

grip

Summer 2010

MAKING HARD CHOICES

*Your Life
Your Decision*

Alcohol & You

Obsessions & Compulsions

Living with an
anxiety disorder

Prom Survival

Spending more
doesn't pay off

Helping Hand

"My BFF was severely
depressed"

PLUS!

Have the best summer,
reviews, poetry and more



Alberta Health
Services

Teen Olympian: This 17-year-old soared at the Vancouver Games

This man is going to tell you how to deal with your life?

OK,

the only people who may know

SOMETHING

about what's going

ON in your LIFE

would be other

TEENS and then,

ONLY if they hang

out with you and

SOMETIMES that's

not even the case,

especially when your

FRIENDS are completely

OUT TO LUNCH

and some of your PROBLEMS are very SERIOUS. So why don't you get OFF your BUTT and WRITE something yourself? You could get PUBLISHED, it may make you FAMOUS and then you can have your own PERFUME or something just as LAME, but it will make you MILLIONS.

Grip. It's your life. Grab it.

Grip magazine is currently seeking writers, illustrators, animators, poets – creative types of all kinds – between the ages of 13 and 18. Articles, poetry, short stories, illustrations, comic strips and photography will be considered. Send questions and samples to creative@griponlife.ca. You will be paid. Really. Not a lot, but it's still money.

griponlife.ca

what's inside FEATURES

Alcohol & You
Booze is legal when you turn 18. But chances are, you'll have to make some choices about it before then. Make the ones that are best for your body and your mind.



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04! Message

From the Youth Advisory Council



For the first time in your life, you feel independent; you exit graduation thinking you've harvested the glory, the maturity, the knowledge of good and evil. No one can stop me, I have the right to (insert assertion here). The cliché for teens in the 21st century leaves the parent lectures shrinking in the rear view mirror. And similarly, the advice on alcohol is left rotting. We hear, we learn, but when it comes time to act, we're a tad bit hesitant. Humans are often confident in change, but, much like frogs, we sit in puddles of half-murky water and we don't jump until the end. Then, in chaos, we're left to make a decision quickly and maybe it's too late.

This edition of *Grip* sheds light on choice and consequence. I can hear you slap your forehead already, but wait – let's hear from the experts: you! Forget the parent lectures at dinner on alcohol, our team of talented teen writers from across Alberta will show you the charm of mocktails, host heated debates and try to figure out what teens are actually thinking about alcohol!

As if that's a surprise for you...

Grip is a masterpiece that is the product of innovation, diversity and talent. I became involved with the *Grip* Youth Advisory Council as a way to unleash my creative mind. This magazine initiates communication between teens. So, if you're a critic like me, you'll be compelled to respond, act and perhaps bring your own ideas onto the scene. I hope to bring a new frame of mind to the various issues, flex my creative muscles and beef up your grip on *Grip*.

Enough said. Props to your choice of this quirky, yet inspiring, magazine. Cheers to a great read! *clink*

Sandy Xu
Grip Youth Advisory Council

grip

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PUBLISHER
Ruth Kelly

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
Joyce Byrne | comments@gripdonlife.ca

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Beth Evans

MANAGING EDITOR
Emily Senger | creative@gripdonlife.ca

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Kristiana Indradat | creative@gripdonlife.ca

COPY CHIEF
Kim Tannas | creative@gripdonlife.ca

EDITORIAL ADVISORS
Marlis Atkins, Sandra Christiansen, Lynn Damberger, Sarah Damberger, Toby Dunne, Sharon Enslin, Dr. Jonathan Eustace, Cheryl Houtekamer, Tammy O'Quinn, Barb Olsen, Taryn Pawlivsky, Karoline Philipp, Tami Reid, Nancy Snowball, Chris Thorne, Erin Walton

ART DIRECTOR
Charles Burke

ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR
Rodrigo López Orozco

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
Betty Smith

DISTRIBUTION
Andrea Cruickshank | getgrip@gripdonlife.ca

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Katerine Abbass, Nicole Antonakis, Shelly Astill, Chris Berthelot, Kristina Bonwick, Parker Collins, Grayson Evans, Caitlin Hart, Lena Hilfred, Rachel Hughes, Sydney Kang, Kristen Kiemele, Leanne Klimek, Jasmin Risk, Jon Roe, Erin McCarty, Taylor McKenna, Gabrielle McKinley, Kim Nursall, Oladyo Omotayo, Kendall Reinders, Jon Roe, Megan Ryland, Shelly Pearson, Jordan Phillips, Jasmine Salazar, Amanda Taylor, Sam Taylor, Jessie Tollestrup, Sandy Xu

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS AND ILLUSTRATORS
Kristina Bonwick, Gurpreet Gill, Eric Gravel, Ari Melnyk, Ewan Nicholson, Heff O'Reilly, Jan Perrin, Rob Propp, Michelle Truong, Adrienne Vander Meulen, Alanna Yee

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Venture Publishing Inc.
10259-105 Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 1E3
Tel: 780-990-0839 | Fax: 780-425-4921 | Toll-free: 1-866-227-4276
circulation@venturepublishing.ca

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Contributors

Being caught playing air guitar in public doesn't bother **Chris Berthelot** because he loves rocking out to his favorite tunes wherever he is. Besides air guitar and listening to rock music, Chris' other passions include writing poetry, essays and watching plays at the Citadel, as well as working for the Geek Squad (Tech Crew) at Austin O'Brien High School. "Too many people are focused on self-image and popularity," Chris says. "When really, all we should worry about is being ourselves and helping each other as best as we can." Read Chris' arguments about the legal drinking age in Alberta on page 26.



Leanne Klimek is an aspiring novelist. While waiting for her manuscripts to turn themselves into books, she enjoys swimming, drawing, hanging out with friends and spending too much time online. When asked which people made her who she is today, she says, "My mother and my friends, for sure; also, Willow from *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and Temperance Brennan from *Bones*. They're all strong women I very much admire, even though two of them don't technically exist." Read Leanne's essay about living with obsessive compulsive disorder on page 32 and her feature about how to help a friend in need on page 40.



Kim Nursall is a political science major at the University of Calgary. She hopes to pursue journalism after her undergraduate degree, with the goal of becoming a political commentator. Kim describes herself as an atheist, socialist, vegetarian who enjoys sports, video games, Rubik's cubes and obscene jokes. Her favourite band, by far and away, is the Beatles, her idol is Pierre Trudeau, and she would own a Capuchin monkey or a penguin. She also, likes cheese. A lot. Read Kim's take on drinking in first-year university on page 24.





Pink Is for... everybody

On the first day of school at Central Kings Rural High School in Nova Scotia, grade 12 students David Shepherd and Travis Price heard about a grade nine student who got picked on for wearing a pink shirt.

They didn't think this was right. The pair decided to wear pink shirts to tell everyone that bullying isn't cool. The boys bought about 50 pink shirts to pass around. Other students decided to wear their own pink clothes.

The next day, students stood together in a sea of pink.

That was in 2007. Word got out about the boys' good deed. Pink Shirt Day or Stand Up to Bullying Day has since been celebrated by thousands of people in Canada, and around the world.

That's pretty impressive for two guys from Nova Scotia.

Check out www.pinkshirtday.ca or www.standupday.com for more info.

AN APPLE A DAY

Proper nutrition keeps you feeling good, gives you energy and helps you look good, too. But just how many servings of veggies and fruits should an average 15-year-old eat every day?

- A. 2-3 servings
- B. 4-5 servings
- C. 7-8 servings

C. According to Canada's Food Guide, males between the ages of 14-18 should eat a whopping eight servings of veggies and fruits every day! Females in the same age group should eat seven servings of veggies and fruits. So toss that apple and some baby carrots into your backpack in the morning for a power-up when you energy starts to drop off in the afternoon.

Friends make life better. But keeping up with your friends over the summer can be tough when you don't see each other at school five days a week. Keep these tips in mind for keeping a friend:

Tell each other about your interests.

Trust each other and be honest.

Share your thoughts and feelings.

Respect their opinions and beliefs.

Relate to how they feel.

Be sincere with each other.

Accept them for who they are.

Encourage and support each other.

Commit to the friendship.

A friend to keep

7 Ways to Stay Active When School's Out

By Sydney Kang

At the beginning of summer, a lot of things need to be accomplished: hang out with friends, enjoy the weather, shop... but staying in shape can get neglected. The average teen needs about an hour of exercise per day including cardio, strength and flexibility. This is important to keep your body healthy and it can help prevent, or cope with, depression, too. But exercise doesn't have to feel like work with these fun ideas:

- 1. Take a walk:** Summer is beautiful, especially when you are outside. Take advantage of the weather and walk around. Bring your dog, your family or your friends. Explore city parks and trails that you may have never seen before; you might have an adventure while staying in shape!
- 2. Jump in the pool:** Even if you are not swimming laps, just being in water will help you stay in shape. The water provides resistance that will tone your muscles. It is like lifting weights with your entire body. If you are in a lake or an outdoor pool, remember to put on sunscreen.

3. Try something new: Summer is the perfect time to find a new hobby. If you have never played soccer before, maybe this is the time to try it out. Take a summer dance class, martial arts class or join a yoga group. This is a great way to stay in shape during the summer.

4. Bike: Biking is another simple and fun way of staying active. Whether you are biking up a mountain or just in your neighbourhood, biking will keep you moving.

5. Take another route: If you snagged a job over the summer, instead of driving or taking the bus, walk or bike. You're going there anyways; why not stay in shape while saving some money.

6. Cool off: Running through the sprinkler isn't just for your little brother. Nothing is better on a hot summer day than hooking up the garden hose and running through the icy water.

7. Have fun: Organize a day out with your friends. Go hiking, biking, go to the beach or play a sport. This way you'll hang with your friends, enjoy the outdoors and stay active.

My Dusty Book Shelf

Around the World in 80 Days

by Jules Verne

Reviewed by Gabrielle McKinley

So this book isn't exactly new. In fact, it was first published in French way back in 1873! But don't let its age fool you, *Around the World in 80 Days* is still excellent, 137 years later.

The adventure takes off in London on Oct. 2, 1872. The protagonist of the story, Phileas Fogg, is a handsomely wealthy man who lives a life of ease and solitude. The adventure begins when Phileas Fogg wagers 20,000 pounds, proclaiming to be able to make it around the world in 80 days.

However, as his journey seemingly takes off for the best, he is wrongly mistaken for a bank robber by a detective named Fix, a man who has a silly character and is horribly troublesome and sly. Fix puts many obstacles in Phileas Fogg's way, which come quite close to making him lose his wager.

The story has lots of interesting characters, including Fogg's servant Passepatout, who is a very loyal and trustworthy companion on journey. However, his good nature and kindness almost always come

close to ruining Fogg's enormous bet. Towards the middle and end of the book, we see that Fogg is not only a rich and quite-natured man, but a good-hearted hero who finds true love, despite the book's shocking ending.

Grade: A This book is for anyone who enjoys adventures, discrete romance and a series of plot twists.

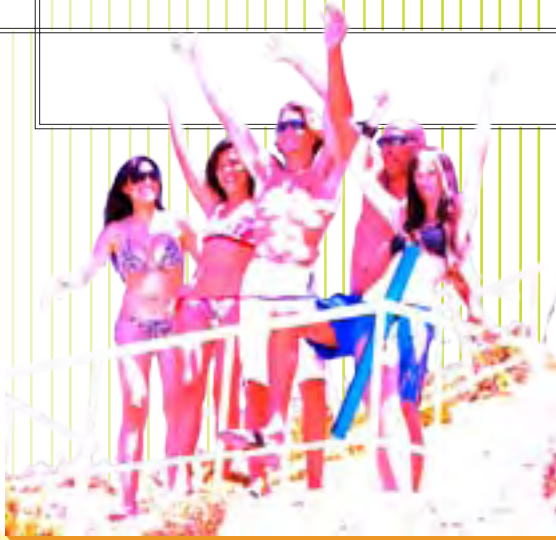
Hey, Eagle Eyes. There are 12 differences between the image on the left and the one on the right. Can you find them all?

Spot the Diff's
(finding emo)



FROM THE LEFT, THE SECOND
PICTURE HAS:
A FRAME EDGE ON THE TOP LEFT
CORNER; EASTER EGGS ON
THE TABLE; CHANGED FLOWER
COLOUR; ONE LESS KNOB
ON THE TOP DRAWER; TREES
BEHIND THE WINDOWS; A TIARA;
A TONGUE STICKING OUT; MORE
BRACELETS; A THUMB RING; NO
DRUM; DIFFERENT COLOURED
MOLDINGS; NO FEATHER
DUSTER.

