

Abidai Benitez, 3rd Place, 10th Grade, Wakefield High School

Silence shouldn't be used when being afraid of showing what matters. Speaking up is the only way someone can show honesty and different types of views. It can also lead to trust with others. You learn to accept differences between one another and that not everybody will accept your opinion. Speaking up means to stand up for what you believe in, because maybe someone else out there believes in the same thing as you. Some people stay quiet because they don't want to do any harm, by offending or criticizing them. But when you leave someone alone knowing you can stand up for them together, it's selfish to put your own need to be comfortable above the needs of others. Worse, by staying silent, you may be harming the very people you hope to help. We refuse to communicate so we can find the easy way out and not get involved. We refuse to speak because we're afraid of rejection, speaking up takes a lot of courage and not everybody has that. We must use the golden rule with every decision we make. In this case just like we would want someone to have our back when we're in dangerous moments or moments where you're afraid, you should do the same to others, and help them speak up. Silence should never be the answer. If you can't stand up for yourself, then make sure to stand up and speak for others. Letting fear come to you, so you don't share your opinion can just make you feel bad about yourself. So speaking up will always be the answer.