



## Parties June 2010

The Verdadera staff encourages you to discuss and explore the issues and stories, as the publication aims not only to offer an outlet for expression, but to improve our lives. Keep in mind that the emotions that flow through the text and the feelings behind the words could be those of your child, your classmate, or your best friend.

*Things to consider:*

- *What purpose do parties hold in the life of a student?*
- *What creates the need to party?*
- *Do parties help or hurt students?*
- *What makes a party a party?*

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### **Student Submissions**

Hey Mom and Dad,

I wish I could tell you about parties and how they are a fun way to let loose and relax from the stresses from Monta Vista. Of course, there are so many other ways to have fun on weekends, but this is one way that many teenagers at high school have fun. We just have to be safe about it. It's all about knowing your limits and not getting too caught up in the lifestyle of constantly going out. The seniors are the ones who usually drink and/or smoke every day on weekends, occasionally in the day, and sometimes even on weeknights. There are particular freshmen, sophomores, and juniors I know that do that too. The bad side of parties is sometimes getting into drunken fights with your friends, and I know many people who have gone to the hospital for drinking too

much. I'm not going to lie, I've definitely thrown up a few times because I got to drunk but I know my limits now. It's a bad habit to get into, but when you have a good balance of work and fun, then I believe it's alright. Love, your sophomore daughter

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*"Partying is such sweet sorrow."~ Robert Byrnes*  
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I've been to numerous parties in my life. Birthday parties, holiday gatherings, family parties, or whatever. Mostly, I've enjoyed these parties and I don't mind going. It's a nice way to connect with other people, or to catch up with what's new and the latest gossip, or just to eat a good meal. Those are the kinds of parties I enjoy. I have heard about parties that are

much different to the kind I know of. Drinking, drugs, hookups. Being a freshman, I can't really imagine myself getting into all that kind of stuff, but I heard that pretty much everyone gets into it by sophomore year. I guess we'll see.

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*"Got my hands up, they're playin' my song. And now I'm gunna be okay, Yeah! It's a party in the USA!"*

~ Miley Cyrus

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I had always wondered what it was like to go to an actual party. It didn't happen though till junior year. I went to my first legit party with my boyfriend and to be quite honest it wasn't that exciting. I'm not much of a smoker, hokkaher or stoner; im what most would call a lightweight drinker who loves alc. The best part was def just taking shots and drinking with my boyfriend. To be quite frank, I would've much rathered watched a movie and made out with him on my bed instead. Parties are just overrated.

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*"That party last night was awfully crazy, I wish we taped it."* ~ Asher Roth

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For me, sitting around the television with my friends on a Saturday night trying to watch horror movies with our eyes closed and consuming our share of calories for the day via chips and chocolate is what comes to my mind when I think of a 'party.' My rendition of a party proves to be quite mellow in contrast to the definition that has been promoted by world of media. "Does that make me lame?", I often wondered in middle school. "Is it loser-ish that the most exciting party I've ever attended is a sleepover?" Now, I have come to see that though my parties don't compare to those that bestow the false pretense of being 'cool', they are not events I will ever have to regret or be ashamed of. We, as a society, have allowed ourselves to fall into the superficial world where the 'cool' parties have to be filled with the things that fulfill us for the moment, risks that we know we shouldn't take. Yet, we always seem to conveniently forget the scene that plays out after one leaves the 'cool' party—drowning in one's own remorse and guilt, feeling disappointed in one's self. Parties. 12 girls gossiping over the hushed voice of Taylor Lautner who mumbles absently on the television in the background. Eating red licorice, chips and salsa, and cookies. Huddling within the warmth of the comforters preparing to mock each and every movie to come. Sharing secrets,

and becoming closer through the exchange of understanding. The faint recognition that these are the people who are going to support and stand by you for your high school experience. I know it doesn't seem like much on the surface, but once you truly feel the bond that these moments grant, you won't find any other party as fulfilling or eventful as the late nights that slowly meld into early mornings— all the while spent with fiends.

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*"There's always some amount of gradual, slow burning destruction over the course of partying."*

~ Gavin DeGraw

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I went to several parties unexpected of what will go down. Then the next thing I know I had way to many drinks, and noticed myself running into things. Later I wake up not remembering anything that happened. So many thoughts and emotions came through my mind. I knew I had shocked and disappointed my friends and family. Events like this can change what people think about you, and I definitely will not be returning to a party anytime soon.