Celebrate Summer!



By Taylor McKenna

Classes are out, so fend off boredom by doing some of the following activities in your free time.

Throw a BBQ. Invite your friends over for an afternoon. Pick up some burgers, hot dogs, buns and fire up the grill! Make a big pitcher of homemade ice tea and enjoy the first few days of summer with good friends.

Paint a picture. Pick up some cheap paint and sketch paper and start using your imagination. Connect with your inner kid and use your imagination to inspire you for the summer ahead. Sit outside, feel the nice warm breeze while you paint a picture of anything your heart desires!

Have a picnic. Invite your loved one, or some friends. Depending on the number of people, try a potluck. Assign friends one thing to bring, like a salad, sandwiches and juice. Making everything homemade will add a unique touch.

Have a water balloon fight. Your local dollar store sells small water balloons for cheap. Bring them home, fill them up and put the filled balloons in a bowl or bag. Create some boundaries, like using the backyard and the front yard. You can make teams, or go it independently, and start the fun!

Re-organize your closet. Go through your closet and decide what you need and do not need. Donate any old clothing that is still usable to a charity. Pack away winter clothing that you won't use for the next few months. You might be amazed at what you find in there.

Plan an outing. Gather your best friends and hit up a theme park, waterpark or spend some time getting lost in a corn maze. Summer's too short, so make the most of it while it lasts!

TOP 3 WEBSITES

By Jasmine Salazar

Wasting hours on Facebook is so five years ago. With some extra time to kill during the summer months, check out these website picks for something a little different.

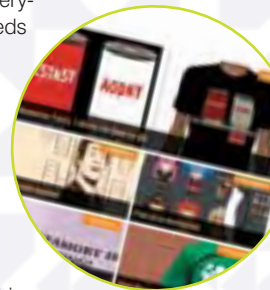
Pixlr
www.pixlr.com

Filter. Enhance. Crop. Saturate. Terms only significant to someone who owns Adobe Photoshop. But, lo-and-behold, that can all change with Pixlr. Pixlr is a free website that parallels the likes of the graphics program, Adobe Photoshop. What's the catch, you ask? Absolutely nothing. Pixlr requires no sign-ups, no downloads - there's not even a "terms of agreement" page. Just type in the website's url and you have the program at your fingertips. Other photo-editors available online do not have all the tools required to fix a photo or they run slowly. Pixlr, on the other hand, is completely hassle-free and it allows you to do almost everything that Photoshop does. It's perfect for anyone who needs to remove red eyes, crop out that messy room, or simply remove that embarrassing zit from your school photo.



TCritic
tcritic.com

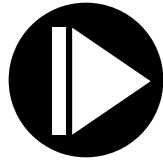
The idea is a simple one - a critique of graphic tees. However, it was one that never graced the online world until Karl Long, creator of TCritic, decided it was what the world needed. And indeed we do. From the complete abstract to the generic logotype, graphic T-shirts are a fashion staple for teenagers. If we can critique movies, albums and even video games to let others know whether or not to invest in it, then why could we not apply this idea to graphic tees? The only downside to this website is that Long only includes obscure fashion lines. You won't find any big name labels here. No Gap, no Ed Hardy, nada. But, nonetheless, this is a website to check out. Whether you are looking to purchase a shirt, or in search of entertainment (the comments are pretty witty), then visit TCritic.



Instructables
www.instructables.com

Looking for a tutorial on how to make a tie-dye shirt, a pin-hole camera or snickerdoodles? Instructables is the website answer for everything do-it-yourself. Users can post tutorials on just about every imaginable thing and can also comment on and rate other postings. The format of the website resembles eBay or Kijiji, which makes it really easy to use. This website is great for gift ideas and it can even teach you how to make your own pair of distressed jeans without having to fork out big bucks. So, what are you waiting for? It doesn't take much time or effort to find a cool DIY project. And, if you know a delicious recipe you're totally hooked on, then why not share your skills with others? Post your own tutorial and watch it rise to glorified DIY fame.





Summertime Reads

Will Grayson, Will Grayson

By John Green and David Levithan

REVIEWED BY MEGAN RYLAND

Maybe you've met someone with the same birthday, but what about meeting someone with the same name? In this novel by popular teen authors John Green and David Levithan, two characters realize that they share the same name and, soon, begin to share a whole lot more than that.

When Will Grayson meets Will Grayson, they are each having a bad day. Both are unlucky in love, and when they meet one another, it sets off a chain of events that leaves both of them changed. One Will Grayson is determined to shut up and not care in order to avoid any kind of heartbreak, while the other Will has already taken not caring to an extreme – except if you ask about Isaac.

With two authors writing alternate chapters, it's double the trouble, and double the fun, as we see the story from the points of view of both Will Graysons. Throw in the local Gay-Straight Alliance, the larger-than-life Tiny Cooper, and an adorable music snob named Jane, and there is a cast of characters with enough quirk and hilarity to keep a reader on their toes. *Will Grayson, Will Grayson* is a story about finding love, falling into it, and falling out. But it is, more importantly, a story about friendship. It's about the friends you choose, the ones that choose you, and all the things that tie us together.

With *Will Grayson, Will Grayson*, Green and Levithan have, again, offered a great look into the hilarious and heartbreaking lives of teens.

Grade: B + Older teens will enjoy this novel that shows friendships at their at their best and at their worst, as characters find love, come out, make friends, mess up, and find their way back to the love they thought they'd lost.



Snitch

by Allison van Diepen

REVIEWED BY LENA HILFRED

Snitch is an enthralling book about a teen-aged girl, Julia, who lives with her dad in Brooklyn. In a neighbourhood and school full of gangs, Julia and her best friends decided long ago not to get involved in that kind of drama.

But when she falls for a new guy, Eric, Julia suddenly can't control the pace of her life anymore. Then Eric joins a gang and Julia is forced to reconsider her priorities. She knows that life can't go back to the way it was, but she desperately needs a true friend at her side. Can she keep both Eric and her other friends?

In seeing the struggles that Julia faces daily, from fights to drug deals and arrests, we are forced to look at ourselves and decide what we want out of life. Are we like Eric, who will do anything to avenge a friend, or Julia's friend Q, who deserts Julia when she most needs someone to lean on? *Snitch* relates the benefits and negatives in gangs, and why we all want so badly to fit in.

Grade: A The author related the ideas, storyline and way of writing really well to teens and showed problems that some people face in a realistic way.

Nineteen Minutes

By Jodi Picoult

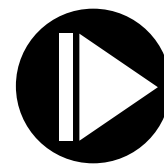
REVIEWED BY SHELLEY PEARSON

What can you do in 19 minutes? Drive to school? Write a chemistry quiz? Walk your dog? *Nineteen minutes* doesn't seem like a lot of time, but to the students of Sterling, New Hampshire, 19 minutes changed their lives forever.

Jodi Picoult's novel, *Nineteen Minutes*, starts out by introducing 17-year-old high school student Peter Houghton, who has been mercilessly bullied, both verbally and physically, at the hands of his classmates because he is different. His best friend, Jose Cormier, gives into the pressures of high school and now hangs out with the popular crowd that often instigates the harassment towards Peter. Losing his best friend to the enemy, the popular kids, and being bullied by Jose, sends Peter over the edge with emotions. Unable to cope with the pain, damage and abuse, Peter lashes out using the violence and terror he has been shown by his classmates in a desperate act to be finally noticed. Peter plans and carries out a school shooting.

This emotional rollercoaster of the twisting lives of both Jose and Peter relates to our lives as teen-





Banshees, doppelgangers, gangs, bullies and a twist on an old classic – just for good measure – are the top teen books, according to our panel of reviewers

agers. We are faced with pressures and pain from all directions, and can recognize and relate to the feelings of the characters in the book. I'm sure everyone who reads this novel can relate the characters from the book to people from their own school.

Nineteen Minutes is thought-provoking, insightful and relevant to the universal lives of teenagers. With its surprise ending, this novel will leave you at the edge of your seat asking yourself the haunting question: Do we ever really know someone?

Grade: A+ *This novel is so riveting that you'll feel it has an instant connection to your own life.*



My Soul to Take

by Rachel Vincent

REVIEWED BY GABRIELLE MCKINLEY

If people had to choose three adjectives to describe Kaylee Cavanaugh, they would describe her as hilarious, intelligent, and as normal as any other teenager. But there's a fourth: she's also a banshee.

My Soul to Take, the first book in Rachel Vincent's Soul Screamers series, follows young Kaylee, who

doesn't see dead people, but she senses when someone around her is going to die. Upon sensing, she then will scream bloody murder. Literally.

Despite this, Kaylee loves the fact that she ensnared the attention of the totally hot Nash Hudson; he is tall, dark, and handsome, and sought after by every girl at her school. But when they go on a normal date, Nash knows more about Kaylee than she wants to know about herself.

Kaylee soon discovers that there are more of her kind, and plenty more of other evil kinds. Every time she screams, she gets a peek inside the Netherworld – the dark and dangerous place where ghouls and monsters lurk, which is certainly no place for a banshee, or for humans. In a frightening plot twist, when Kaylee's classmates start falling down dead for no reason, only she knows who will be next.

Grade: A+ *Brimming with never-ending mysteries, action and romance, this first book in the Soul Screamers series is a must read!*

Once Upon A Time Series: The Diamond Secret

By Suzanne Weyn

REVIEWED BY KIRSTEN KIEMELE

The tale begins when the royal Russian empire falls to the Soviet Union, tearing apart the lives of rich Russian nobility. While the country is in tatters, trying to repair itself from the tragic fall of the Romanov empire, Nadya, a Russian tavern girl, is trying to pull her life together as well.

Nadya works as a maid under a dictatorial boss and despairs of the direction her life is taking her. She has no recollection of life before the tavern, for she woke up in an asylum. Luckily for her, fortune is on her side – or is it?

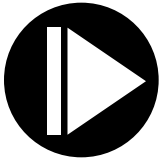
Ivan, an ex-Bolshevik soldier, and his companion, Sergei, are in search of beautiful girl to take part in their scheme. The Dowager Grand Empress Maria Feodorovna Romanov is offer-



ing a reward for the return of her granddaughter, Anastasia. Ivan, and Sergei find Nadya in the tavern, and Ivan is convinced she can play the part of the Empress's granddaughter. Ivan and Sergei tread lightly on the details, telling Nadya that her grandmother is searching for her, not revealing that she will be part of a plot to get the Empress's award. Nadya is desperate to get away from the tavern and she agrees.

The trio makes its way from Russia to Paris. Their journey is full of love, family, betrayal and darkness at every corner. I won't spoil the ending for you, but the tragic story of Anastasia usually has many twists and turns.

Grade: C+ *Readers won't miss out on much if they miss this book. I expected it to be original, but it's like every other story of Anastasia. The author could have done more to make the story her own, but instead she took the same beaten path as previous authors before her.*



Sweet Sounds of Summer

The soundtrack of your life



Islands Disappear

By Said the Whale

REVIEWED BY MEGAN RYLAND

Islands Disappear is the most recent release by indie rock band Said the Whale, appearing in stores this past October. In a lot of ways, it is an ode to Canada and a product of the bands' tours across this nation.

Hailing from Vancouver, B.C., Said the Whale has gained a following with songs about love and the local sites on the West Coast. This album still offers tracks about the band's home region, including "B.C. Orientering," "False Creek Change" and "Black Day in December," about the Vancouver storm that leveled trees in Stanley Park in 2006. But, now that it has a wider audience, the songs are filled with the sights and sounds of places all over Canada. From the song "Emerald Lake, AB," to "Holly, Ontario," it's clear that Said the Whale is no longer just a little band in Vancouver, but a national treasure.

This four-piece band sings harmonies about the harsh Canadian winters and the trials of love as an "uncool, Canadian kid" in its own upbeat style. Additionally, everyone who read *Goodnight Moon* as a kid will appreciate their sweet homage in "Goodnight Moon." From the rocking "Camilo (The Magician)" to the more somber title track, indie lovers will swoon for *Islands Disappear*.

Grade: A+ Largely acoustic, but never too delicate or overly sentimental, Said the Whale manages to offer an awesome variety of indie rock material in this 2009 release.



