



LIFELONG READERS:

THE ROLE OF TEEN CONTENT

NAA Foundation Study Reveals That Future Readership
Results When Newspapers Publish Content for Teens



“The paper thought the teen section would be a great opportunity to offer something for teenagers in our circulation area to read, and that’s the primary focus. The other focus is to help teenagers acquire journalism skills and one day be able to work for our newspaper or another newspaper.”

BECKY CAIRNS :: TX. Editor, Standard-Examiner, Ogden, Utah



“You get good readership from youth today with a teen section. A secondary benefit is the parents of youth read those sections. Even I, as my kids get older, still read that section because I want to know what people that age are thinking.”

BRUCE BRADLEY :: Publisher, The Virginian-Pilot, Virginia Beach, Va.;
President/Publishing Group, Landmark Communications Inc.;
Chairman, NAA Foundation Board of Trustees



“You can introduce children to news, the same as with the NIE program. You need to get a paper in their hands somehow. Readers early on are liable to stay readers later.”

STANFORD LIPSEY :: Publisher, The Buffalo News

With this report, “Lifelong Readers: The Role of Teen Content,” the Newspaper Association of America Foundation begins a new research initiative.

Over a repeating three-year cycle, the NAA Foundation will study the impact of youth content, the role of Newspaper In Education programs and the influence of student journalism – in particular, work on high school newspapers – in developing future readers, improving education and promoting civic engagement.

This research is critical, because newspapers are in dire need of forming strong bonds with young readers.

Historically, young people who were not avid newspaper readers in their late teens and early 20s usually changed their habits as they grew older. But that has not been the case with Generation X and the oldest of Generation Y. Research reveals that 18- to 34-year-olds are reading less than other groups, a trend that is deeply disturbing to anyone concerned about the part newspapers play in an informed, engaged citizenry.

The NAA Foundation has long maintained that an important way to form a lifelong bond with young readers is through specially designed content for teens. However, until now there has never been any solid research to support that. This report provides hard statistical data that newspaper content for teens, by teens and relating to teens strongly bolsters a newspaper’s ability to attract young readers and keep them as they age.

This finding is particularly important because over the last several years, some newspapers have actually abandoned their teen sections in favor of content they perceive as being more appealing to the 18-to-34 age group. One result of this study should be a realization by newspapers that if they direct content to their pre-teen and teen readers, they can build future readership among 18- to 34-year-olds without additional initiatives.

Clearly, there are more factors involved in attracting and keeping young adult readers, but this research shows that a future generation of young readers is there now waiting to be reached. With a sustained and coordinated effort, newspapers can reach it.

Bruce Bradley

*Publisher, The Virginian-Pilot, Virginia Beach, Va.;
President/Publishing Group, Landmark Communications Inc.;
Chairman, NAA Foundation Board of Trustees*

Margaret Vassilikos

Senior Vice President and Treasurer, NAA Foundation



“We get a lot of mail, and a lot more from adults than from young people, especially when some of the kids write some personal stories that older people can identify with.”

BILL NORTON :: TeenStar Editor, The Kansas City (Mo.) Star



“I hear a lot from schoolteachers who like the section and might use it in class. A lot of older readers read NeXt to keep up with what their grandkids are interested in.”

JEAN WESTMOORE :: NeXt Editor, The Buffalo News



“All you have to do is look at what is happening to our industry. This is one response. It is not the total response, as far as readers are concerned, but it couples with our online efforts.”

PATRICK COBURN
Publisher (retired), The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Ill.



This report summarizes new research by the Newspaper Association of America Foundation showing that newspapers with specially designed content for teens have a better chance of attracting young readers and keeping them as they age. Teen sections provide an additional boost to later readership beyond the effects of other factors known to influence newspaper reading.

Although previous studies have found a number of factors – including parental influence and the use of newspapers in school as an educational tool – to be predictors of future newspaper readership, this research is the first to assess the impact of content for teens on the newspaper reading habits of young adult readers.

The conclusions are based on interviews with young adults between 18 and 24 years old who live in seven communities with newspapers that have long-standing commitments to providing content for teens.

The survey determined that 75 percent of the respondents who read newspaper content for teens when they were 13 to 17 years old are currently reading their local paper at least once a week. Only 44 percent of those who did not read the teen section are now reading their local paper at least once a week. The findings were consistent across large and small markets.

It is known that teens who read newspapers are likely to read newspapers as adults. The survey, however, found that teen sections provide a significant additional boost for later reading.

