

the GOOSE is GOOSE

by KENNETH HARRIS

Underage drinking is a reality that high school students have to deal with

"Shots, shots, shots, shots, shots, shots..." These famous words from the rap group, **LMFAO**, mirror the thoughts of some high school students each weekend. While some call it sad, others call it fun. Underage drinking is something that everybody will have to experience in one way or another at some point, whether it is through peer pressure, drinking itself or simply hearing about it. It is illegal, supposedly "immoral" and "probably stupid", but regardless, underage drinking continues to be a reality.

According to the Office of the Surgeon General, more than 70 percent of teens have had a drink of alcohol before they reach 18. The same studies show that when minors drink, they drink more than adults. Adults may drink more frequently, but teenagers consume much more at once.

This means that before they are even three years away from legally drinking, most teens will either engage in or witness incredibly unhealthy binge drinking. 80.9 percent of those who did drink said they drank with at least one other person.

A lot of adolescents are getting together and doing illegal activities. It would seem safe to assume that there is a reason behind students' drive to drink.

"I think that kids drink for the thrill of breaking the law, to get a rush," said Michael Kincaid, senior.

Sometimes, though, the decision to drink is not always based off of sheer fun and rebellion.

"I think it's mostly peer pressure. Depending

on who you hang out with, it can seem like everybody is doing it," said Quentin Levie, sophomore.

The thought process behind a young drinker might indeed be influenced by their friends or rebellion. This still raises the question as to why are students across the nation are banding together and not obeying any laws. Drinking has a special allure as a deeply ingrained part of our culture, and for better or for worse, has become a phenomena of high school culture.

"I'd like to think that it isn't prevalent, but it is a sad reality," said John Carr, assistant principal. "They see drinking on TV all of the time and as the best way to socialize, but all that happens are DUIs and people being hurt or killed."

The social nature of a party is certainly inviting. Watching any old movies or listening to classic rock ballads, one can see that not much has changed in terms of the rebellious activity teenagers are up to. Parties, while looked down upon by adults, are opportunities to meet people, bond with friends and sometimes even make

a romantic connection. Those are all things people are supposed to learn about in high school.

Some seem to view drinking as a rite of passage or part of growing up as opposed to resentful disobedience.

"It's part of growing up. You learn what you should and shouldn't do and who you should and shouldn't hang out with," said Savannah Anderson, senior.

Underage drinking is an inevitable part of high school life. How students choose to handle it makes all the difference.

HIGH SCHOOLERS IN THE LAST 30 DAYS...

39%

drank some amount of alcohol

22%

binge drank

8%

drank and drove

24%

rode with a drunk driver

info from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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