Volume Two

By She & Him

REVIEWED BY JASMINE SALAZAR

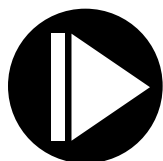
"Actor turned singer" – it's a headline we've seen multiple times, which usually leads to much ridicule and embarrassment for the actor. However, this is not the case with indie actress Zooey Deschanel. When she collaborated with songwriter M. Ward back in 2008 to form She & Him, Deschanel proved that she was not at all like her predecessors. (Remember Lindsay Lohan? Jared Leto? Or even Joaquin Phoenix?)

Volume Two is a continuation of the duo's first album, *Volume One*. Deschanel sings about love, but adds her own quirky twist to it, with her eccentric voice and lyrics. In "Over it Over Again," Deschanel asks, "Why do I always wanna sock it to you hard?" and in "Don't Look Back" Deschanel refers to the Greek mythological story with the lyrics, "Orpheus melted the heart of Persephone, but I never had yours."

Although Deschanel's voice and lyrics come off as sweet, the album never becomes too saccharine. The combination of Deschanel's quirky lyrics with M. Ward's melancholic guitar strings, and the collaborations with other well-known musicians, such as Tilly and the Wall, make this album a success.

Volume Two is a collection of '50s- and '60s-inspired pop, perfect for any summer day spent at the beach or simply in your backyard, and is worthy of any listener's undivided attention.

Grade: B+ Whether you love Deschanel or not, there is no question that the girl has talent. The album might not ever reach "best album of the year" status, but it is a good album nonetheless.



Pictures and Pixels

Catch a flick or try out a new game



Title: *Splinter Cell: Conviction*

Platform: Xbox 360

Rating: Mature

REVIEW BY JON ROE

Sam Fisher's daughter is dead and now he's back. With a vengeance. Or something.

That's really all that's worth understanding of the story of *Splinter Cell: Conviction*, the latest installment of Ubisoft's sneak around and shoot people game.

You play as Fisher, a secret agent who has "gotten out of the game" yet is pulled back in because someone knows who killed his daughter. Or is his daughter still alive? Whatever. Your job is to sneak around, interrogate people and blow things up.

You need to use different environmental features to hide from bad guys because, like most real people, Fisher can only absorb a certain amount of bullets. This puts a heavy focus on stealth. Often you'll drop down from the ceiling, snap a dude's neck, then turn and headshot the other two baddies in a room without alerting the rest of the security brigade – easily accomplished with the game's marking system. What isn't always easy in *Splinter Cell* is interacting

with some of the other objects, like a helicopter you need to jump onto. You need to use the cursor to point at the correct object to interact with, but it's not as easy as it could be. Though frustrating, this happens rarely.

In the end you may not care why Sam Fisher is breaking necks and shooting people, but you'll definitely enjoy it.

Grade: B+ *The single player is fun, and the co-op even more so, but the linear levels and the object interaction take this game down a notch.*

The Last Song

Directed by Julie Anne Robinson

Starring: Miley Cyrus, Greg Kinnear and Bobby Coleman

REVIEWED BY NICOLE ANTONAKIS

For Nicholas Sparks fans, yet another

of his heart-wrenching books has become a movie. *The Last Song* begins when 17-year-old Veronica "Ronnie" Miller (Miley Cyrus) and her younger brother Jonah (Bobby Coleman) are shipped off to spend the summer with their father (Greg Kinnear).

For Jonah this adventure is exciting, but Ronnie doesn't want to be there or see her dad. Ronnie's feelings change when she meets a boy who is completely opposite her, and she starts to fall for him. As the short amount of time Ronnie and Jonah have left in their summer starts to pass, a plot twist changes things.

During the movie, you are able to connect with Ronnie and feel the things she feels and struggles with. We are given a chance to see how change can be good, and how a major turn in events can affect a family. *The Last Song* shows us to look for the good things in life, even when we may feel as though there is nothing left.

Grade: A *Although there were a few predictable moments, the plot twists and turns and great acting and writing made up for those few flaws.*



The Gamer



Get your game on with these *Grip* picks

REVIEWED BY JON ROE AND GRAYSON EVANS

Title: *Deadly Premonition*

Platform: Xbox 360

Rating: Mature

A whole town full of characters dealing with murder in their midst? An atypical detective good-guy with quirky habits? Loads of back story and non-essential information that adds to the mystique of the town you need to explore? Sounds great, except all this is wrapped around the clunky control system of the original *Resident Evil*.

Deadly Premonition is one of the most unique games to be released this generation. You're Agent Francis York, sent to a small town to investigate a murder of a girl. While you're looking for the killer, you have to escape the murderer yourself by hiding and avoiding direct engagement. Stages of supernatural creature attacks are mixed as you question townspeople. Throughout, the game is very much like a movie. It's kind of interesting, but the length of conversations gets tedious.

However, the many scenes do serve to break up the moments when you actually need to move around the town. Moving a wheelbarrow with a flat tire through mud is easier than controlling York's movements. The map is also disgustingly hard to operate, which only adds to the frustration of advancing the story. Despite all this, the game's quirkiness and depth of story keeps pulling you in. It requires an incredible amount of patience, but *Deadly Premonition* has enough of an upside to at least give it a shot.

Grade: C *Patience is a virtue who's reward is a rare experience in a video game: an amusing story worth playing for – if you can avoid throwing your controller at a wall in frustration at the controls. –J.R.*

Title: *Battlefield Bad Company 2*

Platform: Xbox 360, Playstation 3 and PC

Rating: Mature

Battlefield Bad Company 2 is the latest title in the genre of modern military first person shooter, but has it made a splash in the water, or will it get lost in the sea of unoriginality?

With its addictive multiplayer mode, but inconsistent single player, I'm not sure if this game will outlive the more popular multiplayer titles. The single player of *Battlefield* has a humorous story, but lacks interesting situations until the last third of the game. Throughout the campaign, I felt a sense of confusion; there was an underlying feeling that none of the characters really knew what was going on, or what they were supposed to be doing.

The multiplayer was the main focus of this title, from the moment you blow up your first tank to the first across-map sniper, there is never a dull moment. With all the new modes, there is one flaw I have to point out. As you progress through the ranks you unlock new weapons, attachments and perks. But around the last half of the multiplayer ranks there are no unlocks and there is no reward for reaching the level cap. In a very multiplayer-heavy age, this isn't something that should be tolerated. If you expect me to play through the entire multiplayer mode, there should be something to reward me. If they tease me with unlocks and don't deliver, I'm just left disappointed and with a bitter taste in my mouth.

Grade: B+ *The single player mode is fun, but unoriginal, and there aren't enough unlocks in multiplayer mode. This aside, the team-based multiplayer mode is great and the ending sequence is extremely exciting. –G.E.*



ne Wall

QUIZZES, GAMES AND LOTS OF
RESOURCES TO HELP YOU DEAL WITH
ALL THE TOUGH STUFF IN LIFE.
WWW.KIDSHELPPHONE.CA/TEENS

Alberta Health Services.
It's good for more than just your grandma's
hip replacement, or that time your little
brother needed stitches.
Check out an entire AHS website, just for teens
aadac.com/21.asp

Read
these
classic
books

Anne Frank,
Diary of a Young Girl
By Anne Frank

Watership Down
By Richard Adams

The Red Pony
By John Steinbeck



COURAGE DOES NOT ALWAYS ROAR
Sometimes courage is a quiet voice.
"I will try again tomorrow"
- Harry Potter

WISE WIZARD WORDS

*"It takes a great deal of bravery
to stand up to our enemies, but just as
much to stand up to our friends."*
- ALBUS DUMBLEDORE IN *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

*"All we have to decide is what to do
with the time that is given to us.
There are other forces at work in this
world Frodo, besides the will of evil."*
- GANDALF TO FRODO IN *The Lord of the Rings*

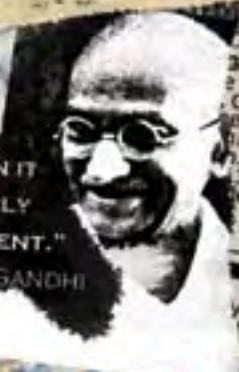


Feeling down? Random
kitten videos from the
internet will cheer
anyone up.
I dare you to visit this
site without saying
"meow" at least once.
www.kittenslette.com


**BRAIN
BRAIN
BRAIN!**

"I OBJECT TO VIOLENCE BECAUSE WHEN IT
APPEARS TO DO GOOD, THE GOOD IS ONLY
TEMPORARY; THE EVIL IT DOES IS PERMANENT."

MAHATMA GANDHI



Find more info about your brain here:
teenmentalhealth.org/brain



UP IN SMOKE

Smoking decreases the blood
flow to the skin, leaving it
leathery and wrinkled.
Smoking can stress your immune
system so that you get pimples
and lose your hair.
Smoking causes cancer of the
lung, mouth, throat, voice box
and esophagus.
Smoking causes heart disease,
stroke and diseases of the blood
vessels.

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UNDER

PRESSURE By Rachel Hughes

Doing what's right for you, rather than what your friends think you should do, is important. But it's not always easy. **How do you handle peer pressure?** Take this short quiz to find out.

Pretend that you are faced with the following scenarios and think about how you would react to each of them. Select the answer that best suits your response. Using the answer key, add up your score to learn more about peer pressure and you!

1. You are at a party where everyone is underage. Some people start drinking. The host of the party asks if you would like her to add some rum to your soda. You:

- a)** thank them and let them add the alcohol to your drink because you want to be included in the party.
- b)** say you like your soda the way it is because you know it is wrong to drink at your age.
- c)** tell them you already added it yourself, and pretend to be drunk to fit in.

2. You are the only one who completed an assignment when your teacher announces it will be taken in for marks. When everyone asks to copy your work, you:

- a)** hand it over, knowing they will appreciate you.
- b)** keep your work, but whisper a few answers so they don't get a zero.
- c)** don't let them have your answers because you worked hard and don't deserve the same mark as the students who didn't do any work at all.

3. You are hanging out with your boy/girlfriend. He/she asks you to do

something you are uncomfortable with, and you say no. They respond with, "but everyone else is doing it, and my past boy/girlfriend did it with me." You say:

- a)** "Not right now, but how about the next time we see each other?"
- b)** "I already said no, and I meant it."
- c)** "OK, I guess it must not be such a big deal if everyone else is doing it."

4. You are hanging out with a group of friends on a Friday night. You're bored, so one of your friends suggests you spruce up the walls of your school with some graffiti. You:

- a)** make an excuse not to do it, and hope your friends don't get in trouble.
- b)** go along with them, because they are your friends and you want them to like you.
- c)** tell them it's a bad idea and suggest something else to do.

5. The group of popular students at school are making fun of anyone who hasn't tried marijuana, such as yourself. You:

- a)** lie, and say you've done it once.
- b)** say you have never tried it, and defend others when they are being bullied.
- c)** find some after school and try it, so you can tell the popular group about it the next day.



[Answer Key]
1. a)1 b)3 c)2
2. a)1 b)2 c)3
3. a)2 b)3 c)1
4. a)2 b)1 c)3
5. a)2 b)3 c)1

LESS THAN 6 POINTS: Work on your response to peer pressure.

You need to learn to stand your ground and not let others influence you to do anything that doesn't feel right. Go with your gut feeling and do what is best for you.