- Only 34 percent of the young adults surveyed currently read the weekday newspaper at least once a week if they had read neither the teen section nor the newspaper in general as teenagers.
- Current readership is considerably higher at 63 percent for young adults who had read the newspaper but not the teen section when they were younger.
- Current readership is much higher still at 78 percent for young adults who read their local newspaper and its teen section when they were 13 to 17 years old.

This pattern is the same with other standard readership metrics for weekday and Sunday newspapers, including average issue reading. The additional gain from reading teen sections ranged from 11 to 15 points on readership scores.

The study found the five factors for 13- to 17-year-olds that best predict future newspaper readership, in order of influence, are:

- Read the local newspaper in an average week;
- Ever read the local newspaper's teen section;
- Parents regularly read the newspaper;
- Parents regularly encourage reading the newspaper; and
- Newspapers are ever used in classroom discussions.

These factors exert their influence independently of each other. This means, for example, that reading the teen section during the teen years significantly increases later readership even if parental encouragement is absent.

The study also uncovered a similarly strong connection between teen sections and later use of the newspaper's Web site. Reading the newspaper during the teen years increases the odds of visiting the Web site as a young adult. However, reading the teen section as well provides a significantly larger boost to later Web site usage.

What attracts teens to teen sections? Personal relevance is key. The study determined that content specifically written for and about teens is the strongest driver of teen section reading. Personal connections are a strong secondary attraction, including writing for the section or being mentioned in an article, or knowing others who were similarly involved.

The newspapers featured in the study are: The Buffalo News; The Kansas City (Mo.) Star; The Virginian-Pilot, Virginia Beach, Va.; Tribune Chronicle, Warren, Ohio; Standard-Examiner, Ogden, Utah; The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Ill.; and the Reading (Pa.) Eagle. The seven newspapers fall into two circulation categories: under 75,000 or above 150,000.

the impact of teen sections on future readers

Across all seven markets, around half of the young adults surveyed (54 percent) read a weekday newspaper in the past week, and 31 percent said they read a weekday newspaper yesterday. The readership figures for Sunday newspapers reveal that 58 percent read the local Sunday newspaper in the past four weeks, with 45 percent saying they read the Sunday newspaper last Sunday.

But when the young adult readers who were exposed to newspaper content for teens during their teen years are singled out, the readership figures increase dramatically.

In the large and small markets, 75 percent of those who read the teen section between ages 13 and 17 are now reading the weekday newspaper at least once a week. That compares with 44 percent who did not read the teen section as teens, but are now reading the weekday newspaper at least once a week.

In addition, of the young adults who read both the local newspaper and the teen section as teens, nearly eight in 10 (78 percent) said they read the weekday newspaper in the past week, and half (50 percent) read it yesterday.

Sunday newspaper readership was equally affected. Eighty-one percent of teen section and newspaper readers said they had read their local Sunday newspaper in the past four weeks, while two-thirds (66 percent) read it last Sunday.

In the large and small markets that were studied in this survey, the readership habits of young adults who had not read either their local newspaper's teen section or the paper itself were worse than that of the market as a whole.

Only 34 percent of those who read neither the teen section nor the newspaper when they were 13 to 17 years old said they had read the weekday newspaper in the past week, and only 17 percent said they read the paper on an average weekday. Only 37 percent said they had read the Sunday newspaper in the past four weeks.

The same readership patterns were evident regardless of market size. However, in the smaller markets, weekday readership was slightly higher than in larger markets, and Sunday readership was slightly lower.

Teen section readers also had higher Reader Behavior Scores as young adults than those who did not read the teen sections. The RBS index, developed by the Readership Institute at Northwestern University, ranges from 1 to 7 and includes such factors as

the days a person reads a newspaper in a typical week, time spent reading and the amount of the newspaper that is read. Young adults who read both a newspaper and a teen section had a 3.6 RBS, compared with 2.0 for those surveyed who read neither when they were ages 13 to 17. Young adults who read just the local newspaper as teens had an RBS of 3.0.

Having read a newspaper or its content for teens as a teenager also had a major influence on a young adult's use of the newspaper's Web site. Three-fourths (76 percent) of the young adults who read the newspaper and its teen section between ages 13 and 17 said they have visited a newspaper Web site, and 42 percent said they have done so in the past 30 days.

Those who read a newspaper and teen section were almost twice as likely to have visited a newspaper Web site in the past week. But even among the young adults who did not read the local newspaper or its teen section, 45 percent said they have visited the newspaper's Web site.