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*"Why is partying and having a good time bad?"*

~ Tara Reid

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I don't really think there are a lot of parties at MV. Like "high school parties" in movies and such. I don't know anybody who does things like drink or smoke or any of those illegal activities that high schoolers participate in. But I guess as a freshman I won't come across many of those people. I guess some of the upperclassmen must do "stuff" but I don't hear about any of it. For now, the only parties I go to are birthday parties. which are a lot of fun. Maybe when I get older I'll drink alcohol but I'm not really in a rush. And I have other things to focus on like school and since I go to MV this takes a lot of focusing.

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*"I've done a lot of partying in my time because I didn't want to go home and I didn't know what to do."*

~ Natalie Imbruglia

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okay so parties. i don't party a lot but i've gotten this reputation as someone who goes out a lot BUT I DON'T!! i mean i like to have fun but for some reason everyone things i get wasted all the time just because of

rumors and i hang out with people who do go out a lot but i don't do that. i always hear gossip about me doing stuff at parties and getting drunk and how i'm going nowhere in life and how im a total waste of space but it's not true. i'm not a waste of space. i am going places. just because i drink and smoke and have fun  
SOMETIMES doesn't mean that i'm a complete loser. i'm probably a lot happier than the people who don't let themselves give into the things they want to do or the people who look down on me. it's funny tho because i don't judge people for not getting toasted. its like whatever your choice thats cool fine by me. i don't think theyre prudes or dumb or losers but they think that i'm a loser which really pisses me off. I get that a lot of the people who do go out don't really have good grades and have kind of messed up lives to seriously is it that difficult to look past the actions of a person and see who they really are? It's just a pasttime, it's like looking at all the people who play baseball and think they're on steiroids. it's discrimination. it's stereotyping. don't think that you're a better person than me based off of something you heard in the girls bathroom or some idea you get from the way i talk or who i'm friends with or what i do. get to know me and talk to me and you'll realize that i'm more than stuff i put into my body. i'm not doing bad things or ruining my life or setting myself up for a fall. i'm doing what makes me happy. and thats the most important thing.

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*"An intelligent man is sometimes forced to be drunk to spend time with his fools."* ~ Ernest Hemingway  
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Last year I went to my friends house for her 17th birthday party and I was only 14 but we've known eachother for a really long time. i guess you could say this was my 1st high school party. I wasnt really expecting anything special but I was nervous becuase I knew I would probably be the youngest person there. Her mom was there and all of her friends from her school. It was awkward at first since I only knew my friend but all of the people there were really friendly and nice. Anyway basically the first thing that happened was that her mom started serving us drinks. and i was like whaaaaaat. because her mom was really good family friends with my parents and I felt really uncomfortable but it was so weird. Then her mom like left or something and then we all drove out to this field and it was like 11 at night and hella scary and then we

did all this other stuff that i had never done before. i would write more but i can't really remember lol but basically that was one of the best parties i've ever been too.

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*"Life may not be the party we hoped for, but while we're here we should dance."* ~ Anonymous  
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I'm not a crazy party animal or anything, though I think that people that don't really know me think I'm one of those kids that go party every weekend and get totally wasted and high. Yes I've been high out of my mind, but never wasted and never at a party actually. Parties are fun but I don't like to go all out at them just because I don't feel safe. Usually at parties after dances or over breaks I feel that I am usually mothering my friends and boyfriend. I think it's because I don't trust anyone but myself to take care of me therefore I tend to look out for others as well. I also fear of being too intoxicated to be to run away from cops if I have to. Hopefully as senior year ends, I'll have one crazy night just for kicks but still stay safe, hint hint nudge nudge AFTER PROM. It also wouldn't really matter if I get in trouble with parents since by then, there's not much they can do to me

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*"Hear no evil, speak no evil - and you'll never be invited to a party."* ~ Oscar Wilde  
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As I look back on my last 4 years, I notice that I have come a long way from what I used to be. In eighth grade was when the actually "crazy," alcoholic parties started for me. Though I'm not one to drink, I go anyway just so I can spend some quality time with my friends and away from home (now that I think about it, those were horrible excuses for me). I remember the first middle school party that I ever went to was when there were a ton of junk food laid out on a huge table and music playing in the background, but as middle school came to an end, that's when the actual craziness began to start. There was a middle school graduation party at one of my neighboring friends' houses but unfortunately I was out of town that night and was unable to attend, but somehow word leaked about the party and how it was filled with alcohol and a couple sexual scandals with a girl in my class and a guy one grade older. But wait there's more... Freshmen year was filled with all sorts of wild parties and at almost