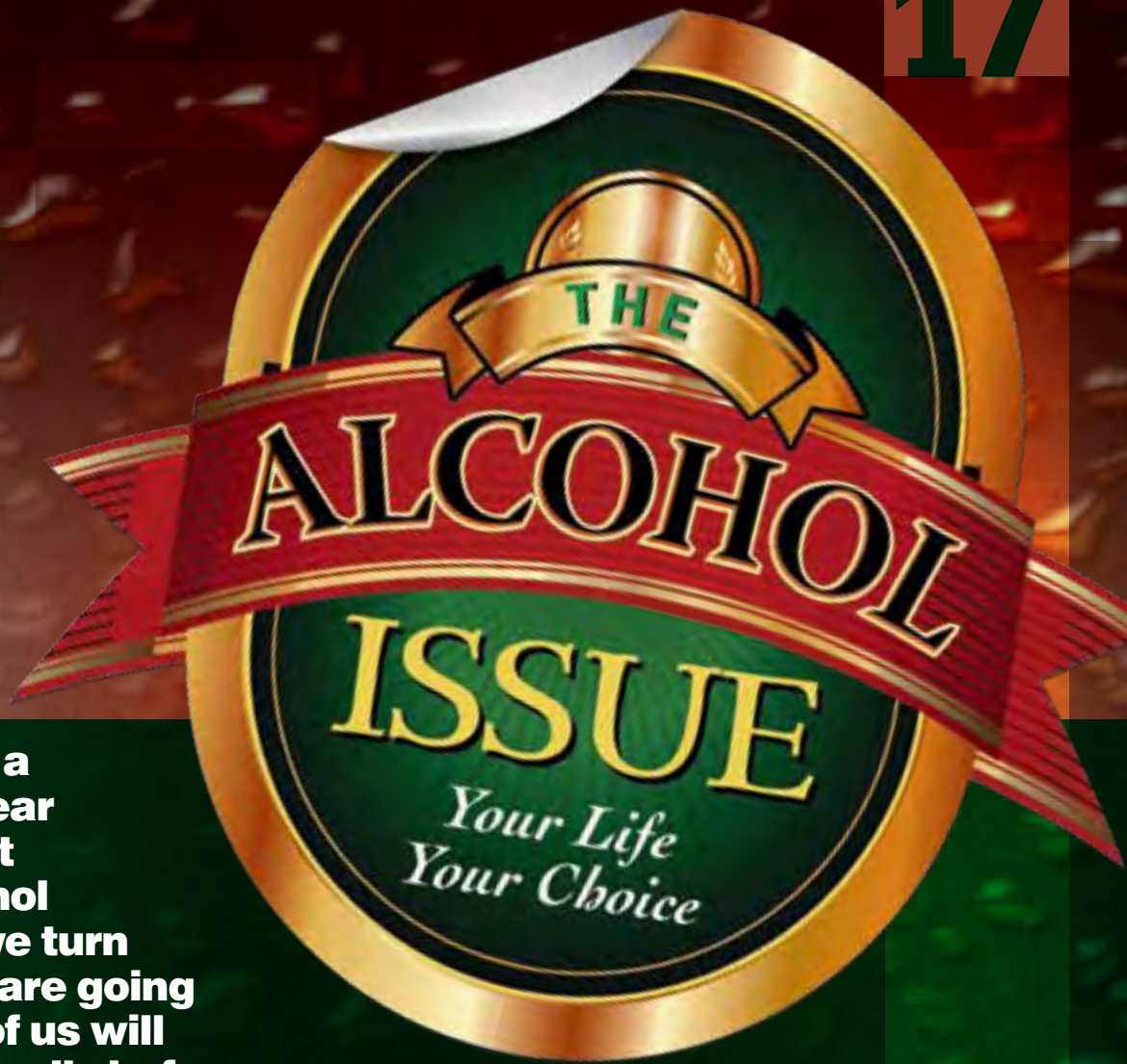
BETWEEN 6-10 POINTS: You can usually handle peer pressure.

You often know where to draw the line, but sometimes still give in when the pressure is too much. Try to keep your values and beliefs in mind more often and you'll be all set to beat peer pressure.

MORE THAN 10 POINTS: Peer pressure is no match for you!

You have no problem standing up for yourself and doing what is right even if you're being told the opposite. You should encourage and help others to do the same. Keep up the great work!

**This quiz is for information and fun; it's not diagnostic



Don't drink. It's a message we hear all the time. But seriously, alcohol is legal when we turn 18. Some of us are going to wait. Some of us will use alcohol illegally before then. Either way, just give us the real facts already, so we can make the decision that is best for our minds and our bodies.

FACTS DON'T LIE

BUT SOMETIMES WE DON'T KNOW ALL THE FACTS, SO IT'S KIND OF LIKE SOMEONE IS LYING. REAL FACTS AND REAL OPINIONS, THEY'RE BOTH RIGHT HERE

18

SUMMER BASH

SUMMER BASH DOESN'T HAVE TO MEAN SUMMER SMASHED WHEN WE PROM AND PARTY THE NIGHTS AWAY

21

YEAR ONE

THERE CAN BE LOTS OF PRESSURE TO DRINK IN FIRST-YEAR UNIVERSITY. HERE'S AN INSIDER'S TAKE ON IT ALL

24

HE SAID, SHE SAID

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE LEGAL DRINKING AGE IN ALBERTA WERE RAISED TO 19? GRIP WRITERS DEBATE IT OUT

26



Mind and Body

Alcohol makes you feel different mentally and physically, but it won't help you escape the real world

Did the popular girl laugh at your jeans again today? Nervous about all the people you don't know at the party? Still feeling down after your girlfriend broke up with you last month? Maybe a couple drinks will help you forget, open up, or relax.

Drinking alcohol might make some people feel more relaxed, more outgoing, or like they are having a great time. This is because alcohol is a drug. It changes the way your brain works, lowering your brain activity. Because alcohol lowers brain activity it is considered a depressant, or a downer.

This lowered brain function means a lot of things. Alcohol will affect your judgment and lower your inhibitions, meaning you might make some bad decisions. It always delays your reaction time and reduces co-ordination, so maybe you'll spill your drink and you'll be more likely to drop things. If you drink enough, your vision might start to get blurry, or you'll see double. You might start to slur your speech, and have problems with balance, walking and standing, so maybe you'll fall over or stumble.

Because alcohol makes your body and mind feel different, some people use it to try and deal with their problems. If you're feeling socially awkward at a party, maybe alcohol will make you feel more talkative and more comfortable. If you're anxious, maybe you think alcohol will help you relax. Maybe you think it will help you escape the real world when you're sad or depressed, or when things aren't going your way.

Lots of adults use alcohol safely. In fact, four out of five Albertans drink beer, wine or liquor. It's also the drug teens use most. According to the most recent survey of Alberta students in grades 7-12, 49.1 per cent reported using alcohol in the last 12 months.

But, since alcohol affects the brain, your mind has to be healthy and mature before you use it, or you open the door to a range of negative possibilities. Being a teen is tough, sometimes it's downright miserable, but using booze to deal with issues like sadness or depression, anxiety or social awkwardness, is only a temporary solution, and not a very good one. Take care of your mind first, and you'll be less likely to use any substances in a way that will make you regret it later. ☐

Since alcohol affects the brain, your mind has to be healthy and mature before you use it, or you open the door to a range of negative possibilities.

IN YOUR WORDS



Interviews by Chris Berthelot,
facts by *Grip* staff

Chris Berthelot travelled the halls of high school to ask teens about their perceptions of alcohol. Here's what he came up with

How much pressure is there to drink in high school?

Maranda (16): There's a little bit, but I don't find a lot of pressure. It might be because of the people I hang out with.

Brennan (15): I've heard of there being some pressure in other high schools. But at our school, the way I see it, nobody is pressured to do anything, ever.

Tyler (17): I think that it depends on the people you hang with, but in our high school, there really isn't any pressure to drink.

Fact: Choosing good friends can help you make good decisions that are right for you.

When deciding whether to drink, remember that everybody isn't doing it, no matter what you've heard in the hallways. When Alberta students in grades seven to 12 were asked to guess how many students at their school had used alcohol in the last 12 months they said 81.6 per cent. The actual number who had used alcohol in the last 12 months was way lower: only 49.1 per cent.

How much alcohol does it take to be considered drunk?

Brennan: It would most likely be around 200 ml, or just under half a regular can of pop that has 40 per cent alcohol, to get an average teen drunk.

Maranda: For me, like three beers or so, basically around a litre.

Tyler: About eight shot glasses of 40 per cent alcohol to be considered drunk.

Fact: Your body can break down about one standard drink every hour. This means one bottle of beer (341 ml/12 oz.), one glass of wine (142 ml/5 oz.) or a shot of hard alcohol (43 ml/1.5 oz.). When you drink any more than this, you start to get drunk.

Any more than five drinks at one time is considered binge drinking. In short, binge drinking makes you feel drunk and it will probably give you a hangover the next day.

Binge drinking is also risky. When you binge drink you don't always make the best decisions. This can leave you asking, "why did I do that?" when you sober up. Bad decisions also increase the risk of accidents causing serious injury or even death.

How long does it take for the body to get rid of alcohol in your system?

Brennan: If you drink just enough to get you drunk then stop, it would probably take you about seven or eight hours.

Maranda: Until I sleep it off, so probably like a good eight hours or so of sleep.

Tyler: I think it takes around 24 hours, but that depends on how much you drink.

Fact: Your body can process about one drink per hour, but if you drink more than that, the alcohol will build up in your body. Then, it can take your body up to two hours to process one drink.

When alcohol hits your stomach it travels into your blood and, eventually, your hard-working liver has to break down all the alcohol. The only cure for drunkenness: wait for your liver to do its thing and eventually the alcohol will leave your body in your sweat, urine and breath. So, if you're trying to sober up, switch to water and pass the breath mints, please.



QUIZ: TEST YOUR ALCOHOL IQ

Think you know about alcohol?
 You might be surprised.
 Take this quiz

- What percentage of Alberta grade 7-12 students did not use alcohol at least once in the last 12 months?
 - 51 per cent
 - 56 per cent
 - 75 per cent
 - 81 per cent
- By grade 12, what per cent of Alberta students chose not to try alcohol, even once, in their life?
 - 10 per cent
 - 25 per cent
 - 33 per cent
 - 40 per cent
- What percentage of grade seven students in Alberta have never used alcohol?
 - 45 per cent
 - 63 per cent
 - 75 per cent
 - 82 per cent
- How many drinks does it take to “binge drink”?
 - 3 or more on one occasion
 - 5 or more on one occasion
 - 7 or more on one occasion
 - 10 or more on one occasion
- Which of the below actions is a good way to sober up quickly?
 - Take a nap
 - Wait it out
 - Drink strong coffee
 - Have a snack and drink water
- When is it safe to mix alcohol with other drugs?
 - If the drugs are prescription drugs.
 - When you keep the amounts of both small.
 - Only when you had a big meal that day.
 - Never.
- Which of the following can affect my drinking experience?
 - What I ate that day
 - My mood before drinking
 - My size
 - All of the above
- Which of the following is NOT a symptom of long-term and excessive alcohol use?
 - Hair loss
 - Sexual problems
 - Loss of appetite
 - Memory loss

Check your answers on page 23.

Summer Bash



Parties and friends are the stuff of summer memories, but all the fun can make for some tough decisions about alcohol

Ahhh, summertime.

School's out and it's time for backyard barbeques, bonfires, chilling with friends in the sunshine and forgetting all about the long, cold Alberta winter. It's a less complicated time of year, when school assignments are a distant memory and the possibilities for awesome summer memories seem endless.

Consider the following: The grill is sizzling, the music is on, friends are arriving, and you just poured a refreshing iced tea. When, hey, look, someone's older brother picked up a case of beer. Someone turns up the music a little louder. Someone else just brought out some vodka and they're offering to spike your iced tea. Suddenly, the easy living summer situation gets a lot more complicated.

Whether it's at a post-graduation bash, a summer BBQ with friends, or a party at the lake, summertime parties mean you could be faced with an important decision about drinking. Drinking is illegal for anyone under the age of 18. However, there may come a time when there's an opportunity to use alcohol and you'll have to make the decision: to drink, or not to drink.

The decision is up to you, but it may be helpful to consider the following points when someone offers you a drink. By simply asking yourself some questions, you can make the good kind of summer memories, rather than the ones you want to forget.

The situation

Are you in a room full of friends you trust? Or surrounded by people you just met? Are you comfortable in the situation? Do you have a safe ride home? Maybe your friends aren't drinking. Maybe they are. It's a lot to consider, but all of these factors are a lot easier to think about *before* you take that first sip of booze, rather than after.

Gauge your mood

If you're feeling sad already, booze won't make you feel better. The same goes with being angry or overly tired. Alcohol often enhances feelings, and it might make you feel sadder, sleepier, or even angry and ready to fight. No one wants to be the crying, fighting or passed out person



at the party that everyone talks about the next day, so take time to consider the mood you're in and maybe skip the vodka in your iced tea.

Drug check

Alcohol is already a drug, and it can react with certain prescription medications. If you've started any new medications for, well, pretty much anything, be sure to ask the doctor about mixing that medication with alcohol. If you're not sure, it's best to pass on the booze. Mixing alcohol with any legal or illegal drug can be really dangerous, especially with illegal drugs because there is no real way to tell what's in illegal drugs. If you're drinking it's never a good time to try any other drugs. In a best case scenario, it could make you puke or generally feel really gross. In a worst case scenario, mixing booze with other drugs can lead to serious medical emergencies and even death.

Eat right

Did you skip dinner to make it to the party on time? Alcohol landing in an empty stomach gets absorbed into the blood stream faster, meaning you feel drunker faster. This doesn't mean that eating a big meal will allow you to drink a lot more, but drinking on an empty stomach is definitely a bad idea.