Readership as Teens (Ages 13-17): Impact on Current Readership

	Total	Read teen section	Did not read teen section	Read local newspaper as teen	Did not read newspaper
Percent in sample		32%	66%	50%	48%
Weekday, past week	54	75	44	70	37
Weekday, yesterday	31	47	24	43	19
Sunday, past month	58	77	49	76	40
Last Sunday	45	61	37	59	29

Impact of Teen Section and Newspaper Readership as Teens on Current Readership

	Total	Newspaper, not teen section	Teen section, not newspaper	Newspaper & teen section	Neither teen section nor newspaper
Percent of market		25%	7%	25%	43%
Weekday, past week	54	63	64	78	34
Weekday, yesterday	31	36	37	50	17
Sunday, past month	58	70	64	81	37
Last Sunday	45	53	43	66	28
Current Reader Behavior Score	2.7	3.0	2.7	3.6	2.0

Newspaper Web Site Usage as Young Adults by Teen Reader Habits

	Total	Newspaper, not teen section	Teen section, not newspaper	Newspaper & teen section	Neither teen section nor newspaper
Percent of total		25%	7%	25%	43%
Ever visited (net)	57	59	59	76	45
More than 30 days ago	25	25	22	34	20
Within the past 30 days	31	32	36	42	24
Within the past 7 days	17	17	16	24	14
Yesterday	5	5	4	6	4
Never visited	36	34	35	19	48

content that draws teen readership

According to the young adults who read teen sections between the ages of 13 and 17, the greatest appeal was that the content was written for teens, by teens or covered issues relating to teens. Thirty percent of those interviewed – and an equal number of men and women – said “teencentric” content was the main reason they read the teen sections.

The next greatest draw, at 18 percent, was that the teen reader wrote for the section, knew the writer, was interviewed for a story or knew people featured in a story. That factor was a greater draw in the small markets than the large markets, and it also was more important to women than men.

Entertainment news relative to teens was the area of content that had the next greatest appeal to teen readers, at 16 percent. That content area was a greater factor in large markets than small markets.

Ten percent of the young adults recalled having a general interest in the section’s stories and articles but did not mention specific subjects, while surveys, opinions and articles offering advice on teen issues were cited by 8 percent of the young adult readers when asked what content led them to the teen sections.

The young adults who read the newspaper as teens but did not read the teen section said they were mostly attracted to the general news content, whether it was headlines on the front page or weather reports. That category was cited by nearly half (48 percent) of the young adults who read newspapers as teens.

Sports coverage attracted 39 percent of all young adult readers as teens, with men far more interested in sports coverage (51 percent) than women (22 percent). Comics or puzzles were selected as a readership driver by 23 percent of the young adults, with advertising and entertainment news being selected by the same overall number – 19 percent – as content that drew them to newspapers as teens.



“Getting people to read the paper and continuing to read it as young adults – that is the future.”

WILLIAM S. FLIPPIN :: President and Publisher, Reading (Pa.) Eagle

Content That Drew Readers to the Teen Section

	Total	Men	Women	Above 150K circulation	Under 75K circulation*
Written to teens, by teens or relates to teens	30%	30%	30%	31%	30%
Wrote for, knew writer, was interviewed or knew person in story	18	12	22	14	23
Entertainment news, reviews, things to do, movies, concerts, school events	16	17	14	19	10
General interest in publication, no topic mentioned	10	11	10	11	10
Surveys, opinions, advice about teen issues	8	7	8	6	10
Comics or puzzles	4	6	2	6	0
Front page, headlines, photos, artwork	4	2	6	4	5
Advertising or classifieds	2	4	1	3	0
Nothing in particular	17	20	15	17	18
Read teen section as teen (32% of sample)					

Content That Drew Non-Teen Section Readers to the Newspaper

	Total	Men	Women	Above 150K circulation	Under 75K circulation*
News in general, headlines, front page, politics, weather, science, technology, business or stocks	48%	48%	48%	50%	36%
Sports	39	51	22	38	48
Comics or puzzles	23	27	18	23	21
Ads, inserts, coupons or classifieds	19	17	22	20	14
Entertainment, upcoming events, movies, concerts, restaurants	19	16	23	20	10
Living, Dear Abby, horoscopes, food, fashion	8	6	9	8	4
Required for school class	5	3	9	5	5
Cars, autos (not classified)	3	3	2	3	0
General interest, nothing specific	5	4	6	5	3
Read newspaper as teen but not teen section (25% of sample)					

*The seven newspapers fall into two circulation categories: either under 75,000, or above 150,000.