every single one the cops seemed to find their way in. My worst memory was when I Went to one of my friend's 14th birthday party and a couple of guys sneaked in alcohol, troublesome I know. Me and a couple of my friends wanted to stay away from the alcoholic scene so we chilled inside the house, while everyone under the influence was hanging out in the backyard. To make the story shorter, the night ended with a bunch of drunken girls crying on the ground, occasionally vomiting, and a visit from several Santa Clara police officers. Luckily nothing extreme resulted from that night and no breathalyzers had taken place. The officers simply told us to call our parents and tell them to pick us up and eventually call it a night. A couple of the parents started yelling at the birthday boy's mom, and I felt bad because honestly it was their children's fault for bringing the alcohol not the mom's. I was also lucky that my sister, instead of my parents, picked me up from that party, and before I got into the car she could sort of tell what went on that night. Honestly, I'm disappointed in the way most of the people at the party acted but I'm even more disappointed that I didn't stop the nonsense. I could've prevented the police from arriving, the parents from getting all heated up, and that boy from having a dreadful birthday party! I'm sorry for everything that went on that night, but the positives are that that night shaped my life and now instead of attending those types of occasions, I'm more interested in having some good, clean fun. Unfortunately, those other partygoers were unable to learn anything from that night and I would bet that these sorts of situations still go on in their lives. I dodged that bullet, when will they?

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*"Never be the first to arrive at a party or the last to go home and never, never be both."* ~ David Brown  
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I'm the type of person that parties and drinks to feel better. Parties were my automatic stress reliever; it was my cure for everything. I don't love to party like everyone assumes, the only reason I do is to get crazy and avoid much of everything wrong in my life. Through breakups and pressure, partying made me feel a happiness words could not describe. Sometimes in life we all go through sh\*t, it can be something small but other times somethings make u fall so hard it's hard to climb back to where you once were. I've only been to one party this year and to be honest, I don't feel like I

missed out. I've always known my partying mentality wasn't good and it sure wasn't going to fix my problems. I stopped after this boy came into my life; he changed me and put value back into me. However it can be fun once in awhile but sometimes it can also turn sour and the next thing you know the best thing in your life left you. I sure learnt my lesson, as much as I want to party right now I know it's for the best I don't if I've learnt anything from my lost relationship.

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*"Where's the party, I want to free my soul. Where's the party, I want to lose control."* ~ Madonna  
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It sucks when my younger sister is at a party and I'm at home. My parents thinks she's the better kid so they let her go out later. Just because I don't look like the innocent nor do my friends, my parents assume my sister is an angel. How ironic.

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*"At a dinner party one should eat wisely but not too well, and talk well but not too wisely."* ~ William Somerset Maugham  
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There's this facebook group that I just joined called "I remember when 'party' meant birthday party, not drunken whore-fest." Personally, I don't understand why teenagers need alcohol, drugs and sex to have fun at parties; what ever happened to good ol' pin the tail on the donkey? :) Everybody can remember back to the old days when they went shopping with their mom or dad to find the perfect present for their best friend who was having a birthday party at the park. So why is it that now we find ourselves in front of our bedroom mirrors trying to find the perfect outfit to get drunk in?

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*"If you go to a party, and you want to be the popular one at the party, do this: Wait until no one is looking, then kick a burning log out of the fireplace onto the carpet."* ~ Jack Handy  
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Its funny how people always assume I party all the time, the truth is I rarely do. I started the summer of my sophomore year due to a huge breakup. My college family friend had just come up from college and both of us were bored at the old people's party and told my parents we were going to the mall to window shop. Instead we went to one of her other friends college party. It was something entirely new to me. There was

loud music and drunk kids everywhere, so I decided to be the same. 3 shots and 2 cans later I was pretty much the same. I don't remember much from that night other than it helped me get over my ex and I met someone totally new and had lots of fun.

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*"You moon the wrong person at an office party and suddenly you're not "professional" any more" ~ Jeff Foxworthy*  
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Parties. A night to remember, if you can. A night to have fun, a night to party. Party till your about to puke from laughs, alcohol, and just to many cigarettes. Vision is hazy, movements are broken, and everything is slo-mo. And the more f-ed up you get the more fun everything else gets. A night of celebration or a night of getting away from daily boring, tiring life. Whatever it is, it's hard to explain what a party means to you. Maybe its the peer pressure and desire to be popular that you go to parties to get f\*ed up for everyone else to see. Maybe it really is to have a good time. Or maybe its to mac on all the ladies you see and try and have a drunk hook up with a girl you might think is hot only to realize the next day that you must've been really drunk to do that. Anyways, all in all, a party's a party and who doesn't want to get f-ed up.

