

parties in a PANDEMIC

Young people continue to attend social gatherings, but does it stop at no concern for COVID-19?

Especially right now, social gatherings and parties are something that is ill-advised and just not a good use of time.

Now more than ever, I think it's very important to pay attention to your personal health, both mentally and physically. Being in a normal environment with your friends and peers is something I've missed since COVID-19 started, and I'll admit I've gone to parties despite the advisory not to.

There comes a point where staying safe in quarantine takes a toll on your happiness, especially when you watch your friends go without you.

There are safer ways to enjoy your free time with the people you enjoy without it involving a massive amount of teenagers with no masks, sharing drinks, etc;

Since the start of winter break, I've noticed a spike in parties, as well as narcotic drug use in our community. Having seen it with my own eyes and heard people's confession to having done narcotics, it seems as if it's becoming normalized. New Year's Eve obviously made many parties justifiable, as well as "just cause" parties and birthday parties.

COVID-19 has caused many people in our community to turn to drug use. I have watched the people I have known the longest fall into hard drug use, especially in the past 10 months. The usuals we see have been nicotine and alcohol. As of late, cocaine has been seeming to gain interest from many, most inside of our own

school.

Opioid related deaths have been on the rise since 2014, with almost three Coloradans dying per day from drug overdose (drugabuse.gov). Opioids like Cocaine, Hydrocodone, Xanax, Molly, DMT, Shrooms, and Morphine have become very mainstream and glamorized.

After the legalization of Marijuana in 2014, the "gateway drug" soon became accessible to anyone and everyone. I have noticed that this plays a part in the justification teens have for doing hard drugs.

"Weed doesn't do anything negative to me, and I was told it's going to ruin my life. It only improves my mood and overall outlook on life. So, why would anything else have a terrible effect on me when what I was told about weed was ultimately a lie," source said.

This glamorization mostly sprouts from rappers and celebrities such as Lil Peep, SuicideBoy\$, Mac Miller, Nelkboys, and Juice Wrld. This has sparked interest in young people living in high-income areas, as well as rural cities.

"I've done cocaine three times. I mean I haven't gotten high off of it, I just think it's kind of fun to do," Source said.

I understand going to parties, but hard drugs are overboard. These people are kids, setting

themselves up to fail by using hard drugs with the potential of getting addicted just as they did to alcohol and nicotine.

Seeing the people I've looked up to since I walked through the doors of Castle View not only use, but encourage the use of hard drugs, makes me concerned for my own future.

COVID-19 doesn't seem to be going as quickly as we had hoped, but I don't want to cause problems for myself that will hinder my success just because quarantine is boring and hard to get through. Jeopardizing your future at such a young age is just unthinkable for me. Addiction isn't temporary, but this difficult time of isolation is. I wish I could make my friends understand that the lasting effects of drug abuse will last longer than any personal issues they're dealing with, that makes them want to feel numb.

"I GOT INTO MOLLY AT A YOUNG AGE. WHEN IT'S MIXED WITH THE RUSH OF A PARTY, IT'S AN EXPERIENCE THAT'S HARD TO STOP."

written by Macy Key

WE NEED PROM

We don't want to risk getting people sick, but we do need to have a prom

Prom needs to happen. The pandemic has been going on for almost a year now. We have had these lousy online and hybrid schedules since spring break of 2020. When you think about it, that is a really long time.

By no means am I saying we need to put our students and staff at risk so that we can get our full "high school experience," but I really do believe that we need a prom. School dances are and always have been cheesy and childish, but that's really the whole point. How many times in your life after high school are you going to have the same opportunities that prom gives you?

There have been rumors about the dance being held at the Broncos stadium or outside, and honestly, it doesn't matter to me.

It doesn't matter where it's held, how bad the decorations are, and how bad the music is. Prom is something that high school needs just as much as football games and hormone-fueled drama.

I want to rent a tuxedo that I have to return in 24 hours and I want to stress about how I'm going to ask my date out. The three best days of high school are the first day, the last day, and Prom. Taking one of these away is going to leave seniors with an incomplete high school experience. So it's time to stop letting the parents and school district dictate our high school experience. Give us prom, we need it.

written by Nathaniel Santiago