

THE GIRL'S GUIDE TO HOMECOMING

Step 1: FIND A DATE

Make sure to text his/her friends to make sure he/she isn't already taken!

Step 2: PICK A GROUP

Fight to make sure you're in a group with your friends. As they say, it's not about the date, it's about the group.

Step 3: JUNIORS/SENIORS: PICK A THEME

Not too "out there" but not too mainstream, unique but not unguessable.

Step 4: PLAN THE NIGHT

Sit-down restaurant or fast food? Stretch limo or party bus? So much to decide!

Step 5: FIND AN OUTFIT

If in costume, go thrift-store shopping for cheap, vintage gems. Sophomores—hope no one's wearing the same dress as you!

Step 6: LOOK PRETTY

Hope that your spray tan doesn't look too orange.

Step 7: ATTEND PICTURES

Make sure Mom and Dad bring the "good camera" to ensure an Instagram quality Kodak moment.

Step 8: EAT!

Make sure to fuel up for the fun night ahead!

Step 9: DANCE!

Find your friends from other groups and rave to 00s pop together. It can't get any better than this!

Step 10: PARTY!

Now for the most important part of the night: the afterparty. Rave until the wee hours of the morning with your closest pals. Most importantly, be safe!



by Helen Fagan



At high school parties, binge drinking is a silent reality

by Maya Kowitt

As portrayed in the media, and on teenagers' snapchat stories, it's nearly common knowledge that some students believe that alcohol seems "necessary" for the party scene.

There are people who know their limits, and then there are those who drink to excess or binge drinking.

Hollywood has a history of portraying teenage drinking and the high school party. Though movies such as "Mean Girls" and "Clueless" attempt to portray high school parties, students claim that these representations are not realistic.

Instead they create a misconception that all teenagers know their limits when holding those red solo cups.

A senior girl said, wants to make clear, "Most high schoolers aren't typically thinking about how to be safe and making good decisions when they are on the prowl."

One may wonder what it is about binge drinking that many movies and TV shows don't normally expose. What Hollywood often forgets to portray is the dangerous side of high school parties. While films and TV exhibit teenagers consuming alcohol in large quantities in a short period of time, rarely are the effects or consequences shown.

The 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, given through the KW department, found that nationwide, 32.8% of high school students had at least one drink of alcohol on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey.

This is compared to the nation wide statistic that of the 32.8% of high schoolers, "17.7 % of students had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row (i.e., within a couple of hours) on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey."

Though unsettling, students at New Trier find these numbers to be fairly accurate, from what they are

seeing at parties they've attended.

A junior girl laughed as she stated, "Well we are in high school. Drinking is a part of the experience for a lot students."

According to the 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 38% of high school juniors and 42.4% of high school seniors claim to drink alcohol. Though teenage drinking is likely something that can't be controlled, it's important to educate students on the effects of drinking, and the outcomes of the high levels of intoxication that many high schoolers pursue.

A senior claimed that he now refrains from the party scene, stating that he chooses not to drink because of past negative experiences he had at parties with alcohol.

"I don't even think I knew I was binge drinking. I thought it was normal to take seven shots, throw up later, feel awful in the morning, and then repeat the next weekend."

The senior then added, "It's kind of scary if you think about it, because so many people just drink, and then keep drinking, without realizing how much they've allowed into their system."

Students claim to have various reasons for drinking excessively. A junior girl stated she does it to "escape stress from the school week," while a senior boy declared, "It's a guarantee to have a good time."

A senior girl backed up the "drink to have fun" mindset, "It gives me the confidence that I normally don't have when sober. When I drink a lot, I become more social, which I feel is the case for most people."

Another senior girl added, "Yeah and I also like to dance, and when I get drunk I don't care what people think, so I dance the night away."

Though students agree that alcohol allows for a "good time" it also comes with a cost. A fun night of binge drinking can lead to not-so-fun outcomes, such as poor de-

cision making, lack of self-control, having a massive hangover the next day, or potentially even blacking out.

Likewise to having different reasons for drinking, students have different causes that typically leads to binge drinking.

A senior girl said, "I usually set myself a goal of how many shots I want to take. Then when I reach my goal, I get happy and want to drink more because by that time it doesn't even taste bad anymore."

A senior boy said he ends up binge drinking when playing "ruit" (beer pong), "I end up drinking a lot of beer because I don't want to look lame for not finishing my beer during a game," he said.

Students who claimed they are part of the percent of teenagers who binge drink, all had similar reports, stating that after a good amount of alcohol consumption, it doesn't even taste like you're poisoning your body, it starts to "go down like water," a junior girl said.

Experts though warn of the adverse effects of binge drinking.

Mary-Louise Risher, a doctoral researcher in the Duke Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science said "In the eyes of the law, once people reach the age of 18, they are considered adults, but the brain continues to mature and refine all the way into the mid-20s. It's important for young people to know that when they drink heavily during the period of development, there could be changes occurring that have a lasting impact on memory and other cognitive functions."

Though taking down those extra shots or finishing all the beers in ruit may seem like the right thing to do at the time, a senior girl was more cautious. "If you are going to drink: measure out your alcohol before drinking, know your limits, don't mix drinks, and remember that you can still have a good time without 'dying' every night."

Exploring students' pre-party rituals

by Lindsey Burns

Before the party starts, another party usually takes place first. For some students, pre-gaming is routine on the weekends.

Urban dictionary defines pre-gaming as "Consuming alcohol in smaller amounts before a bigger drinking event with the intention of easing yourself into a night of crazy fun." At New Trier, pre-gaming is when a smaller group of friends get together before a bigger party and drink.

"Pre gaming is just to have more fun and get in the mood before going out. It makes you more confident and it makes you more social," a senior girl said. "It's to have more fun with whatever you're doing and to make you more comfortable, just like adults."

Pre-gaming, though uniform in intention, varies in practice. For some students it means a quick shot on the go as the senior girl said, "shots are just so much easier when you're in a rush". While to others it involves a longer, social process.

One junior girl explained what her friends do at a pre-game. "We usually pre-game by dancing and listening to music and by taking shots," she said.

She explained that, "it's usually a smaller group of people, just my friend group, so parents are more comfortable and not worried about people getting hurt."

Guys have a similar routine. "We usually play games and drink beers," a senior boy said. He went on to explain the games that are played which include beer pong, slap cup, stack cup, flip cup and tower.

"Tower is a game that you play in pairs where each team has 2



cups of beer they need to drink to win the game," the senior boy said.

"Each team stacks 3 beers on top of each other and the bottom one has to be full. You then take turns throwing ping pong balls trying to knock the tower down and if you do then you start drinking your drink and you keep drinking until the other team rebuilds their tower. The first team to finish both beers wins."

These games promote binge drinking and present a danger to students before they even get to a party.

According to SoberCollege, "In drinking games, you are often not in control of what you drink, how much, or for how long. Failure to comply with the rules of game lead to ridicule, making it difficult for individuals to just say no. This can prevent an individual from knowing when to cut back and makes them more likely to become impaired and in an unsafe situation."

