, even though it is a job," she said. Babysitting regularly for one or two families is something freshman Greta Milne, who started babysitting at the age of 13, does as well. "My parents' friends offered to pay me to watch their kids," she said. "I was too young to have a real job, and



ILLUSTRATION BY MADELEINE BENGTSOON

I liked babysitting, so I continued with it." The traditional route to start babysitting starts with many students working as a parent's helper by providing care for children while the parents are home. This was how freshman Maeve Cook-

Martin started out at the age of 9. "After a few years of being a mother's helper, I started babysitting for [the family], and through the years I've spent with them I've been able to watch these kids grow up," she said. Josie has also been able to

watch the kids she babysits reach milestones. "When I first met the boy I babysit, he had delayed speech and he couldn't talk," she said. "I learned a lot about human communication with him, not just through words but through body language, feelings, and emotions. It created a bond between us that is special." Opportunities for babysitting work are often shared via word of mouth. "When tourists come in the summer and it gets more chaotic, people I've babysat for give my name to their friends, and then they'll give my name to their friends," Maeve said. "Your name gets around really quickly on the Island." When asked about advice for prospective babysitters, Josie recommends being yourself. "I used to be self-conscious of what the kids would think of me, but I think my authenticity made

us bond more," she said. Greta suggests doing physical activities with the kids, which she finds allows everyone to have a better time together. "We do board games, play hide and seek, or build something with building blocks," she said. Maeve recommends prioritizing clear communication with the parents. "Sometimes parents will tell me one thing and the kids will tell me something else, like asking for dessert if their parents said no. It's important to get all your information from parents," she said. Having a relationship with the kids, as well as their parents, makes Josie want to continue babysitting. "Creating bonds with the family and becoming close to both the kids and parents is important to me," she said. "It's such a cool experience to be loved by these little kids. It just makes me want to keep coming back." **HSV**

As technology use grows, staff adapt

BY OLIVIA MACPHERSON

Following the spread of COVID, the use of technology by students and faculty at MVRHS (Martha's Vineyard Regional High School) has increased substantially. Students can type up classwork and responses to tests rather than write them out manually with pen and paper, and the ability to efficiently share information has increased through sites such as Google Classroom and apps like Remind, Quizlet, and YouTube. Rick Mello, the school's IT director, spoke to the huge push at the onset of the pandemic to have Chromebooks available to all students. However, with this instant access to the Internet in every classroom, the school has had to keep up with the ever-changing technology in the

name of protecting student privacy and maintaining academic integrity. While students benefit from increased access to information, the need to keep students safe can pose challenges. "The high school is bound to what's called the CIPA law [Child Information Protection Act]," said Mr. Mello. "As a school, we have to have a firewall in place." But there are disadvantages to this. "A teacher might say, 'Hey, go to this site', and a student fills it out and it doesn't load," said Mr. Mello. "In this case, the firewall is being a little too aggressive." Junior Emmett Silva has encountered the school's firewall when he was instructed by a teacher to access a site in order to complete his schoolwork. "I was not able to complete the assignment, as were many of the students in

my class," he said. While the firewall may block some websites accidentally, it does work to prevent students from accessing sites that might complete the work for them. Mr. Mello said, "Probably the biggest concern is that everything's on the internet, and you can pay someone five bucks to write an essay for you." Or you can ask artificial intelligence (A.I.) to do it for free. ChatGPT, a new chatbot, was released in late November 2022. The chatbot uses A.I. to generate original responses to user prompts. This constant evolution of software is challenging students and teachers alike with finding new ways to work with the scope of information now readily available to them. Junior Connor Graves said, "I think that as technology grows — especially with A.I.

— there are always going to be new ways or methods of cheating the system. That's not going to be something that's going to change." Elsbeth Todd, an architecture and design teacher who has worked at MVRHS for 10 years, said, "Technology has always been part of my curriculum. Still, it's important to know how to draft and work with paper. Making physical models is still a part of the design profession." Despite technology being an integral part of classes such as design, architecture, and animation, Ms. Todd sometimes observes students trying to use their phones when they aren't supposed to. To her, however, this is more than a temporary issue. "Adults have to know how to manage their phone usage when they're at work," said Ms. Todd. "If you are



OLIVIA MACPHERSON

Freshmen Tasman Strom, Matthew Day, and Eli Bryant use SketchUp, a design software, to build house models in Ms. Todd's Design and Architecture class. an employer thinking about hiring somebody, would you want them to be on their phone all the time? Probably not," she said. "What we try to do is help students find their way with [technology usage] so that, at least in school, they can practice being present and learn how to separate themselves from their phones." Emmett thinks the key to using all forms of technology in school is moderation — phone use included. "I don't see phone use being particularly harmful so long as it's used sparingly," he said. "But like anything, too much would become too much." **HSV**

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