Skip the super size

Alcohol is alcohol is alcohol. Whether it's in a beer can, a wine bottle or a mickey, one serving contains the same amount of alcohol. Know that there's about the same amount of alcohol in a bottle of beer (341 ml/12 oz.), as there is in a glass of wine (142 ml/5 oz.), or a shot of vodka or any other hard alcohol (43 ml/1.5 oz.). Your body can process about one of these standard sized drinks per hour. If you're going to drink, keep track of how many servings you've had. Alternating between alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks is also a good idea to avoid getting totally wasted.

Find a ride

Seriously, everyone knows that drinking and driving isn't cool. But when you're

about to blow your curfew and you, or your ride, have been drinking, you might not think as clearly. Drinking may make you feel invincible, but you're no Superman, so make sure you have a safe way home. When it comes right down to it, even one drink is too much if you're driving, so don't be afraid to call your parent or another adult you trust for a ride home. Yes, they might be angry at the time, but an angry parent is better than the consequences of losing your license, injuring someone else, or injuring yourself in an accident.

Do what's right for you

After considering all these factors, the decision to put that vodka in your iced tea, or to pass it up, is only up to one person: you. It doesn't matter what your friends decide, or what you think they expect you to do. It doesn't matter if you drank before. Just because you made a certain decision once, doesn't mean that you have to make the same decision again. You're smart enough to make your own decisions, and you're the one who has to deal with the consequences. What will you decide? ☐



Sometimes, when people drink too much alcohol, they pass out. It's the body's way of saying, 'Stop the abuse!' and turning off before they can drink anymore. But it's also possible for a person to drink too much before the body turns off.

The results aren't pretty. There's usually lots of puking, but that's not the worst of it. Binge drinking (drinking a lot of booze in a short amount of time) can cause alcohol overdose and poisoning. And this is really, really dangerous.

Alcohol reduces the gag reflex, so it's possible for a super-drunk person to choke on their own vomit. This is not only gross, it can also be deadly. Extreme amounts of alcohol can even cause breathing to be irregular and stop all together, can cause the heart to beat irregularly or can lead to hypothermia.

If someone is drunk – really drunk, to the point that they are puking and passing out – you need to call an ambulance. Even if you're underage, even if your parents are going to be totally mad

at you later, even if you think your friend doesn't want help, call for it anyways.

After you've called for help, make sure the person is resting on their side, so they won't choke if they vomit. **Do not leave the person alone.** Stay with them and make sure they're breathing until medical help arrives.

Making that call isn't always easy, but it could save someone's life. ☐

SIGNS OF ALCOHOL OVERDOSE:

- Severe vomiting, or vomiting while passed out and not waking up after vomiting
- Not responding to being talked to, shouted at, pinched, shaken or poked
- Unable to stand up
- Slow and laboured breathing
- Turning a purplish colour
- Cold, clammy skin
- A rapid pulse rate

Mocktails



Looking for a fresh and delicious way to cool off this summer? Try some of these delectable booze-free creations!

By Rachel Hughes

TROPICAL FRUIT SMOOTHIE

Ingredients:

- 1 mango (peeled and seeded)
- 1 papaya (peeled and seeded)
- 1/2 of cup fresh or frozen strawberries
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- approx 5 ice cubes

Directions: Combine the mango, papaya, strawberries, orange juice, and ice cubes in a blender. Blend until the ingredients are smooth. Serve with a colourful cocktail umbrella!

STRAWBERRY DAIQUIRI

Ingredients:

- approx 6 fresh strawberries
- 1 tbsp of lemon juice
- 1 cup of lemon lime soda
- approx 5 ice cubes

Directions: In a blender, combine the strawberries, lemon juice and lemon-lime soda. Add the ice cubes and blend until smooth. Pour into sugar-rimmed glasses to serve.

LUSTY LIME

Ingredients:

- 1 can (6 oz) of frozen limeade concentrate
- 1 cup of carbonated water
- 1 cup of orange juice
- 1 cup of water
- approx 10 ice cubes

Directions: Combine the limeade concentrate, carbonated water, orange juice, water and ice in a blender. Cover and blend until slushy. Pour into chilled glasses to serve.

CAPPUCCINO COOLER

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups of cold coffee
- 1 1/2 cups of chocolate or vanilla ice cream
- 1/4 cup of chocolate syrup
- 1 cup of whipped cream
- crushed ice

Directions: In a blender, combine the coffee, ice cream and chocolate syrup. Blend until smooth. Pour over crushed ice. Garnish with a dollop of whipped cream and more chocolate syrup to serve.

CRAN-DANDY COOLER

Ingredients:

- 2 cups of cranberry juice
- 1 cup of pineapple juice
- 1 cup of orange juice
- 1 (4 oz) of jar maraschino cherries
- 2 tablespoons of lemon juice
- 1 (12 oz) can of ginger ale
- 1 orange sliced in rounds

Directions: In a gallon pitcher, combine cranberry, pineapple, orange, cherry, and lemon juices. Just before serving, top off with ginger ale and stir. Serve over ice and garnish with cherries and orange slices.

Recipes are adapted from allrecipes.com.

Alcohol Quiz (Answers from page 20)

1. a) 51 per cent

According to the most recent data, 51 per cent of Alberta teens in grades 7-12 chose not to use alcohol in the last 12 months.

2. c) 33 per cent

By grade 12, 33 per cent of Alberta students report that they have never experimented with alcohol or chosen to use alcohol, even once, in their lifetime.

3. c) 82 per cent

Eighty-two per cent of grade seven students in Alberta have never used alcohol.

4. b) 5 or more drinks

Binge drinking is classified as five or more drinks on one occasion. Binge drinking increases the risk of injuries from accidents and impaired driving and can cause health problems, including seizures, stroke and kidney failure.

5. b) Wait it out

The only way to sober up after drinking alcohol is to wait it out. Drinking coffee or having a nap won't do anything to make you less drunk. Your liver needs time to break down the alcohol.

6. d) Never

Alcohol interacts with other drugs in a lot of different and unpredictable ways. Even small amounts of alcohol taken with other drugs such as cannabis, cold medications or allergy remedies can react with the alcohol and cause serious health programs.

7. d) All of the above

Lots of different factors affect how you feel when you drink. Alcohol might enhance your mood. If you're sad already, that means alcohol will probably make you feel sadder. A larger person's body may be able to tolerate more alcohol, but if that larger person has an empty stomach, alcohol hits the blood stream faster, making you feel drunk faster.

8. a) Hair loss

Long-term alcohol use has lots of bad effects on the body, but hair loss isn't one of them. Besides the obvious liver damage, long-term alcohol use can cause sexual problems, loss of appetite and memory loss.



Year One

By Kim Nursall

Booze can be part of the culture for a first-year university student living in residence, but sometimes the consequences aren't pretty.

Alcohol is present in many aspects of residence life at university – it can be a culture in itself. If you do choose to drink, it is not unlikely you will find yourself drunk two or three times a week, and Monday at 2 p.m. will somehow start to seem like the best time for Jell-O shots. Drinking in residence is practically expected, and nowhere is this more prevalent than in first year.

First year in residence is an incredibly liberating experience for many students. No longer are you constrained by what your parents deem acceptable activities – you answer to no one, and are accountable to only yourself. You learn a lot about responsibility, about the finer points of growing up. When it comes to booze, some of these lessons are the most painful to swallow, but can be the most valuable overall.

For myself, I didn't drink a lot in high school. I was focused on my academics and extra-curricular activities, and the little spare time I did have was usually spent passed out due to exhaustion, rather than alcohol consumption. This orientation helped me a lot in terms of my university career, but it deprived me of the time that most people have to develop a basic set of social skills. As a result, when I entered the immensely communal residence environment my lack of social skills and awkwardness were noticeably amplified. My inability to relate to people in a strictly social setting became a very distressing aspect of my life. But rather than attempting to fix my discomfort by developing relationship skills, I turned to alcohol.

Liquor seemed like the perfect solution: with lowered inhibitions, I became livelier, funnier. My insecurities disappeared when I drank, and I was able to act like the person I thought I should be in social situations. My confidence and self-esteem shot through the roof when I was intoxicated, and it was a high I'd never previously

experienced. This reliance on drunkenness was inevitably my undoing, however. My naïve attitudes about alcohol resulted in a number of situations that I'd rather not remember.

One of these unfortunate situations occurred during the University of Calgary Snowboard Club's Halloween cabaret at the Den, the campus bar. Due to some other obligations, I did not know that I would be able to attend until the very last minute, and since tickets to the event are hard to come by, the only way I could purchase one was to line up early at the door and hope they were not sold out. So, after finding out I could go, I threw on my costume and went to line up. I was able to purchase the last available ticket, and ventured into a practically empty Den (this was around 7:30 p.m.), where I knew maybe one or two people.

I was immediately uncomfortable, so I turned to my sure-fire remedy: booze. Being an inexperienced drinker, I ended up downing around 12 shots within 45 minutes, all because after each shot I didn't feel drunk enough, and therefore comfortable enough, to interact with the people around me. Finally, I got drunk enough to start having conversations with the people around me... and then my memory cuts out...

The next thing I remember, I was outside, puking my guts out. Someone asked if I wanted to get into the ambulance that was parked in front of me. After resisting attempts to be put in the ambulance, and insisting that I just wanted to be taken back to residence (and being told by the paramedic that "Ambulances are not taxis!"), I was finally ushered back to my room by campus security and the

residence community advisors. The next day was one of the most painful of my life, as I spent it curled up in bed, trying not to vomit and attempting to keep my head stationary in whatever position caused it to ache the least.

Don't get me wrong – I have some fond memories of residence. But because of the many negative consequences that can ensue from getting drunk, I've learned that drinking with people should be an effect of being comfortable with them, not the cause. I should put friends first, alcohol second. It's also just a good thing to be around people you trust in case things go wrong. Moreover, it's important to understand your tolerance level, to stay hydrated, and to eat something before drinking – all lessons I've learned, and continue to learn, as I live in residence. ☐

THE INS AND OUTS OF FITTING IN

The transition to a new school can be pretty stressful. But it is possible to meet new people without panicking.

Join a club. Like to write? The student newspaper would love your skills. Into politics? Consider student government. The sporty type? Join an intramural team. Talking to new people can be a lot easier if you share some common interests.

Bring a buddy. Once you've made those initial contacts, consider bringing one friend to a party or social event. Meeting new people is a lot easier with a wingman.

Ask questions. When you meet new people, ask them open-ended questions about themselves. Where did you grow up? What's the best movie you've seen recently? People love talking about themselves.

Put it in perspective. You are not the only one who feels anxious in social situations. Chances are, some of the people around you are pretty nervous, too.

Peace out. If a social situation gets too awkward, leaving is always an option. Have an escape plan before you go in.

If You Plan to Drink

1. Stay with friends for support. Drinking alone is dangerous.
2. Eat before and while you drink because it slows down the effects of alcohol.
3. Choose to drink in familiar places and with familiar people.
4. Space out your drinks throughout the evening by drinking one or two glasses of water between each drink of alcohol.
5. Avoid patterns of binge drinking. This means five or more drinks on one occasion is usually a bad idea.
6. Remember that alcohol does not affect you the same way each time that you drink. It can be different depending on your mood that day, what you ate that day, who you're with and your general environment.





He Said

By Sandy Xu and Chris Berthelot

SHOULD THE LEGAL DRINKING AGE IN ALBERTA BE RAISED TO 19?

Q: The legal drinking age in Alberta is 18, but the age in many other provinces is 19. Would adding that extra year in Alberta cut down on dangerous behaviour from young drinkers?

YES

"A review of high school biology shows that alcohol is a depressant," writes Sandy Xu. "This means it is a chemical which slows the central nervous system and this is detrimental to developing brains."

As the saying goes, "You learn something new every day," so how about 365 days? That's 365 days to learn, adjust and bridge the gap between the responsibilities of a teenager and an adult. And that's no exception with the drinking issue. For the typical teenager, age 18 calls in a whole series of life freedoms, rights and responsibilities: graduation, university, voting, driving, jobs... a compilation of major milestones. It's a time of your life that calls for maturity, and when alcohol is factored in, these responsibilities will be that much harder.