TEEN ANGLES: 'It's a Window Into Teen Life'

The newspapers featured in the NAA Foundation study started their teen sections to reach out to teens in their markets and to do a better job of covering issues related to teens. But once those sections launched, the newspapers quickly discovered that their efforts were doing that and much more.

Patrick Coburn, who retired in August 2006 as publisher of The State Journal-Register in Springfield, Ill., says that when his paper started The Voice section for teens, "it was definitely intended to try to hook the younger readers into the newspaper habit. It dovetails nicely with our NIE efforts. We try to get the kids really early on and then carry them through in a participatory basis with The Voice. It has been very successful in both those areas."

William S. Flippin, president and publisher of the Reading (Pa.) Eagle, notes that his newspaper's teen section, Voices, "helps us keep in touch with young people and lets them write and do their thing and see it in the paper. I would hope it also helps build readers through life. Getting people to read the paper and continuing to read it as young adults – that is the future."

And in the present, Voices is building "a lot of goodwill toward the newspaper," says Lisa Scheid, editor of the section. "It also shows the young people that the

media isn't this monolithic thing. They are now part of the media."

Other newspapers with teen sections report similar advantages.

"It gives kids something to relate to, and takes us to a market we are not hitting," says Toni Guagenti, editor of 757: Teens Cover the Code, the teen section of The Virginian-Pilot in Virginia Beach, Va.

"It is also a training ground for teens," she adds. "They don't have to go into journalism. The world needs better communicators and better writers. As they go into adulthood, I think it helps them eventually be better communicators."

The Pilot's teen section has been so successful that the newspaper is now in the process of planning a page for ages 5 to 10. Guagenti says The Pilot hopes to launch that section in October 2006.

Guy Coviello, assistant managing editor of the Tribune Chronicle in Warren, Ohio, says he is not at all surprised that the NAA Foundation survey shows that young people who read newspaper teen sections are likely to be lifelong newspaper readers.

"Most sensible companies are trying to market to kids because they want to create customers," says Coviello, who oversees the paper's Page One section for teens. "If they get to kids at a young age, the habit will stay. It applies to

newspapers as much as to Coke or Abercrombie & Fitch."

Coviello notes that teen sections not only reach young people in the 13-17 age group, but also have a huge readership among pre-teens.

"I saw a recent poll that asked young people between ages 12 and 21 how old they wanted to be," he says. "Until age 19, everybody wanted to be two years older than they were. I have noticed in middle schools, a lot of kids are reading the teen section because they want to be that age and want to know what teens are doing and what they are talking about."

"Conversely," Coviello adds, "we have a huge adult readership because it's a window into teen life. Anybody who is a parent or grandparent or teacher or volunteer is reading that section to see what kids are reading and thinking about and what their views are."

The State Journal-Register's Coburn echoes that sentiment.

"We find that the parents are reading that section just so they can know what is going on with their kids," the retired publisher says. "Parents really like it because they are interested in the issues that the kids are talking about. That is a benefit that certainly was not anticipated."

influence on future readership

While reading the local newspaper and reading that newspaper's teen content as teens were the two most influential factors in predicting future readership by young adults, they were not the only things that helped develop a newspaper reading habit.

The four other factors for 13- to 17-year-olds that had a positive impact on future readership by young adults were, in order of influence:

- Parents regularly read the newspaper;
- Parents regularly encouraged reading the newspaper;
- Newspapers were ever used in classroom discussions; and
- Parents regularly encouraged reading newspaper content for teens.

More than one in every four of the young adults interviewed said they were regularly encouraged by their parents or guardians to read the newspaper when they were in their teen years, and nearly one-third were regularly encouraged to watch television newscasts.

The survey also showed that college graduates and minorities were more likely than average to have been encouraged by their parents to read

newspapers. College graduates also were more likely than average – and more likely than those young adults with only a high school diploma – to have parents who regularly read a newspaper. But although the parents of minorities encouraged their teenage children to read the newspaper, the parents themselves were more likely to watch TV news than read the paper.

The vast majority (86 percent) of the young adults who were surveyed said that newspapers were used in their classrooms during their teen years, and 71 percent said they were assigned to read newspapers outside of school for classroom projects.

When they were teens, the young adults in the study said they were more likely to engage in regular discussions of current events with their parents or guardians than with their peers, by a margin of 39 percent compared with 28 percent. College graduates also were more likely than average to have discussed current events regularly with their parents.



“I am going to college and majoring in journalism. I never would have done that if it weren’t for writing for TX. and going to [the 2005 Youth Editorial Alliance National Conference] in Nashville.”