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*"Don't stop, make it pop DJ, blow my speakers up. Tonight, I'mma fight 'Til we see the sunlight. Tick tock, on the clock. But the party don't stop no" ~ Ke\$ha*  
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Parties are the best. I always get really excited when I go to a party 'cause I know FUN stuff is going to happen! Sometimes it gets SOOO crazy! SO. DARNED. CRAZY. ESPECIALLY when the pinata comes out! and then, oh my goodness. PIN THE TAIL ON THE DONKEY?!? that's my favorite. I mean, who DOESN'T LOVE SMACKING AN ASS?!? One time, I went to a party, and there were water balloons, and I wet myself! But by far, my favorite part of parties are the drinks--there are SO MANY to choose from. APPLE. ORANGE. CAPRI SUN. I just want to down all of them. Cake is the best. ESPECIALLY the cherries on top. MAN! And singing? Oh don't even get me STARTED!! What's better than a repetitive song that you can sing in every single language possible? NOTHIN\! But my absolute favorite part is the presents. Among my favorite presents OAT (of ALL

TIME) was the COAT HANGER and the TISSUE BOX my best friend bought me. JEALOUS MUCH? Bet you are! Too bad I ain't sharing with you.

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*"If I were invited to a dinner party with my characters, I wouldn't show up." ~ Dr. Seuss*  
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Whenever I think of parties, I think of those sweet childish parties I've hosted and been to since I was in diapers. Sure, now the movies have changed from rated-G to rated-PG13 and rated-R, but in a way the parties are still fun and innocent. These parties will have my friends running around the house in graphic T's and simple schoolwear- not yet tiny dresses. We'll be laughing at some stupid joke and play Mafia, Truth or Dare, or the Wii. Somebody will burst out dancing and be a human iPod. And we all drink....soda. I'm sixteen. Maybe it's just the friends I have, maybe it hasn't hit us yet, or maybe, it has... You see, I have a lot of friends whom which I can classify into many subgroups. Still, it doesn't matter who hosts or goes to what kind of party; it's all the same. My quiet friends tend to host little innocent parties. My friends who can be perceived to be most exposed to social interactions host these kinds of parties too. In the end, what matters most is that parties live to their name, where people can enjoy themselves as they party; not end up in a hospital puking after drinks. I'm the type who'd be happy not going anywhere as long as I was sure I knew exactly what was happening at the places I wasn't going to. I'm the type who'd like to sit home and watch every party that I'm invited to on a monitor in my bedroom.

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*"I'm the type who'd be happy not going anywhere as long as I was sure I knew exactly what was happening at the places I wasn't going to. I'm the type who'd like to sit home and watch every party that I'm invited to on a monitor in my bedroom." ~ Andy Warhol*  
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I do not go to parties. Sure, I have attended celebrations and other festivities but never those like you see in the movies. I have never been to a party where there were people drinking underage or doing drugs -- the parties with the blaring music and the stories that are heard in the hallways the next day. I think that I am pretty adjusted to this kind of behavior and if people around me want to drink them selves silly, by all means go ahead. However, I will not join you. Yes, I have been

invited to these kinds of activities but I always turn them down. It is simply because those kinds of parties are not my idea of fun. Plus, if you get in trouble, you could be ruining your future. This is not a risk I am willing to take. Perhaps sometime before I graduate I will go to one of these parties just to see what it is like or maybe laugh at people acting out of character. Still, I just don't see the need to join them.

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*"I am for those who believe in loose delights... I dance with the dancers and drink with the drinkers." ~ Walt Whitman*  
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Today I saw a bunch of people on Facebook who had been drinking and having sex after a dance. It's funny because it was prom night and they had done the whole thing - taking pictures with their parents and their dates, corsage, limo, everything. But after that, it's just gone crazy. What goes through their minds? What will they expect to happen. What are their parents thinking they're doing out at 4AM when the dance ended at 10:30? Do they know? Are they okay with it? My heart goes out to those people. In many ways I'm so glad we go to Monta Vista because no, we aren't "sheltered," we're just not stupid. Even if we're somewhat sheltered that's much better than being stupid. I'm glad that the majority of people don't get caught up in doing things like that here.