Shouldn't we give 18-year-olds some sense of adulthood before letting them destroy their life and possibly someone else's? For the skeptics who insist alcohol draws out the adult in people, think back to the previous generation in the 1960s and '70s, who were isolated from alcohol until age 21. They were working full time and financially responsible for their families at age 18. Why is it that they were able to care for themselves and their children at such a young age? Maybe it was that the drinking

She Said



Grip assigned two teens to argue on opposite sides of a pointed problem, just for the fun of an argument. They didn't get to choose their side; we flipped a coin

age was 21, which gave them time to consider deeper, stronger and better priorities than that of today's teenagers. A little more time means that much more time for your body to grow, both physically and mentally.

And while we've slapped the challenges on their plate, we've also cooked another fatal issue with alcohol: the brain issue. "Longer-lasting brain changes and related neuropsychological impairments can result from excessive use of alcohol during this critical period," Sydney University professor Ian Hickie said in a recent issue of the *Central News Magazine*. A review of high school biology shows that alcohol is a depressant. This means it is a chemical which slows the central nervous system and this is detrimental to developing brains. The brain doesn't stop growing until after age 18, and an amalgam with alcohol is a recipe for disaster.

I'm not done with the brain just yet! Having earned our sacred driver's licence, a sip of alcohol can boost your life insurance by paying the ultimate price: your life. In 1999, New Zealand lowered the legal drinking age from 20 years to 18 years and the alcohol-related crash rates rose for drivers under the age of 20, according to a study conducted by the *American Journal of Public Health*. Apparently, an extra year or two does make a difference.

Finally when they've stepped across the high school threshold, teenagers will (and thankfully too) acknowledge their responsibilities and explore their first year of adulthood freely, without the nag of alcohol. And when the day comes, they'll embrace it with the consciousness and knowledge that a high school senior would never have harvested: the understanding that they've done themselves, their family and their community a favour with the price of 365 days.

NO

"If a person, by the age of 18, is allowed to join the military or vote in the government, that person should also be allowed to drink," writes *Chris Berthelot*.

Around the world, the age of 18 is when many countries consider young people to be legal adults. In addition, the age of 18 is the legal drinking age for many countries, as well as the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, and Quebec. In the rest of the provinces, the age is 19.

The legal drinking age should stay at 18, rather than be raised to 19. In Canada, our legal age to vote and to join the military is 18. Why should it be that a person turning 18

If a person, by the age of 18, is allowed to join the military or vote in the government, that person should also be allowed to drink.

would be allowed to vote, and thereby influence the government, as well as participate in armed combat, and be allowed to use a firearm, but would not be old enough to drink alcohol? If a person, by the age of 18, is allowed to join the military or vote in the government, that person should also be allowed to drink.

There is virtually no difference between being 18 and 19, so why should the legal drinking age be raised? It should remain at 18 for that very reason. In other countries, such as the United States, the legal drinking age is 21. They also have huge problems with underage drinking. Due to the excessively high legal drinking age in America, teenagers

become more prone to binge drinking and out-of-control partying, because they are not considered mature enough to deal with alcohol at an earlier age. They are legally blocked from the alcohol, but they can get it anyways by getting a legal adult to "boot," or buy the alcohol for them. Therefore, the age should remain at 18, because it is an ideal legal drinking age, where it is not too high that it causes devious behaviour, but it is also not too low that the person is not mature enough to handle the responsibility.

Another reason that the age should stay at 18, rather than being at 19, is that when someone reaches the legal drinking age, most of the time there is a common inclination to maturely and moderately drink, expressing responsibility. Often, when there is something that is either illegal or frowned upon, there will be a larger tendency to engage in whatever has been banned (like drinking), rather than

something that is legalized. If the age is kept at 18, although underage drinking will still be a problem (which would also be the case if the age was at 19), ultimately it would prevent some teenagers from becoming interested in alcohol and being introduced to it an earlier age.

In the end, there is no difference between 18 and 19. Reasonably, if we are permitted at the age of 18 to use dangerous firearms and to influence the government by voting, we should be allowed to drink at the age of 18 as well. In addition, by keeping the age at 18, rather than 19, we avoid the possibility of a larger amount of devious behaviour that could result with a higher legal drinking age. ☐



No Booze

By GRAYSON EVANS

Video games get blamed for a lot of bad things, but Grayson Evans argues that when it comes to representations of alcohol, games are actually doing a pretty good job

GAME

e Here



Video games get blamed for a large number of real-world crimes, such as murder, vandalism, stealing and assault. But two particular crimes seem to be missing from this list: underage drinking and drunk driving.

There could be numerous reasons why this is, but what I think is that modern video games don't glorify drinking. In fact, in most games, drinking results in a meaningful consequence for the character within the game play. A good example of this is in the game *Grand Theft Auto IV*. If you go to the bar and drink too much, the character is nearly impossible to control and will most likely fall on his

face, or get hit by a car. From what I can tell, this is an accurate portrayal of what it would be like to be drunk. When my character consumed alcohol and reacted in a negative way, it made me want to not drink in the game, and made me believe that if I drink alcohol in real life I will experience the same thing.

In recent years, bottles of alcohol have appeared as props in games, but they are only as important as a crate or barrel in a level. If I drink in a game, it's in the hopes I get some health from it, which is rarely the case anymore. Alcohol in games is sometimes even an "enemy" (being as damaging to the character as a regular enemy). Drinking random liquor in *Fallout 3* to gain health caused my character to become an alcoholic. With each day, he slowly became weaker and lost health; I had to eventually make a visit to a doctor to fix it. This outcome of my character's drinking gave me an emotional attachment to the character, who was physically hurt by over-drinking. I think if video games progress as a mainstream entertainment outlet, alcohol isn't something that needs to be taken away or added to a game, but something that can be there as a tool to connect the player to the character being controlled.

The question isn't whether alcohol should be used as a storytelling device, but whether it influences teenagers. The use of alcohol in movies may influence a teenager to drink, but not video games.

When I play a game, the last thing on my mind is the goods being advertised in the game. I'm thinking about the game play. In an interactive medium, it's nearly impossible to advertise during the experience. This is why the question of alcohol influencing teenagers though video games hasn't come up in mainstream media. Before writing this editorial I spent quite a while looking for any sign of video games being blamed for alcohol consumption. I could not find one article blaming games for underage drinking, because games are usually more entertaining than looking at ads for beer. Games are just that, they are an avenue for fun. Unless its clearly stated within the game to drink, a player won't consume alcohol in the game play. With a focus on creating the gaming medium and making it more respectable to mainstream audiences, it's highly unlikely that games will soon have underlying themes that push the gamer to consume a certain product. In the past 30 years, the gaming industry has moved away from product placement and onto creating a great experience.

As someone who plays games a lot, I don't think any game could influence me into doing something illegal in real life. They haven't reached a point in the medium where the game can be taken seriously enough to create a profound influence on someone's life in that way. Video games may not be perfect in their influences, but they aren't the evil people make them out to be. ☐



ILLUSTRATION BY HEFF O'REILLY



When Alcohol is a Problem

What's the difference between using and abusing? An expert in addictions prevention helps explain

ALCOHOL IS A DRUG. It is the most commonly used drug in Alberta. In fact, about 79 per cent of Albertans over the age of 15 use it to some extent, and many do so problem free. But, like many drugs, alcohol can be addictive.

Most teens who drink alcohol aren't considered addicted, but sometimes alcohol can become a problem. Eventually, alcohol becomes an addiction for an estimated 2.7 per cent of Albertans, according to Alberta Health Services (AHS). And the younger someone starts drinking, the more likely they are to develop alcohol-related problems, or an addiction, later in life.

But what's the difference between using alcohol and having an addiction?

According to Tami Reid, who works in addiction prevention with AHS, when alcohol use starts to interfere with important areas of a person's life, it can be a sign that it's time to get help.

"Is their health being impacted because of their choices to use? Their relationships? Their school?" Reid questions. "Are they no longer involved in healthy leisure activities or are they getting into other risk behaviours, like unprotected sex or violence? And are they making poor choices around drinking and driving?"

Reid suggests that problems related to alcohol in one or more of these areas: health, family, school, leisure, finances and legal, could be an indication of addictive or

problem behaviour. No two people's experiences in these areas will be the same.

"For everyone, that's going to be a little different," Reid says. "Maybe one or two of those life areas have had significant impact, maybe all of them have."

No two lives are the same, but if you have a friend who is, for example, starting to skip classes to drink, or is stealing from his or her parents to pay for booze, the situation might require a friend intervention.

If you decide to help a friend who might be drinking too much, Reid encourages an open attitude.

"It's important not to judge them, or to criticize their decisions, but it is important to try talking to them," she says. "You can be a positive role model for them by sharing your concerns and offering support if they want to look for information about how to access some help."

Reid wants teens to remember that alcohol use should be taken seriously. "Unfortunately, I don't think everyone considers alcohol to be a drug, and that needs to shift," she says. "People need to be open to seeing that it is a mood altering substance. It is a drug." ☐

WHERE TO GO

If you're worried about how you, or a friend, is using alcohol or any other drug, you're never alone. There are tons of resources get help. Here are some places to start.

- Talk to a parent, a friend, or another adult you trust, such as a teacher, counsellor, or doctor
- Contact your local Alberta Health Services, Addiction and Mental Health Area Office
- Call the AHS help line at 1-866-332-2322 or Alberta's HEALTHLink at 1-866-408-5465
- Look for information and services at www.aadac.com/21.asp www.aadac.com/87_149.asp
- Look for "Programs and Services" on the Alberta Health Services website www.albertahealthservices.ca

HELP Wanted

Got a **niggling question** that no one can answer, or that you're too **afraid** to ask your parents, teacher or **best friend**? Send it to us. We **guarantee** anonymity, and we're beyond embarrassment. We'll find an **expert** to answer the most **persistent** question you have related to any topic: relationships, **school**, sexuality, puberty, drugs, **love**, life, and the pursuit of **happiness**. So... **what** are you **waiting** for?

Question: Lately, my appetite is almost completely gone and I only eat because I have to. Most nights, I'm only sleeping for a few hours. I feel unenergetic and I'm no longer excited about the things I used to be interested in. I really don't like the thought of having to tell a doctor or my parents that I think I might have depression.

– *Feeling Down Deanna*

Hi Deanna,
It's important to remember that everyone has bad days, and as a teen with these kinds of feelings, you're not alone.

"It's quite common for teens to feel down for a day or two," says Dr. Jonathan Eustace a clinical psychiatry professor at the University of Alberta. But if you've been feeling this way for quite some time, and it's starting to have a real affect on your life, he says it's important to talk to someone about it. Your family doctor is a good place to start, and if you can involve people who care about you, like your parents, talking to your doctor might be less frightening. Dr. Eustace adds that your family doctor can help rule out other possible causes for your symptoms, since they can be associated with other conditions.

Rest assured that depression is a treatable condition that affects many teens. If you are diagnosed with depression, your family doctor may refer you to a psychologist or psychiatrist who will work with you to determine best type of treatment for you.

Question: My boyfriend and I have been together for two years, but we're going to different universities this fall. Do you have any tips on how to deal with this separation?

– *Lovebird Lina*

Hi Lina,
Going away to university is an exciting time in your life. You'll be in a new city, making new friends and learning new things. But we can't deny it – it's hard to be away from someone you love. No matter how busy you get with your new life, you may still miss the person you once spent a lot of time with.

Dr. Eustace says long-distance relationships do work for some people, but be prepared. "They take more work to maintain than just a regular relationship," he says. To help deal with the distance between you and your boyfriend, Dr. Eustace suggests communicating frequently and being more open and honest about your relationship. Do you want to continue your relationship at the same intensity? Talk to your boyfriend honestly, and determine your commitment.

He also suggests talking to close friends and family that you can trust about your situation. They may offer some good words of advice, or offer you a good distraction. If your feelings are getting difficult to cope with, or are disrupting your school life, talk to a counsellor. Universities and colleges have counselling services for students to help them deal with different issues.

Question: My older brother and dad are always arguing and lately things seem to be getting worse. What can I do?

– *Kenneth from Craving Quiet*

Hi Kenneth,
If turning up the volume on your iPod doesn't help tune out your brother and dad's arguing it may be time to say something. Everyone has the right to live in a relatively stress- and conflict-free environment, says Dr. Eustace. If you think your family's arguing is starting to become a real problem, he suggests approaching your brother and dad by yourself, or joining with other family members outside of the conflict to approach your brother and dad together.