JESSICA SCHREIFELS :: Former Reporter for TX., Standard-Examiner, Ogden, Utah

TEEN ANGLES:

‘I Like to See My Name in the Paper’

Jessica Schreifels, a 2006 graduate of Northridge High School in Layton, Utah, spent two years on the teen staff of the Standard-Examiner in Ogden, Utah, and found not only an outlet for her writing, but also a future career.

Schreifels, 18, is studying journalism at Weber State University in Ogden, with a goal of being a newspaper writer. Her interest in journalism was sparked by her work on TX. and the opportunities that created.

“I got involved because I really liked writing, but at my high school, we didn’t have a student newspaper,” she says. “I really liked journalism-type writing, but I had no outlet for my writing. So I decided to take that interest and start writing for

the Standard-Examiner to see if it was something I was interested in doing.”

The answer was a resounding “yes.”

“I am going to college and majoring in journalism,” she says. “I never would have done that if it weren’t for writing for TX. and going to [the 2005 Youth Editorial Alliance National Conference] in Nashville. If it weren’t for those two things, I wouldn’t have considered it.”

When Schreifels began working for TX., she says, “I didn’t really know anything about writing.” She learned by pulling out two months’ worth of teen sections and studying articles written by other young staffers. She also polished her writing and reporting skills by working with the section’s editor, Becky Cairns, and by picking up tips and pointers

during the TX. monthly staff meetings.

She went from reading just the teen section to being an avid newspaper reader. “I want to see what other people at the paper are writing,” she says.

Schreifels has had “amazing feedback” from other young people who read her stories, but nothing compares with the thrill of seeing her own byline on a story in the newspaper.

The Standard-Examiner pays its teen writers for their stories, but Schreifels notes that she would have written for the section even if there had been no pay involved.

“I probably would have done it either way, because I like to see my name in the paper. Getting paid for it, too, is another perk,” she says.

characteristics of the surveyed audience

Within the sample, about half of the young adults had some college education or a vocational-technical degree, and 13 percent were college graduates. Fifteen percent of the young adults questioned did not graduate from high school, and 22 percent were high school graduates but were not pursuing additional education.

The high school graduates who had not gone on to higher education were more likely to be renters, to be employed and to have moved away from home. Roughly three-fourths of the sample still lived with their parents.

Fifty-one percent of the young people who were questioned for this survey were male, and 49 percent were female. Forty-five percent were between ages 18 and 20, and 55 percent were between ages 21 and 24.

Minorities made up 19 percent of the sample, but they were heavily concentrated (94 percent) in the three major metropolitan markets included in the survey – Buffalo; Kansas City, Mo.; and Virginia Beach, Va.

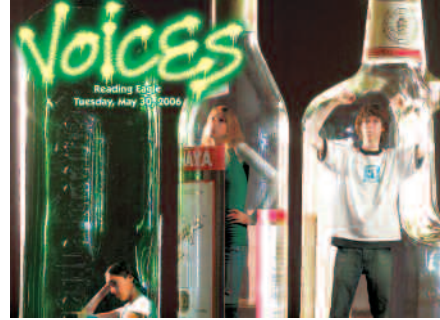


“At the end of each of our articles, we usually submit our e-mail address so people can talk to us. It’s interesting because I heard from many people in Arizona and Washington state who had read my articles. I really got good feedback.”

COLE SPICKER :: Three-year Staff Member of TX., Standard-Examiner, Ogden, Utah, and a 2006 graduate of Weber High School

“People who read the teen section get into the habit of reading papers. I have a pile of letters on my desk. We’ve had prisoners in correctional institutions write to our advice columnists, and letters from older people who sometimes like Voices and sometimes want to admonish the kids.”

LISA SCHEID :: Voices Editor, Reading (Pa.) Eagle



TEEN ANGLES:
Section Editors Revisit
Unforgettable Moments

Becky Cairns says her most memorable moment as editor of TX., the teen section of the Standard-Examiner in Ogden, Utah, occurred just after Sept. 11, 2001. The teen section for the following Monday was already done and in place when the terrorist attacks shook the nation.

“Several of the staff members called, and as the story unfolded, they thought we should redo the page and have something in it that coming Monday,” Cairns recalls. “At their prompting, we totally redid our page.”

Other stories that stand out in the minds of the newspaper teen editors:

- At The Virginian-Pilot in Virginia Beach, Va., the staff of 757: Teens Cover the Code did a series of stories on what it was like to be a teenager throughout the decades, starting in the 1940s. The young reporters interviewed people who were teens during those decades to capture the flavor of the times. They

also prepared lists of what teens were reading, popular songs and other lifestyle trends.