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*"Let's get this party started right. Let's get drunk and freaky fly. You with me so it's alright We gonna stay up the whole night." ~ Uffie*  
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Completely honestly, I don't have all that much to say about parties. Yes, I've been to my fair share and im more than acquainted with the perks of Saturday Nights; but to me, parties aren't worth all they hype they entail. I don't deny im always willing to have a good time, but at our school, if you party you're pretty much automatically judged. Its stupid. People think I have split personalities because I like to go out and waste my time, and then come home and put on my working cap. It seems im either one or another, a "partier" or a "student". Who drew that distinction, and what is up with that. I hate playing the label game, and being completely honest, to me, id rather be labeled studious than otherwise; although I don't believe I should have to pick one. To me, highschool is the time experiment-

face it, we're NOT adults. I'll try things out, get myself into sticky situations, and have a good time doing it- but if that comes with a label of being "WILD" and unkempt, then its not worth it.

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*"Spring is nature's way of saying, "Let's party!"*  
*~ Robin Williams*  
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Back when I went to Monta Vista, I went to a few parties for fun. A lot of my friends were there and it was pretty cool hanging with everyone. But once you get to college, the parties are way different. You go with a group of friends, but it's a whole different environment when your at the party. There are so many people hanging out and its more fun than a high school party. Theres always new people you can meet and get to be great friends with. Its pretty funny seeing your friends get F\*\*\*\*D up because they're so different than normal its funny to watch them. One time, my friend got kicked out of the party because he was too drunk and needed my help to call the cab company. When I checked his phone, he was dialing his house number haha. The only bad part about it is when the cops show up to shut it down. But its still worth it to have fun.

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*"I did all my heavy partying before I turned sixteen."*  
*~ Cameron Diaz*  
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"Dude you have no life...don't you party or get out of the house ever?"

"No."

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These lines of conversation occurred on an online game after I just revealed to this anonymous person that not only do I not go to parties, but I also rarely do anything "just for fun". I used to go to parties. I used to have fun. Not anymore.

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Before I start this long and tragic analysis of generational misunderstanding and parental fallacies, let me clarify something. The party I speak of is not what you would call a party. My parties consist of me dressing up "properly" and going to an Indian person's house who I barely know. The kids [anybody 30 and under] are herded into one room and unless you know somebody there well [which you usually don't] you just sit awkwardly for the next 4 to 5 hours. There is little laughter. There is little socializing. For the "minors" there is nothing. Finally when a parent does come up and ask the kids if they want to eat something, the children are expected to politely say yes and are then accompanied to the food where they take moderate

portions of amazing food, and then silently go back up [being extremely careful not to spill any on the spick and span carpet] and eat. After mouths have stopped chewing, an awkward silence even more heavy than the last fills the air.

Should somebody try to start a conversation, it usually is:

"Hey...what school do you go to?"

"Oh...Monta Vista"

"Isn't that a really nerdy school?"

"Yeah."

"Oh."

Perhaps the conversations last a little longer with more interrogation as to where you took SAT classes, what APs you're taking, and in a few cases you get to bitch about those teachers you really hate. However, one never deviates away from one topic in these forced conversations: School.

My parents always ask me on the ride home:

"What school does [name]'s son go to? What's his gpa? What colleges are they applying to? What major?"

That is not a party. That is not fun. And that is NOT the de-stresser [Or whatever other misleading optimistic and opportunistic word you choose to make up] that I should get before I dive back into my books as my parents always say.

Your parties may involve drinking, dancing, fun, friends and food.

My parties involve adults discussing grades, teens discussing grades, awkward silences, and the great food which we are only to eat in moderation for fear of what the other families will think. When you are at an Indian party, it is not like being at a party. It is like being watched by hawks. Each and every one trying to learn about you, you trying to learn about them, and a very thick subliminal hostile tension in the air as you move around.

That's not even the worst of it. The worst thing is when Indian parents decide to talk about their children at parties. For some reason they feel the need to belittle their children at parties. Every time I come down to get a glass of water, or to replenish my plate so that I have something to do other than stare at the wall; I hear something along the lines of:

"Oh yes. My daughter is a failure. She has terrible grades, and she doesn't do any extra-curricular activities, or anything. I don't know what she will do in life. She will probably grow up to be some accountant or some cook instead of a doctor or an engineer."

And then the parents all cringe.

