

Name: Eli

Date: 1-24-17

Writing

## **Should Whales and Dolphins be Held Captive?**

Have you ever been in a time out? Have you ever been grabbed and forced to go somewhere? Well imagine that happening pretty much every day! Captive animals always have to deal with that! Imagine that being you. If an animal hurt you, it'd probably be killed while if you hurt it, you'd just be warned. Whales and dolphins are some of the most forced animals to lose their freedom, put on shows, and get their lifespans shortened in return. People often argue about whether this should be allowed. I think any animal definitely should **NEVER** be held captive!

Animals deserve freedom and should only be held captive if they need help or can't survive in the wild. Animals in captivity get injuries and conditions that don't occur in the wild. Captive orcas often get collapsed dorsal fins because of how little space they have to exercise. Whales and dolphins are gentle creatures and never hurt each other. However, when captive, they fight like beasts with each other. One reason for that could be they're not getting along and can't separate, so they'll most likely fight. This can be seen as injuries like teeth marks, bruises, ripped off chunks of flesh, etc. All of this evidence supports freedom being needed for all of these majestic creatures to help them stay healthy and happy.

In addition to deserving freedom, in many aquariums animals are forced to put on shows which goes against their natural behaviour in the wild. Orcas in Seaworld spend most of their time at the surface with very little shade doing tricks while wild orcas spend 95% of their time in shady water not being forced to do tricks. The orcas at Seaworld should be in the shade because their skin can't handle the boiling sun. Imagine having to deal with extremely painful

sunburn every day! Orcas at Seaworld, if not able to be free, should at least not be forced to do tricks and should be able to have a less stressful life. Coastal sanctuaries wouldn't make them do tricks and would be able to give them a more natural environment. So maybe they could be there. Animals shouldn't be forced to do tricks. If they're held captive, they should at least not be stressed.

When animals are held captive, their lifespans are often shortened. In the wild, female orcas live to about 90 years old while males live to about 60. 150 orcas were taken into captivity since 1961. Now 128 of them are dead. This shows how their lifespans are shortened because  $2017 - 1961 = 56$ . That's less than an average male orca's lifespan! It's also a lot less than a female orca's life span! 34 years to be exact. Scientists say that the average lifespan for orcas at Seaworld is 13! 47 years less than a male orca's lifespan and 77 years less than a female orca's lifespan. In my opinion, this is very wrong, mean, harsh, and brutal.

A lot of people might disagree with me about this and have some pretty good reasons. Many aquariums help sick/injured animals and sometimes cheer them up when they're sad. Aquariums entertain little kids. For a lot of people it might be their only chance to see and learn about certain animals. I disagree with these because not all aquariums release animals once they're better and kids' and grownups entertainment and learning isn't more important than animals' freedom.

Sea mammals are one of the most captured family of animals in the world! It's not fair that they're treated this way! All they get in return for being forced to be in aquariums is food, shortened lives, sometimes being whipped, etc. I think people should enforce a law that stops people from capturing them. They deserve freedom, to have less stressful lives not doing tricks, and longer lifespans. This is all very, very wrong.

Name: Elijah L.

Date: 1/24/17

Writing

### **Should Kids Have Phones?**

What should kids do if something bad happens to them? What if their parents are running late to pick them up? If you are a parent asking those questions, you are not alone. Many parents around the country and the world are worried about the same question of whether their kids should have a phone. In my mind, though, kids need phones as much as they might want them.

To begin with, a reason kids should have phones is that it lets parents stay in touch with their kids. For example, Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, a professor of educational psychology at the University of British Columbia, says, "My own son, who doesn't have his own [cell phone], often borrows my cellphone when he goes for a sleepover at a friend's, so he can call before he goes to sleep without having to ask to use the family phone. Even if he doesn't actually call, it makes him feel better to know he can." Children like the safety of knowing that they can talk to their parents. It also means that if anything happens to the child, the parents can know. Cell phones could also be useful to children of separated parents. Schedules may be confusing, and visits between parents could be a problem for communication. If kids can't communicate with parents, neither has any idea what's happening with the other.

Another reason kids should have cell phones is that, unfortunately, kids can be bullied for not having a phone. For instance, statistics show that almost 90 percent of teenagers own a cell phone. This could cut off a kid from their friends, who might not want to call the house phone. At the Solomon Schechter School of Manhattan, 73.1 percent of the kids who did not have cell phones wanted them, and though no kids reported being bullied, it still cuts kids off.

Though kids should not exclude kids without phones, it does happen and can make a kid an outcast.

Having a phone can even teach kids responsibility. In the aforementioned survey at Solomon Schechter, 80.8 percent of kids would or do use phones for contacting parents, and 47.2 percent for research. These are responsible reasons to use a phone, at least in my opinion.

Another example is Tristan Mills. Just under seven years ago, when he was eleven, Tristan got a phone from his older sister, to save money instead of terminating their plan. Tristan's parents gave him hard rules. He was only to use the phone if he needed to contact his parents. Since his mom picked him up every day from school, it was helpful to communicate if she was running late or Tristan had to do something unexpected after school. Tristan immediately understood that his phone was a privilege and stuck to the rules. Considering the countless number of ways a kid could use their phone irresponsibly, the fact that kids are responsible shows a lot.

Though some people might say that having a phone gives kids too much freedom to do things like using more data than their plan allows, costing the parents, I still hold on to my point. If that happens, parents can set rules. Remember, giving a kid a phone is not total freedom over what they can do with a phone. If kids do it again, parents could take away their phone for a certain period of time, or turn off the data. Even though it is a problem, it's a problem that can be solved.