- In TeenStar, the teen section of The Kansas City (Mo.) Star, a young woman recently wrote about her decision not to have sex and what that decision cost her. Bill Norton, the section’s editor, says that article generated more response than any other article published in TeenStar’s 12-year history.
- In The Voice, the teen section of The State Journal-Register in Springfield, Ill., a senior wrote about the disturbing trend of parents hosting parties for teenagers and providing alcohol for underage drinkers, especially at high school graduation time. Local law enforcement officers confirmed the trend and said it has been growing over the past 10 years.

- At the Tribune Chronicle in Warren, Ohio, Page One presented a series of stories on teens whose parents are public figures and in the local spotlight. The profiles included a teen whose parent was a union president involved in a big labor dispute and lockout, the daughter of a school board member in the area’s largest school district, and the daughter of a high school principal.

The NAA Foundation engaged MORI Research of Minneapolis to conduct this study.

MORI Research interviewed 1,607 young adults, ages 18 to 24, between March 30 and May 2, 2006, in the complete Metropolitan Statistical Areas of Buffalo; Kansas City, Mo.; Virginia Beach, Va.; Warren, Ohio; Ogden, Utah; Springfield, Ill.; and Reading, Pa. Each of those communities has a market newspaper that has offered specially designed content for teens to young readers for at least 10 years. Three-fourths of the interviews were in the three larger markets (circulation above 150,000), while one-fourth were in the four smaller markets (circulation under 75,000).

Young adults interviewed all had lived in their communities for at least 10 years, ensuring that the interviewees had been in the area long enough to be exposed to the teen sections when they were between the ages of 13 and 17.

The interviews averaged 15 minutes in length and were conducted Tuesdays through Saturdays in order to get industry-standard readership measures. No interviews were conducted with employees of media or marketing companies.

The questionnaires used in the survey were designed to address behaviors of respondents as teens, defined as between 13 and 17 years old. They included standard readership and Reader Behavior Score (RBS) measures.

The Reader Behavior Score index was developed by the Readership Institute at Northwestern University and includes measures of average-day newspaper readership, time spent reading and amount read. Scores range from 1 (for someone with no newspaper readership) to 7 (for someone who reads daily, for a longer period of time and reads most or all of the newspaper).



“The section is very popular in the community. When I took over in 1994 and would go around to high schools to talk about it, hardly anyone knew what it was. Now when I go to a school, it is one of the first things that anyone talks about and it is one of the first things that comes up at civic appearances and speeches by our editors.”

GUY COVIELLO :: Page One Editor and Assistant Managing Editor, Tribune Chronicle, Warren, Ohio



“The teen section needs to be seen as an integral part of the paper. If you let it become the kids’ pages, it won’t be around too long. For a section to survive, it needs to be more than patronizing.”

MIKE MATULIS :: Editorial Page Editor, The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Ill.

TEEN ANGLES:
‘You Have to Put Out Effort’

Of the seven newspapers included in the NAA Foundation study, the one with the most interesting story on how its teen section began is The State Journal-Register in Springfield, Ill.

In 1993, Mike Matulis, now the paper’s editorial page editor, left his reporting job at the newspaper to take a position at a local community college teaching journalism and composition, and advising the student newspaper.

“I probably knew in my gut that a lot of kids weren’t reading newspapers, but once I started giving quizzes, it became clear that most students were not newspaper readers,” Matulis remembers. “It was also clear that most of the kids did not have high school newspapers anymore, which was a lot different from when I was in school.”

He found those facts so disturbing that he wrote a memo to Patrick Coburn, an editor who went on to become publisher of The State Journal-Register before retiring in August 2006.

“I just detailed my concerns about this, but I also said that I felt the newspaper didn’t offer much of an entry point to kids by [not] encouraging them with a section that was devoted more to their tastes,” Matulis says. “We went out to lunch and talked about me coming back to the paper with that goal.”

Shortly thereafter, Matulis rejoined the paper and plans were approved to proceed with a teen section. The next step was to run a series of house ads to solicit participants for a teen advisory board that would help with the planning for the new section. The response was huge.

“Quite a few kids actually showed an interest in helping us plan it and design what it would be,” he says.

The first issue of The Voice came out in September 1995 with Matulis as its editor, a job he held until 1999, when he took the position of editorial page editor.