This may seem comedic to you, but let me tell you it isn't. Not only is it humiliating, but it is also degrading, belittling, demeaning, and a perfect way to showcase a teen, under super-human levels of stress, under a spotlight and shout out insults at them in front of an audience. That may seem exaggerated, but I assure you it is not.

If you are an Indian parent, I now speak to you.

You need to learn how to socialize without using your children as your topics of conversation. They are not a nice pair of shoes you got on sale at Macy's, nor are they some zoo animal you gawk and laugh at. They are humans, people, and your offspring. They are not amused when you belittle them in front of your friends [regardless of if they're important or not], nor are they amused when you laugh in that annoying way you do when talking about your children and their failures. You know what I mean. That fake laugh that's an octave higher than your normal one and that you reserve when mocking other people's child for their failures, or mocking your own. So what if your child does not have perfect grades. So what if they do not want to follow in your footsteps as an engineer. So what if they do not want to earn heaps of money by being a doctor. You need to learn how to talk about other things. Why not a current event? Why not bitch about the economy? Why not talk about that lovely dish you made? The possibilities are endless. Simply because you had a childhood where you had to walk some 40 miles to get to school, couldn't afford books, had to use a rock to write, and ate flour at home does not mean you can expect the same things of your children. You moved to this place because you wanted something different for them. You wanted to offer them a life different to that of what you had. Then stop trying to force your work ethic and academic/professional ideals on them. This is a different place, a different time.

Living in such an academically driven community only adds fuel to this inferno. Cupertino with its elitist ideals and high income population only drives up those expectations you have of us and I think that this geographical and societal location we are in amplifies the problem. As we are in the upper middle class of society, we know the feeling of having money, and we are addicted to it. We need luxurious cars, gargantuan houses, and more. However, we also do not have enough money that we can say we have everything we want. We are constantly driving to do better, go higher, and earn more money to achieve that "American Dream". That dream that you have a good family, good house, lots of money, good car, good job, etc. If this is what one has to go through to achieve that "American Dream" then it isn't worth it. I quit. Parents stop using

your children as tools to further your dreams, goals, and ambitions.

This is why I no longer attend parties. I tell my parents I'd rather study. I'm sure they tell everybody that at their little parties and titter in that fake laugh as they try and make other parent's jealous. I'd rather talk to my friends, than sit in a strange room with strangers and stare at a wall while an awkward silence suffocates us. I'd rather follow MY dreams, believe in MY ideals, and create MY own visions for the future.

For me parties are just a place where all the fallacies of Indian parents come through, and my hatred for them only deepens. Parties are a place where I wallow in self pity and count the minutes until I can leave. I know I am not alone. All Indian parents do this on some level or another. Students, try looking for it next time and you will see how startlingly apparent it is now that you've read this.

So the next time you want to laugh because I don't go to parties, I will just smile; because by not going I am bypassing something much worse. I can pretend to ignore the humiliation, the boredom, the tension, the pressure, and the sheer hatred I feel towards that portion of our society and culture.

Parties are no fun.

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*"We can make this thing into a Party, instead of a Memory." ~ Will Rogers*  
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I believe that parties allow for a great amount of relaxation after an extremely stressful time period. They can help lift up ones spirits, particularly during a very tumultuous time within their own personal life. A party is able to serve as a great morale booster for everyone that is part of it. I have personally felt the effects of many parties and they have made my food infinitely better through the ability a party has to make

one just forget everything bad within their life. A party also gives the opportunity for many people to hangout with each other, whether they know them or not. I, myself, have made many new friends though parties. Some of these people have even become some of my closest friends, even though I never knew them before the party. Parties are wonderful because they have the ability to create new interactions and can create new and possibly permanent relationship. My newfound friends through parties have helped me through many difficult times within my life and I owe many thanks to the party that allowed us to meet in the first place. Parties also serve as extreme stress relievers because of their ability to set one free from their obligations and to think about the present instead of what will happen in the future. This is due to the spontaneous nature of a party and the ones in the party. I personally love parties because how they can make me feel so much better after an extremely stressful time. It allows me great relief as I am finally able to enjoy myself and not worry about my responsibilities, such as school and my personal life. Parties allow me to just have a fun time and give me a respite from everyday life. Parties allow me to get back onto my feet. For these reasons, I am extremely happy to attend any party and I am able to understand its great powers to bring many people together.

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*"My mum used to say to me, 'you can't have fun all the time,' and I used to say, 'why not?' ...I just thought that fun went with partying and all that kind of stuff, but it doesn't necessarily. (whispering) It can actually make you really miserable if you do it in excess." ~ Kate Moss*  
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## A Walk in Your Teen's Shoes

By Joni Quintal, MA

“Mom/Dad, there is a party this weekend and I want to go to!”