Explain to your brother and dad how you feel about their arguing, and how it's affecting you, because they may not know. "Be as specific as you can," Dr. Eustace says. Depending on your personal situation, you might say things like, "I'm having a hard time getting my homework done, or, I'm not able to talk to my friends on the phone because of the noise." If you have a solution in mind, share it respectfully, but you can't be solely responsible for fixing the problem. If you feel there is a threat of violence in your home, or the possibility of harm to you or your family members, talk to another adult in your life, or seek outside help.

Help Wanted is provided for general informational purposes only and is not intended to replace consultations with your doctor or to provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any personal medical and health questions that you may have.

E-mail helpwanted@griponlife.ca
or mail **Help Wanted**, c/o Grip Magazine
10259-105 St.
Edmonton, AB T5J 1E3

By Leanne Klimek

I imagined germs everywhere. When I had to wash my hands 40 or 50 times a day to get rid of them, it was time to seek help

“Write about something that’s wrong with you. You have enough stuff wrong with you. Write about OCD, or something”


That’s what my sister said when I asked her what I should write for this issue of *Grip*. I was torn between appreciating her frankness and feeling insulted because she basically told me I was one screwed-up 18-year-old girl. But, hey, who can blame her?

She’s right about me having OCD.

Like any other disorder, people who don’t know about, or don’t have, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) often have misconceptions about it. Once I explain that at the height of my OCD I washed my hands between 40 and 50 times a day, I’ve had people ask me: “Well. That’s a lot of handwashing. Why didn’t you just stop?”

Thing is, people with OCD can’t just stop. Because they’re afraid of what will happen if they do. “Afraid” is a bit of an understatement, I think. They’re terrified.

I couldn’t stop. I imagined I could see the germs on every single surface I touched, and if I took even a millisecond to consider what those germs would do to



my body – which, believe me, I did – I would have to wash my hands before touching anything else.

It was my psychiatrist who said, “OCD is the disorder of the ‘what ifs.’” What if I didn’t get all the germs the first time I washed? Since bacteria lives on the door handle, what if I touch it, and touch my mouth, and get the germs inside me? What if the person who stuck their hand in the potato chip bag was sick? What if I eat from the same bag and get whatever germs they have?

People with OCD take the “what ifs” to heart. They use the “what ifs” to make sure they never see the possible results: germs still living after the first wash, ingesting bacteria, getting sick because the germs on someone’s hand were transferred to the chips that are now down my throat. We OCD sufferers work with the “what ifs,” and we take every precaution so they might never, ever actually happen.

Sometimes that means always using a clean towel, or refusing to sit down to lunch without both washing and sanitizing. Sometimes that means cleaning hands between 40 and 50 times a day.

There are different ways OCD can present itself, not necessarily with germaphobic tendencies. But this is my story of my OCD, and mine definitely had – and has, as this story continues right up to my fingers typing this – the fear of germs present.

I wash and sanitize less than I did a year ago. In part, I thank my medication for this. Without it, I couldn’t have decreased that number of handwashings from 40 or 50 to significantly less. Washing was interfering with my life – I would worry myself sick about the germs I was touching, breathing in during church, the germs that might have survived the sting of Purell. My parents had been able to tell something was wrong (using pretty close to a bottle of sanitizer a week and having a scarf wrapped around my face during Christmas mass were indications all might not have been well inside my brain). They brought their concerns to the psychiatrist I’d already had for a few months because of an eating disorder.

My psychiatrist came to a conclusion. The swine flu scare going at the time, combined with the place

I’d reached during my eating disorder, had triggered some serious obsessive tendencies. And, thus, I was put on medication.

When my doctor wrote me the prescription, I wasn’t entirely sure what to think. I felt apprehensive about what would happen once I’d start taking the medication. I wasn’t afraid of side-effects, but felt concerned the meds would make me sick in another sense – with the meds taking effect, would the handwashing stop? Would I end up with swine flu, or a cold, or in the hospital with some unmentionable disease, all because I’d quit keeping everything clean?

I was started on low dosages – it took several weeks for visible progress to be made. The progress itself wasn’t too jarring, since it happened slowly, so I felt more inclined to take the pills.

Though medication can help, there is no magical pill that cures obsessive-compulsive disorder. During the height of my OCD, I saw a psychologist about once every two weeks. She taught me to deal with ruminating thoughts, because often, germs were all I’d think about, and I’d get more and more panicked whenever I knew I was in contact with them. My mom, my psychologist and I would sit together discussing my obsessive tendencies, my rumination, my coping strategies, the side-effects of my medication.

Those are the things that help me live with OCD: discussing my setbacks and triumphs, dealing with repetitive thoughts and taking my meds.

The ruminating thoughts are still there. They’re just way less persistent than they used to be.

I suspect they’ll never fully go away. 

WHAT IS OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER? (OCD)

OCD is a mental disorder characterized by obsessions and compulsions.

Obsessions are unwanted, preoccupying thoughts, images or impulses. Often, the person with these thoughts will admit that they don’t entirely make sense. Obsessions might revolve around contamination (being afraid of germs, cancer, AIDS, etc.), death, symmetry (of object placement, words, or movement), sex (fixation on acts that upset one personally), or fears of accidentally hurting loved ones. Obsessions motivate compulsions.

Compulsions manifest as repetitive actions, sayings or prayers that temporarily provide relief from obsessive thoughts. They might take the form of washing and sanitizing, praying (reiterating words or phrases that are “safe”) or repeating (actions or thoughts, for instance, rewriting something until it’s “perfect”).

Many people have obsessions and compulsions, but people with OCD have them more often and feel more distressed by their occurrence. Obsessive-compulsive disorder is an anxiety disorder. Do not hesitate to seek help if you or someone you know has, or might have, OCD.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY EWAN NICHOLSON

Eric Mitchell

By Erin McCarty

Flying through the air at 100 kilometres per hour is no big deal for this 18-year-old Olympian

HIT THE BOOKS: Eric goes to the National Sports School in Calgary, which allows him to balance school and training.



At just eight-years-old, **Calgarian** Eric Mitchell was already bored with downhill skiing at Canadian Olympic Park (COP) every weekend, and he told his dad he wanted to try something new.

Upon entering a recruitment program at COP, he developed an immense passion for a new sport: ski jumping. "Ski jumping is my life, and it is my drive," Eric says.

Now 18, Eric is a member of the Canadian National Ski Jumping Team and he recently attended his first Olympic Games in Vancouver in February. He was the youngest competitor, both on his team and at the competition, at the age of 17. He's been competing internationally for three years now and he was in the Top 70 in the world going into the Games.

There is no doubt the sport is Eric's passion. He does dry-land training for one to two hours, six days a week. In addition to ski jumping, Eric is an avid runner, logging an average of 50 kilometres each week. "The sport takes strong legs, so running is great for conditioning," he says.

Quite appropriately, Eric's sport hero is Canadian runner and icon Terry Fox. He says he's inspired by what Fox was trying to do, and he hopes he can inspire a nation too, through ski jumping. "Ski jumping in Europe is like hockey in Canada. Going to the Olympics and showing Canada how amazing this sport is... it's like inspiring the nation and having them take notice of a sport that seems to have died out. We're proving it is still very much alive."

It was Eric's qualifying jump in Otepaa, Estonia, which ensured Canada's ski jumping team would compete at the Olympics. He deals with the stress of competing at such a high level by remembering the goal he set three years ago to make it to the Olympics, when everyone thought it was a crazy, impossible idea. "Competing at the Olympics was not as stressful for me as qualifying for them," says Eric. "Going in to the competition in Estonia where it was minus 34 (Celsius), I had everything working against me and I had a great jump and finished top 30, qualifying me, and the rest of my team, for the Olympics."

Eric says being a student at the National



"It's my dream to have my whole family compete at the 2014 Olympic Games."

Sports School in Calgary allows him to balance school with training. At a whopping 250 period absences this year alone, and spending seven months away from home last year, the school's flexible teaching style and accommodating instructors make training and racing out of the country possible.

But he remains a good student, while being able to compete in places as far away as Finland and Germany. "I love travelling. I think I racked up 70,000 frequent flier miles in a year," Eric says. "I like to be seen, and to

see things along the way." School is where he buckles down to work, but ski jumping is the fun time, he says. "I think about ski jumping 24/7. But I know school is necessary, and I have to put in the work so I can have fun."

Eric attributes so much travel to the lack of training facilities in Canada. The jumps at COP and Whistler Olympic Park are the only ski jumping facilities in the country, making out of country training a necessity. He plans to spend his summer in Park City, Utah, so he can continue to train.

Despite his hectic schedule, he still manages to enjoy what little free time he has with friends, doing activities like downhill skiing. "It's a real balancing act, but I can enjoy the small things," he says. His friends at the National Sports School share the same challenges and goals, so they understand what it's like to be an athlete at such a high level.

He says he definitely didn't get to where he is without the help and support of his family and his teachers. "I couldn't do all of this without the help of my parents. Having them in Vancouver to support me meant a lot."

Eric's parents have become actively involved in the sport. Eric says his dad went from knowing nothing about the sport to being the president of the Altius Nordic Ski Club and both his parents were chiefs at the Olympic Games.

Eric's sister Charlotte, 15, and brother

This is Eric Mitchell



PHOTO THE CANADIAN PRESS/JEFF MCINTOSH

Logan, 12, have followed their brother's footsteps into ski jumping. Charlotte will be attending the National Sports School next year. Eric says his sister pushes him and, because they are so close in age, they are able to train and do homework together. "It's my dream to have my whole family compete at the 2014 Olympic Games," Eric says.

As for his future, Eric says he'd like to take some online university classes in business marketing while he continues to pursue his ski jumping career. "I'm the exact height and weight of the four-time Olympic champion in the sport. The longevity of the sport means a lot can happen."

His advice to other teens is to find a goal and focus on it. "Focus on what you love. You've got to start now. Finding a purpose brings confidence, and respect for yourself that you've achieved something."

READY TO LAND: Canada's Eric Mitchell soars during the team ski jumping competition at Whistler Olympic Park at the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Winter Games.

FLYING HIGH

There are three events in ski jumping: normal hill, large hill and team. There are four key aspects to a race: the in run (track), the take-off, the flight and the landing.

The normal hill platform is 90 metres (295 feet) high. The large hill platform is set at 120 metres (394 feet). To get from the top of the track to the landing it only takes about 12 seconds! At top speeds, athletes reach 105 km/h before the take off.

Judging is based on points given for distance, in run length, style, and wind conditions, out of a possible 20 points.

At the Olympics, Eric placed 49th in the normal hill race, 51st in the large hill race and his team placed 12th overall.

Don't Fear

By Sam Taylor

My parents wanted me to study engineering after high school. The pressure to decide was stressing me out, until I decided to focus on what is right for me

One of the most important decisions we make in life

is deciding what to do with the rest of it after high school. There are so many choices and options that the decision seems crazily intense, complicated and stressful. Take a deep breath and know that you are not alone. With a few helpful coping strategies, some organization, and by knowing who you are, this decision will be manageable.

My parents have always really pressured me to get good marks and figure out a plan for my life as soon as possible. They have also always tried to steer me towards becoming an engineer, like the rest of my family. However, even though the pressure was immense, by the end of grade 10, I had no idea what to do. Anxiety began to slip its way into my thoughts and, eventually, I was extremely panicked.

Fortunately, the summer before grade 11, I went camping with my great aunt and uncle. We were sitting around the campfire one evening when we began to talk about my plans for the future.

My aunt sipped some milk and said, "Honey, life is not a race. You want to be happy in life, so you need to relax. What you want to do is already something you're good at. Don't let anyone force your choices upon you. Do some research and wait, you will know what you want to do when you know." Talking about the fears I had really helped ease some of them, and it helped me get some really good tips.

My aunt's advice helped me to realize that I should not be panicked about what my

ar & Future

parents think, and focus more on what I want.

During the end of grade 11 I was enrolled in career and life management (CALM) class. Our teacher told us that the key to life would always be this: know thyself. She had us take personality tests and aptitude tests to do just that. After we had a general view of our traits and what we wanted out of life, she had us pick a career and research it. One of the requirements was to interview someone in that profession. I now knew that I wanted to help people and I was interested in how people's minds work. This led me to choose psychology as the profession I would research.

This research caused psychology to stick in my mind. I eventually began looking up requirements for psychology and the length of years in school I would need to become a psychologist. I rearranged my schedules so that I would have all the courses required and I dug a little deeper. To my ultimate surprise, during the beginning of grade 12, I found that the college here was offering psychology and sociology classes to high school students. I enrolled myself to see if psychology was really the career for me and I am happy to say I have been accepted into the University of Calgary for a major in psychology. Finding out the specifics about my career of choice really helped to ease some fears about the future.

