

CHAT ROOM



Maureen Lemon

Parents need to stay plugged in with their kids

As cliché as it may sound, it is hard to believe it is time to go back to school! September has always been one of my favorite months because going back to school is always a hopeful and exciting time filled with promise. As a teacher, I am able to start a new year with fresh ideas and brand new students. As a parent, I am able to encourage and hold high expectations for my own children as they begin a new year. Sadly, however, I don't believe the people of Columbine High School are feeling the same as I am today.

The students and teachers of Columbine must go back to a place that is capable of haunting them daily with horrific memories of heartache and bloodshed. When this unbelievable carnage occurred, I was as stunned as anybody else. I sat in front of the television in shock and grief and wanted to know why this happened. As stories about the young gunmen began to come out, I began to feel even more confused by their violent behavior because they appeared to come from decent families and neighborhoods.

Lots of excuses

For the next couple of weeks, reasons for the attack were claimed by many. Hollywood was blamed because of TV and movie violence. The music industry was targeted because of the language in their lyrics (Marilyn Manson). Single-parent homes and divorce were mentioned. Drugs and basic erosion of family values were also thrown out into the arena of reasons. Somebody or something needed to take the blame for this unfathomable crime. But I was never really satisfied with any of these answers. Don't misunderstand me, I believe all of these reasons are valid pieces that fit into a very large puzzle. But, I came from an alcoholic home. I listened to wild music. I

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Back-to-school means new duds for kids

■ School is scheduled to start on Monday in Farmington and area stores are swarming with back-to-school shoppers.

By MARY RODRIQUE
STAFF WRITER
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Emilia Iglesias sat in a chair at the Shoe Carnival in downtown Farmington admiring her feet. The shy, dark-haired youngster was sporting a pair of brilliant white Reebok tennis shoes with pale blue striping and sparkle laces: new shoes for a new school year.

"She will be starting kindergarten at Hoover Elementary," said her mom, Ernestina, of Livonia.

Just as sure as yellow school buses on the roads signal the end of summer, shoppers flocking to malls and retail centers are another sign of the season.

Elizabeth Guglielmotti had a tougher challenge at the Shoe Carnival. The Ladywood High School sophomore has precise school-issued guidelines for style and color.

"They have to be black," said her mom, Marie, of Livonia. "Last year, mid-heal was okay. Now it's more of a running type shoe, any brand - Reebok, Adidas, Nike. But there isn't a lot of black."

Elizabeth did find a pair of black Adidas shoes to go with her navy blue plaid skirt and navy sweater uniform.

"We have great 'guy' shoes, and we're getting the ladies athletic line upgraded," said Wesley Sorrells, general manager of Shoe Carnival, which anchors the southwest corner of the Downtown Farmington shopping center.

A few doors down at Dots, large yellow-and-black signs in display win-



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BREWER

Fashion mavens: Above, Emilia Iglesias shows off her new shoes, purchased at Shoe Carnival in downtown Farmington. At right, mom Gerryanna Luscri and daughter Tianna, 7, have success at Dots.

dows advertised School Zone sales and the addition of a children's clothing line.

Barb DeGrande of Farmington was back-to-school shopping with daughters Nicole, 13, an East Middle School eighth grader, and Kathryn, 10, a sixth grader at Our Lady of Sorrows.

Clutching an assortment of outfits, Barb lamented the fact that Kathryn "needs less clothes because of the school uniform, but she's the one finding all the outfits."

Kathryn bolted in and out of the dressing room with blouses, capri



pants and shorts in coordinating colors. Nicole stood by her mom and sister empty-handed.

Clearance bargains

Another Sorrows' student, eighth grader Ashley Kapron, was having good luck with the clearance racks.

"That made her mom, Vicki, happy. 'Everything is in the \$5 to \$7 range,' she said. 'Now we're coordinating and pairing things down.'"

Gerryanna Luscri of Farmington Hills was having a special day with her daughters Tianna, 7, a Gill Elomen-

tary third grader, and Angela, 3, who goes to daycare at Botsford Hospital twice a week while her mom works there as a nurse.

"We had lunch at Big Apple Bagel, then went to Damman Hardware and now Dots for the School Zone days," she said. They planned to continue shopping in the center at T.J. Maxx.

Tianna was finding outfits suitable for returning to school while her little sister hid in the clothes racks.

New line for kids

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Cost adds up

By VIVIAN MARINO
AP BUSINESS WRITER

NEW YORK (AP) - In the next few weeks, millions of youngsters will be trading in their tennis rackets and swim trunks for book bags and jackets - and their parents will be faced with yet another round of seasonal expenses.

Back-to-school necessities can add up rather quickly. There's \$30 for that new backpack; \$40 for gym shorts, \$50 for cheerleading uniform rentals, \$100 for new software to help with homework.

"I think the American household - particularly

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