What happens inside of you as you hear those words?

Before you respond to your teenager, ask yourself:

“How am I feeling right now knowing that my teen wants to go to a party?”

Do you experience negative feelings? Happy memories? Fear because of your own experience when you were younger?

Do you disclose your experiences when you were a teenager?

This last question is the one many parents dread—yet it is likely to come up in any family discussion of alcohol. The reality is that many parents *did* drink before they were old enough to legally do so. So how can you be honest with your child without sounding like a hypocrite who advises, “Do as I say, not as I did”?

This is a judgment call. If you believe that your drinking or drug use history should not be part of the discussion, you can simply tell your child that you choose not to share it. Another approach is to admit that you did do some drinking as a teenager, but that it was a mistake—and give your teen an example of an embarrassing or painful moment that occurred because of your drinking. This approach may help your child better understand that youthful alcohol use *does* have negative consequences.

As children approach adolescence, friends exert a lot of influence. Fitting in is a priority for teens, and parents often feel shoved aside, but what surprised me listening to 20 teenagers last Sunday evening, was the pressure they put on themselves to fit it. The pressure to “party” was not coming from their peer group; it was coming from inside of them. Since we know this right from teenager's experiences, it is a good idea to brainstorm with your teen, some ways to say no and “opt out” of going to a party or saying no once they get there. I think that it is best to allow your teen to come-up with the language for saying no. Teens have a language of their own that they will understand best. Ask them to share some ways with you that they can keep themselves “cool” and safe.

Also, help them come up with some, “What if” situations that may happen so they are prepared to make wise choices. Bottom line....tell your kids that you love them and want them to have fun AND be safe. If you can, be a safe place for your kids to call home if they do drink and cannot drive. Explain to them that you may be disappointed and there will be a consequence, but you will always go pick them up and get them home safely.

For young people, alcohol is the number one drug of choice. In fact, teens use alcohol more frequently and heavily than all other illicit drugs *combined*. Although most children under age 14 have not yet begun to drink, early adolescence is a time of risk for beginning to experiment with alcohol.

While some parents may feel relieved that their teen is “only” drinking, it is important to remember that alcohol is a powerful, mood-altering drug. Not only does alcohol affect the mind and body in often unpredictable ways, but teens lack the judgment and coping skills to handle alcohol wisely. Scientists used to think that our brains were fully developed

before we reached adolescence, but the latest brain research shows that our brains continue to change into our mid 20's with the frontal lobes, responsible for reasoning and problem solving, developing last. So as you can see, your teenager has a hard time making decisions and solving problems on their own, without the influence of alcohol!

The best way to influence your teenager to avoid drinking is to have a strong, trusting relationship with him or her. Research shows that teens are much more likely to delay drinking when they feel they have a close, supportive relationship with a parent or guardian.

Establish open communication. Make it easy for your teen to talk honestly with you.

Show you care. Even though young teens may not always show it, they still need to know they are important to their parents. Make it a point to regularly spend one-on-one time with your child—time when you can give him or her your loving, undivided attention.

You can stay connected throughout your child's adolescence by asking yourself the following questions and then discussing them together:

What were my biggest problems as a teen? My biggest fears?

How did I feel about my looks?

What did I do to rebel against my parents?

Was I popular? Who was popular and why?

What were the toughest grades for me socially? Why?

Did any friends ever dump me?

Were my parents helpful and understanding during my teen years? What did I need most from them during my adolescence? Did it change as I got older?

Did I ever fall in love? How did I feel when we broke up?

Did I keep secrets from my parents? Why?

Establishing a relationship with your teen, if you don't already have a trusting relationship with them is challenging, but doable. If you want support to build better communication with your teen, visit, [www.familyontheedge.com](http://www.familyontheedge.com).

## Let's Party!

What goes through your mind when you hear the words, "LET'S PARTY!?"

Do you get nervous because you don't "party?"

Are you afraid of being rejected by others if you don't go?

Do you not attend a party because you don't want to be labeled a "partier" or "wild"?

Do you go because you don't want to hurt someone's feelings?

Do you know how to get out of the situation if you attend a party and want to leave?

Do you have someone to call to take you home?