“If nobody is paying attention to you, why should you pay attention? You have to put out effort, and I think The Voice is a success story just in its longevity,” Matulis said. “The other thing I would stress is that the teen section needs to be seen as an integral part of the paper. If you let it become the kids’ pages, it won’t be around too long. For a section to survive, it needs to be more than patronizing.”

7 teen sections, 7 different methods of doing things

Three of the teen sections featured in the NAA Foundation study pay their young contributors for their work, while four do not. But not one of the section editors reports any difficulty recruiting teen writers, illustrators and photographers. Here is a summary of the recruiting, training, publication schedules and other characteristics of the sections included in the study.

1 > NeXt, The Buffalo News

The teen section is a 12-page tab that runs once a week, on Wednesday, and has around 30 writers from an eight-county area of western New York that includes more than 50 high schools. NeXt Editor Jean Westmoore tries for diversity on her staff, with writers from both the urban Buffalo area and outlying communities.

Most of the content is provided by the teen staffers, with that content occasionally being augmented by the newspaper's regular reporting staff and the wire services. The Buffalo News is a Newspaper Guild operation, so NeXt staffers are considered freelancers and are paid between \$10 and \$50 a story, depending on the quality of the article and where in the teen section it runs. Once a year, the newspaper advertises for new writers for NeXt and also sends a notice out to classroom teachers. Westmoore works individually with her teen writers, and she also holds a training session for new reporters. Stories are suggested by the teens themselves or during occasional brainstorming sessions.

2 > The Voice, The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Ill.

The Voice comes out every Tuesday as a separate feature section consisting of a front page and a jump page, with the remaining pages of the section filled with TV news. The newspaper promotes upcoming stories in the teen section on Sunday and Tuesday, and occasionally on Monday as well. Stories are written primarily by teens, although Voice Editor Kelsea Gurski steps in occasionally as a “gap-filler” or if there is a topic “that is a little too meaty for a high school student.”

The teen section uses both teen writers and teen photographers, none of whom are paid. However, staff members gather every Tuesday evening for planning meetings where they indulge in pizzas, cookies, cupcakes and chips. The teen section gets all of the “freebies” sent to the paper for its young reporters and photographers, and once a month, a staff contributor receives a \$10 gift card to a popular teen attraction. The staff usually consists of around 20 writers and photographers drawn from 15 rural and urban schools in the area.

3 > TX., Standard-Examiner, Ogden, Utah

TX. is a broadsheet section, usually a page and a half in size, that is included as part of the regular Monday paper. Its staff of 45 teen writers, photographers and illustrators provides all of the section content. The newspaper tries to have at least one representative from each of the 15 high schools in the newspaper's circulation area, as well as the three or four private schools, and occasionally a home-schooled student will be part of the staff as well.

Contributors are paid on the same scale as freelancers, with writers receiving \$25 to \$40 per story, artists receiving \$35 per illustration, and photographers receiving \$40 for a package of photos. In a typical week, the teen section includes three or four stories, so most staff members write once a month or once every six weeks. TX. advertises for new writers once a year. Section Editor Becky Cairns has a staff meeting every month to brainstorm on story ideas, and the Standard-Examiner promotes the section on the front page every Monday.

4 > TeenStar, The Kansas City (Mo.) Star

TeenStar appears weekly, on Thursday, as page 3 of the newspaper's features section. Section Editor Bill Norton says the young reporters do 90 to 100 percent of the work, and they are not paid. The section recruits staff members with house ads in the paper, and TeenStar often receives applications from more than 100 would-be writers. Frequently, the section has as many as 80 contributors.

The staff meets the third Sunday of every month to talk about possible stories and other issues, with the paper providing snack food, soft drinks and water. Norton says the reporters then follow up individually with story proposals for upcoming issues. He works about three weeks ahead on copy for the section. One of the biggest challenges, he adds, is that many high schools in the more neglected urban areas have abandoned their journalism programs, so the young people from those areas need a huge amount of help and training before they can write for the teen section. Norton conducts intensive workshops for those students to help teach them some journalism basics.

5 > Voices, Reading (Pa.) Eagle

Voices is a 20-page tabloid section that is inserted into the newspaper every Tuesday. Lisa Scheid, the section editor, has between 100 and 200 young people who freelance for the section. Writers attend an initial training section, then receive ongoing training and critiques. Students can write as much as they want, and they are paid on a sliding scale of \$10 to \$25 per article. For writers to receive top pay, they are required to meet a list of "musts" – a great lead, multiple sources, no clichés and the correct use of Associated Press style.