All in all, because kids can contact their parents, avoid judgement and bullying, and learn to be responsible, kids should have phones, whether or not they need restrictions. If you are a parent and you want to know whether your kid needs a phone, just go for it!

Name: Odelia

Date: 1/23/2017

Writing

### **Why Kids Should Not Have Junk Food In School**



osa is an 11-year-old girl who is overweight, she is trying to lose some weight but when she gets to school every day all of her friends offer her fruit roll ups, gummy bears, chocolate, doughnuts etc. While her friends are trying to be nice, Rosa is eating more and more sweets everyday which causes all her hard work to be useless. Like Rosa, many children struggle from being obese or overweight and children are exposed every day to sweets in school. While kids all over the country suffer from obesity problems, many schools do nothing about it. So many children could be saved from obesity problems if schools did not allow junk food in school. Amen, sister!

One reason why kids should not have junk food in school is because junk food makes kids lose concentration. According to Gary Pretsfelder, the principal of Solomon Schechter Manhattan, “kids should eat healthy because it supports kids learning.” In fact, brain development and growth depends on nutrition. Not only does healthy eating support learning but eating junk stops it. According to the Ohio State University study of 12,000 5th through 8th graders, kids who ate junk food had slower

academic growth in math, reading, and science. If you eat a healthy, balanced diet, it will help your concentration, memory and focus.

Another reason why kids should not have junk food in school is that they can get overweight. If people don't eat healthy when they are young, it can lead to a lifetime of real health consequences, like high cholesterol, high blood pressure, early heart disease, diabetes, bone problems, and skin conditions such as heat rash, fungal infection and acne. Sixty million adults (20 percent of the US population) are obese. About 300,000 people die each year from problems caused by being obese or overweight. Schools should help solve the obesity problem by not allowing kids to eat junk food in school .

Some may believe that it is not a school's job to control kids' eating habits, it is fun and traditional, or that it is not bad if you don't have too much. On the other hand, munchkins are fun but diabetes is not . "It isn't bad if you don't have too much" is easier said than done. I mean, who has only one munchkin? Once you start you can't stop. It is not a school's job to control kids eating habits, but it is its job to teach children, which is really difficult when sugar makes kids lose concentration.

It is clear that allowing kids to have junk food in school is a bad decision. It can make kids lose concentration in school and make them overweight. School is a place that kids should learn all types of things including how to keep themselves healthy. For all these reasons schools should not allow kids to have junk food in schools. So next

time you pack your child a junky snack, think about what the consequences are.

Name: Toby

Date: 1/27/17

Writing

### ***Should The School Day Start Later?***

A couple of days ago Jaden fell asleep despite the class being very loud, all because he didn't get enough sleep because he had to wake up so early. Students are having to wake up way too early, making them tired at school and making them skip breakfast to get to school on time, but that can stop! So I believe that schools should start later so that kids can get more sleep.

One reason the school day should start later is so kids are awake enough to learn. Imagine it's a Monday morning and you need to wake your sleepy teenagers. You can't! You're not the only one. Indeed, each morning, few of the country's 17 million high school students are awake enough to get much from their first class, especially if it starts before 8 a.m. Indeed, many of them stayed up too late the night before, but it is not their fault. As evidence: Adolescents are known for not getting enough sleep. The average amount of sleep that teens get is somewhere in between 7 and 7 ¼ hours, even though they need between 9 and 9 ½ hours Teenagers need more sleep.

Another reason the day should start later is so kids have more time for breakfast and healthy eating in the morning. Many people of all ages have opinions about this topic:

If school would start 45 min later and end 45 min later all that could be stopped!

Students would get more sleep, would have a good breakfast. Some people even skip breakfast because of the need to get to school in time. If students are worried about needing to sleep or being hungry in the morning, they can not concentrate on what is important. Also when kids wake up they may not have enough time to eat breakfast. A teen survey responder said “I find myself very tired again. I can't focus because I'm busy thinking about sleep and how hungry I am because I missed breakfast (everyday).”

Another reason to start school later is that being tired affects behaviour. In the 1950's and 1960's, most schools started between 8:30-9:00 and many students barely stayed awake all day. By 2000, many high schools were starting at 7:30 or earlier, and more and more studies showed that these early school start times can weaken teenagers' ability to learn, drive safely, and get along with others. This can even increase the likelihood of smoking, drug abuse, and teen pregnancy. Teens are easily swayed by peer pressure, and school waking them up earlier makes them even less able to “just say no” or think ahead about what they are doing and the consequences of it. This can result in all kinds of problem behaviors. Some high schools end early and many teens are unsupervised from approximately 2:30 until 5:30 p.m. (Sometimes even



later in many suburbs) also creates the opportunity to make bad choices. You can go ask your local police department when teens are getting in trouble and they will gladly talk about those who are unsupervised after school hours. Another thing that happened is that, just like babies, tired kids are also cranky, easily frustrated, and overly emotional. This can create arguments between family and friends.

Some people might say that if the day starts later, it also ends later leaving too little time for homework. And if you stay up for work, you will still be tired the next morning. Even so, teens already go to bed late, therefore is better to go to bed a bit later than to wake up very early. They could also say that waking up early teaches you to keep on a tight schedule, but I think that can learn to stay on a schedule in different ways. Therefore, the day should start later.

School starts so early that you fall asleep in class, and are too tired and rushed to do anything. Being tired affects your judgement, causing you to sometimes do bad things. If you are tired, it's harder to learn. That we can agree on. Also, after school it's harder to resist peer pressure, leading you to make bad decisions. If the day started later, everything would be better.