If any of these questions have ever crossed your mind, then you are not alone. If you can answer the questions, honestly, you are more likely to stay safe, sober and resilient to internal pressure from yourself or pressure from friends. It's about who you want to be in the world and how you want to authentically show-up in life as YOU! I sat with 20 students last Sunday night to talk about parties and the stories that we read for submission, shared a common theme:

Teenagers are going to "party" at some point in their high school years and navigating what to do and how to behave is challenging!

What is a party anyway and what makes it "legit". Rumor has it that if there is no alcohol and no drugs, then the party is not "legit" and not worth going to. Is this true for you?

So you decide to go to the party and things begin to get a bit crazy. People are drinking and smoking pot and you don't want to participate but the person who drove you is drinking. Time goes on and you decide to have a little to drink and all of the sudden someone yells, "COPS!" What do you do?

Have a plan in place *before* go to any party because you don't know who might crash it and you have no control over who shows up and what they bring. Be brave and have a conversation with your parents or older siblings and make an agreement that if you call and need to be picked up from a party, they will come, no questions asked.

Being a young adult is a good time to think about and talk with your family about your values and morals. What do you really believe? Do you share your parents' values about drinking and drugs? Have you talked with them about their use of drugs and alcohol, if any, when they were growing up? If you have not had this conversation with them, send them an email or text message saying that you have some questions about what you believe and how you want to live your life. Driving in the car with your parents or walking with them makes it easier to talk about sensitive subjects. This is your life and you probably have different ideas and views from your parents and if you have parents who are not comfortable talking about sensitive subjects with you, ask them if there is another adult that they trust with whom you can talk.

Communicating *before* you decide to take risks will help you navigate your world if you decide to participate in illegal drinking or drug use. Know the rules and laws so that you are not caught off guard and really mess up your life if something happens. Make informed choices and know the positive and negative consequences that may occur so that you can make wise choices for YOU!

As hard as it may be, stand up for what you believe in and feel good about the decisions that you make for your life. Remember, you are the only one who looks back at you in the mirror and you are the only one who walks in your shoes, daily, and truly knows how it is to be you.

So party, whatever that means to you.....just party knowing all of the outcomes of your behavior!

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Principal ~ Facilitator ~ Consultant

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Joni is currently the Principal of Yavneh Day School in Los Gatos and has been there for five years. Prior to Yavneh, she was the Vice Principal of Student Services (the Counseling Center) at Hiram Johnson High School in Sacramento.

Joni consults with school, student Leadership Groups, non-profit organizations and parent groups. She creates team building events, facilitates communication style & learning style inventories, holds mother/daughter workshops and really enjoys working with young people.

### **Resources from the Verdadera Staff and Professional**

[www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)

- Conducts studies, provides information and resources pertaining to alcohol related problems for the purpose of reducing them

[www.every15minutes.com](http://www.every15minutes.com)

- An organization dedicated to insightfully revealing the effects of drunk driving.

[www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)

- Aimed at parents, this website provides tips and resources on parenting in the twenty-first century.

[www.teens.drugabuse.gov](http://www.teens.drugabuse.gov)

- A website that presents the straight facts on drugs, stories, and a form to email questions to a licensed M.D.

### **Ways to Submit**

1. Visit us at [www.verdadera.org](http://www.verdadera.org). You can submit stories here, learn more about Verdadera, and meet staff members.
2. Stories can be turned in to **any staff member** – hardcopies or emails, anything is welcomed. Staff members are also there to help answer your questions about issues, topics, anything.
3. Email it to [verdadera.entries@gmail.com](mailto:verdadera.entries@gmail.com)

The topics for the 2010-2011 school year will be on the Verdadera website soon.

For any other questions, you can reach us at [verdadera.mvhs@gmail.com](mailto:verdadera.mvhs@gmail.com).

Please access the complete June issue "Party" through the following three options:

1. Through Monta Vista school website at [www.mvhs.fuhisd.org](http://www.mvhs.fuhisd.org)
2. Access online directly at [www.mvhs.fuhisd.org/verdadera](http://www.mvhs.fuhisd.org/verdadera)
3. Access directly at [verdadera.org](http://verdadera.org) for a complete collection of Verdadera issues since 2005



## Parties June 2010

*Verdadera is a publication created by and for Monta Vista students for the purpose of instigating communication concerning the reality of high school within the community. Each month, an issue on a topic relevant to the lives of our students is sent home for reading by both parents and students. While we do not edit submissions, we aim to publish personal experiences, not opinion articles. Please utilize all the resources present and feel free to email comments and feedback.*

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