A typical staffer writes three or four stories a year, but Scheid tries to get her contributors to write one story a month. Even if they don't all appear in the teen section, the stories often are promoted in the paper and run on the Voices Web site. Voices includes a notice in the section twice a year seeking writers, and Scheid also visits local high schools and tech schools once a year to look for photographers and illustrators. The section draws its staff from the 18 public high schools in the newspaper's circulation area, as well as two parochial high schools, some private boarding schools, two vocational-tech schools and some home-schooled students.

6 > Page One, Tribune Chronicle, Warren, Ohio

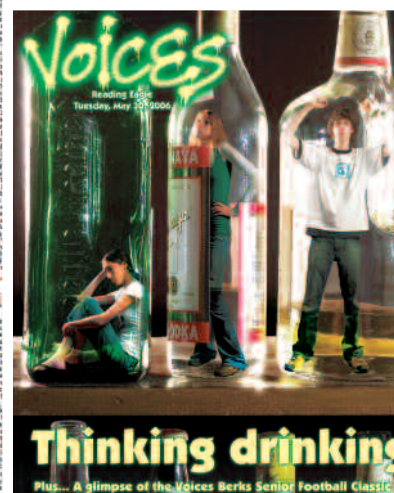
When Page One began in the early 1990s, it was an eight-page tab stuffed inside the Sunday paper once a month. Now it is the cover of every Monday's lifestyle section plus a jump page, with the 15-member teen staff handling all writing, photography, illustration, layout and Web design. The staff is picked from attendees at a series of journalism workshops that the newspaper sponsors during the school year.

Assistant Managing Editor Guy Coviello, who oversees Page One, says that the workshops cover the whole range of journalism training, from the "five Ws" to instruction on writing various types of news stories to more "intangible stuff" such as ethics and First Amendment issues. "The idea is that students, after the workshops, should be able to move onto the Page One staff," he says. "In September, we will start out with about 50 kids in our workshops. By the time we get to March, we are down to 10 or 12," and those students are used to replace graduating seniors. The teens are not paid, and they are expected to attend weekly staff meetings which generate most of the section's story ideas.

7 > 757: Teens Cover the Code, The Virginian-Pilot, Virginia Beach, Va.

The teen section appears every Friday as a full-color page in the feature section and half of another page. Notices seeking teen reporters for the upcoming school year are run during a three- or four-week period. Last year, 757 Editor Toni Guagenti received 100 applications. "I pretty much take everybody," she said. "Having more teens involved means I get more stories." The skill levels of her staff differ, Guagenti says, so she tries to assign students with no experience smaller things such as a book review. Students with advanced skills or great potential are tapped for more in-depth stories.

Although the staff is not paid, Guagenti does run a competition each school year to select one columnist to write every two weeks for \$50 a column. A mandatory meeting is held in September for the entire staff on journalism basics, accuracy and fairness. Guagenti then holds staff meetings every other month to develop story ideas. The section also benefits from stories written by participants in the newspaper's annual summer diversity workshop. The newspaper regularly promotes the teen section on the front page, as well as on the front of the features section in which it appears. And recently, the paper has begun promoting the section in some advertisements as well.



About the NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA FOUNDATION

The NAA Foundation was established as the ANPA Foundation in 1961 by the Board of Directors of what was then called the American Newspaper Publishers Association. In 1992, it officially adopted its current name. It is the educational and charitable arm of NAA.

The NAA Foundation strives to develop engaged and literate citizens in our diverse society through investment in and support of programs designed to enhance student achievement through newspaper readership and appreciation of the First Amendment.

The Foundation's programs and products emphasize the use of newspapers and other media by young people. Foundation support is concentrated in three primary focus areas:

NEWSPAPER IN EDUCATION: The Foundation maintains a nationwide system of cooperation between newspapers and schools designed to enhance student achievement and appreciation of the First Amendment in a variety of subject

areas through the use of newspapers and other media. The Foundation provides resources and training on using newspapers in schools and helps newspapers develop strategic plans for providing NIE services to educators.

YOUTH CONTENT: The Foundation supports the Youth Editorial Alliance, a nationwide coalition of newspapers dedicated to advocating the value of content targeted toward youth. The Foundation provides resources and training in the development of youth content in newspapers; serves as a clearinghouse for youth readership initiatives; and helps newspapers plan and evaluate youth features and content.

STUDENT NEWSPAPERS: The Foundation encourages collaboration between newspapers and schools to support student-produced media. The Foundation works with scholastic media associations nationwide to provide training and resources, with an emphasis on enhancing appreciation of the First Amendment.



Newspaper Association of America Foundation™

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