CALENDAR

FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS

Unless otherwise noted, for information: Ashley Knoch at 412-648-9059, akk57@pitt.edu

PITT NETWORKING DAY
JUNE 7
Find an event in your area:
www.alumni.pitt.edu/news-events/pitt-networking-day/

HEALTH SCIENCES NETWORKING NIGHT
JUNE 15, 6–8 P.M.
Lemieux Sports Complex
Cranberry Township, Pa.

WHITE COAT CEREMONY
AUGUST 12, 11 A.M.
Carnegie Music Hall
Reception immediately following.

MEDICAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION REUNION WEEKEND
OCTOBER 5–6
Reunion Classes:
1958, 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013

HEALTH SCIENCES ALUMNI & FRIENDS RECEPTIONS
DATES TBA
Atlanta, Ga.
Philadelphia, Pa.
For information:
Sarah McMullen at 412-647-5307 or msarah@pmhsf.org

To find out what else is happening at the medical school, visit health.pitt.edu and maa.pitt.edu.



GETTY IMAGES



FOR REAL! TWEEN SCIENCE

Why do we weep? It seems to have to do with how long *Homo sapiens* children depend on adults to survive, says Pitt's Lauren Bylsma, an assistant professor of psychiatry who has studied crying. We humans depend on adult caregivers longer than any other animal does. So, we need a surefire way to let others know when we need their help: Tears do the trick.

I know what you're thinking, *Don't other animals make tears?* Yes, pretty much any creature with eyelids produces them to keep eyes moist and free of dirt. But, although it's hard to prove, tearing up for emotional reasons seems to be uniquely human.

When we're born, we often wail to attract the attention and care of another person, much like a hungry baby bird calls for its mother to feed it. A few months after birth, babies start to replace loud cries with tears to express a need or emotion. As we grow older, we slowly start to rely on other humans less for survival and more for emotional support. During this time, tears tend to completely replace vocal cries, accompanying complex states of mind like relief, anxiety, frustration, and joy.

Why the shift from vocal to tearful crying? One theory is that it allows us to more discreetly direct our desire for support toward specific people. We can avoid attracting the attention of people we don't find comforting or who might harm us.

So the next time your floodgates open, for crying out loud, don't get down on yourself about it. Remember, tears may have helped early humans survive, and thrive. —*Susan Wiedel*

Is there a topic you'd like us to explore? Drop us a line: medmag@pitt.edu