Knowing what I will be doing for the next five years of my life is an immense pressure off my shoulders. Now I have time to consider the plus side to life after high school: freedom! I will finally have complete control over my life and I love the idea. I am also excited to start becoming an adult and finally contribute to the world, possibly make a difference in it.

Of course, I still have plenty of fears. I'm afraid I will waste my loans on partying hardy, or pretty clothes. I'm afraid I won't have a good job waiting for me at the end of the road. Sometimes, I am even afraid that I have made the wrong decision concerning psychology. No matter what happens though, I have solid support from my family and friends. Making mistakes is only another part of life, and the fear of making those mistakes could prevent you from doing the most exciting things of your life. Good times or bad, I have always believed it does not matter where you started, or where you end up, as long as you enjoy the trip along the way. ☑

WHEN ANXIETY IS A PROBLEM

Some anxiety about big life decisions, like what to do after high school, is totally normal, and even healthy. You'd never study for that big exam without a little bit of anxiety!

But, anxiety shouldn't be all consuming. If you're feeling really anxious all the time and have continuous symptoms like feeling on edge, tiredness, nervous habits (nail biting, etc.), trembling and/or a racing heart, there may be something more to your symptoms than just a little stress.

If you're feeling anxious to a point that it interferes with your life, talk to someone else about it, like a parent, a doctor, a school counsellor or another adult you trust. Or you can always call **Alberta's HEALTHLink at 1-866-408-5465 or Kid's Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868.**

TOP TIPS TO DEAL WITH ANXIETY

1. Really realize relationships

Connecting and interacting with the people who care about you will help you realize that what you are afraid of is, perhaps, not as big of an obstacle as it seems.

2. Exercise

Taking time to take walks, jogs or other physical activity will help clear your head and it releases endorphins – the feel-good chemicals in your brain.

3. STOP the alcohol and drugs

Yes, you've heard this thousands of times, but relying on substances, even something as little as coffee, is not going to help your fears, and may actually make them worse. This happens because you experience a "high" and then your emotions drop lower than they were to begin with. Not a nice feeling.

4. Relax

Yoga and other breathing techniques, when done properly, can really help you regulate your heart rate and help you gain control over your fears. You do this by learning the breathing exercises and applying them whenever you begin to feel anxious.

5. Talk it out

Having an honest conversation with someone about your fears and doubts is going to help you release the stress that has been bottled up inside you. This, my dear friends, would be a good thing.

6. Sleepy time

Your body needs rest. However, anxiety can make falling and staying asleep a big problem. Don't eat or exercise right before bed, eliminate any stressful things hanging out around your bed, and read a book or do whatever you do that helps make you sleepy.

A Friend in Need

When you're worried about serious mood changes in a friend, you can provide the first aid to help them on the road to recovery

By Leanne Klimek

If a friend is experiencing serious mood changes, it might feel like a meteor has smashed into your world, but there are ways to deal with these changes when they hit someone you care about.

Signs of change

You know a girl called Millicent. Millicent is a happy-go-lucky, moccasin-wearing, honour-rolling, pink-haired girl. You have sat beside her in biology for the past semester, and consider her a friend.

It seems, though, that she's changed as of late. You're concerned, and you want to help; something's definitely off. But you can't put your finger on what.

A good first step is to try and put your finger on what is different. Figure out exactly how Millicent has changed. Take note of her actions, words and moods. Compare Millie now to the Millie you remember – has she always ignored everyone in the hall between classes? Was she always so quiet during group discussions? Would she have always accepted a failing grade on the last bio quiz? Train your eye for anything different, whether these differences are apparent or subtle.

You don't want to compare Millie to someone else, or to anyone else but herself. Look for things out of the ordinary for your friend. For instance: "Millicent, you seem quieter than you used to be." Or: "It seems like you're not in class as much as you normally are."

Everyone has mood changes. We all go through periods of sadness. Sadness is a normal emotion, and since Millie's human, she's going to feel it sometimes. Mood swings are normal as well, and they aren't cause for great concern. It's quite possible that if Millie was experiencing a regular mood swing, she would be back to dancing moccasin-clad through the hallways in no time.

However, since your notes tell you something is different – something has changed – about Millie's mood and its regular arcs, Millicent might not come out of this down period without help. Help could come from a professional or another adult. But in this case, just like in many other medical situations, a friend noticing change has access to the situation and can provide the first aid.

How to help

Start by approaching Millicent. Don't be afraid to come to her with your concerns and be comfortable telling Millie what you've noted. Get yourself comfortable saying the words "I've noticed a change in you." Bring your vivid-haired friend the notes you've taken; explain



DOS AND DON'TS TO HELP A FRIEND WITH MOOD CHANGES

DO care, listen well, and be a friend.

DON'T judge or make fun.

DO feel free to approach a professional or trusted adult.

DON'T give advice.

DO be comfortable saying things like “I’ve noticed a change in you.”

DON'T use labels like “depressed.”

DO notice change.

work for her. Don't judge her when she starts to open up. Don't make fun of her. Encourage her to visit a doctor, or a trained professional. Be a friend – a concerned, listening, non-judgemental ally.

Since you're supporting someone, you're going to need supporting, too. Be aware of your health. Know if you're not healthy enough to help Millie. Get support for yourself in the form of a kind person, or an enjoyable activity. Always feel free to approach a professional.

Next steps

Let's say, though, you've done all the right things. You're healthy. You've taken notes; you've observed Millie's changes. You've tried lines like: “I've noticed a change in you”; “How are you feeling?”; “Do you want to talk?” But it's not working.

In this case, you can head to several places. You can go to an adult and explain the situation. Choose an adult you feel comfortable around. This adult might have resources helpful to you during this trying time. They might have new ideas you haven't considered.

If Millie gets angry at a friend for trying to help her, when you've done all the right things, it could be a sign of underlying issues. Don't feel bad when you've done all you can.

Remember, it's not the label of “depressed” that matters. What does matter is the action you take when you're concerned about someone. Overall, the most important thing you can do is care. Everything you'll do to help the person will stem from caring about them. Let Millie know she's not alone in the world. ☐

that you have been observing changes in her, and make sure Millie knows you're concerned.

Beginning your conversation with “Are you depressed?” might not be the best idea. Words and labels, like “depressed,” are used for diagnosing, which isn't what you're trying to do. Keep in mind your central goal: you're trying to help. You're being concerned about the person who sits next to you in bio. You're being her friend. You're not trying to be her doctor.

Keeping a line of communication open is an excellent step in the right direction. Talk about anything: the weather, the gross cafeteria food, the homework neither of you understood. Gain insight to Millie's life by talking to a third party, such as another one of Millie's friends, or her older sister. Maybe something you didn't know about has triggered her mood change. For instance, if Millicent has just broken up with her boyfriend, she's not going to bounce back right away.

Importantly: listen. Hang onto every word that comes from Millie's lips. Talking – and listening – makes a big difference in helping someone. But don't give Millie advice; what works for you might not

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

School counsellors or favourite teachers

A parent or other trusted adult

Kid's Help Phone 1-800-668-6868

Distress Crisis Line (available 24 hours) 780-482-HELP (4357)

Mental Health Crisis Help Line (available 24 hours) 1-877-303-2642

Teen Support Line 780-428-TEEN (8336) / 1-877-803-TEEN (8336)

HEALTHLink Alberta 1-866-408-LINK (5465)

www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca

www.suicideinfo.ca

www.healthlinkalberta.ca/default.htm

www.depressioncanada.com

Reaching

When my best friend began to cancel plans and send desperate text messages late at night, I knew something was up. What I didn't know was how to help

Everyone thinks to themselves, "That won't happen to me; that only happens to other people, people I don't know" — and clinical depression is no different. But clinical depression is fairly common, affecting an estimated eight to 10 per cent of Canadians in their lifetime. It is not always severe, it is not always obvious, but it is always important. With a statistic like this, chances are, you do know someone suffering from some form of emotional downfall. This isn't just something that happens to other people. This is something that could personally affect you. It's something that deeply affected me.



Out

by Parker Collins*

I met my friend Jessica*, "Don't call me Jessica, that's a girl name, call me Jessie," when we were 12. We were at the lake for the summer, and we became instant soulmates, best friends in the way you know will never fade away, no matter how far apart or how different you may be. We were together every day for over a month. We learned the ins and outs of each other's personalities, and we left the summer with a bond that has carried us, sustained us, for over five years.

Over time, though, I saw a change in Jessie. She would text me less, call hardly ever. I was hard-pressed to see her even twice a year – something she blamed on us living in two different cities, though that had never stopped us before. Her other local friends noticed, too. She would make plans and cancel at the last minute, always without reason. She would spend her time alone, blocking us out except to call, message or text us late at night with questions so soul-searching and upsetting that we could offer her no answers. Maybe it was partially our fault for letting her slip so deeply into her "blue space," unaware of what was really going on with her, or maybe it would have happened anyway. Either way, what was happening to our friend was devastating.

As we slowly clued in to how lost she was, I, along with a few other friends of hers, attempted to draw Jessie out of her shell, enticing her with parties, boys, Oreos, vacations – we offered everything from God to Galaxyland, but nothing worked. We tried to convince her to talk to her parents, to tell them how she was feeling, to show them the piece of her heart, which we were only allowed secret glimpses of in the dead of night, the time when, she said, the pressures and the emptiness weighed heaviest; the time when she would most likely be found in a small, broken form, curled on the floor of her bedroom.

One day, though, something broke through to her, and provided a light chirping, perhaps, or a new record from her favourite band (music always helped her stay with us, she says) – and she

"came out" to her parents, letting loose all the blue that had been breaking her down.

Understandably shocked at first, her parents quickly found her a therapist, someone for her to open up to, even when she couldn't find the words – Susan*. With Susan came an infinite amount of fear for Jessie – fear of being weak, fear of breaking down by digging up her past, fear of a thousand things she could never quite explain to us. But Susan also brought something none of the rest of us could ever seem to – an understanding, non-judgmental opinion, available no matter what.

Since she started seeing Susan a few months ago, Jessie has improved at such a rapid and concentrated pace that everyone in her life is shocked. She laughs now, smiles, talks about boys, and makes plans for the future. Looking back now, I realize that if she hadn't gotten help when she did, Jessie might not be around these days – and I can't imagine what we would do without her.

If you have a friend, a family member or even an acquaintance who you think might have depression, step in early. The best way for you to help them is to offer yourself, as an understanding and compassionate friend, and to believe anything they tell you – their lives may seem surreal, their pain dramatic, but it is likely all very true. And, who knows, maybe you reaching out will be what saves their life. 📌

*Names have been changed



ILLUSTRATION: HEFF O'REILLY

- Need some more information about depression? These excellent resources will help you out.
- Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868 - KidsHelpPhone.ca
 - Mental Health Help Line 1-877-303-2642
 - Signs of Teen Depression HelpGuide.org/mental/depression_teen.htm
 - Canada Suicide and Crisis Hotline 1-800-448-3000
 - Suicide Information Website YouthOne.com
 - Support Network TheSupportNetwork.com

Budget



The end of the school year is rapidly approaching, but for most grade 12 students the freedom of summer cannot be enjoyed until all the stress of graduating is over.

It can be very overwhelming to find all the things that you need for grad (a tux/dress, shoes, accessories, limo, flowers, pictures, grad tickets...) without it adding up to a daunting amount of money. Sometimes it seems like only the \$600 dress paired with \$200 heels will make you look stunning, but this is often not the case. There are lots of options for people who want to have a good time at prom without breaking the bank.

If you aren't sure where to begin when planning out your prom budget, consider making a priority list. The list could be in order of what you are willing to spend the most on to what you are willing to spend the least on. Don't forget to include the price of the tickets, which usually range from \$70 to \$100 per person.

A lot of people worry about transportation when it comes to prom. If you were thinking of renting a limo, try to get the maximum number of people you can and split the cost. Some limo companies will provide a discount if you have over a set number of passengers. Maybe you can't get enough to split the cost affordably, that's OK! You could try asking family or friends to borrow their cool car, hitch a ride with a friend or just take public transit.

"Take the C-Train," says Katherine Rabik, a grade 12 student. "It would be super fun, and would certainly make for some good memories. Plus you would be doing something different. Where's the fun in being the same as everyone else?"

Remember, while pulling up in a fancy limo can be amusing, spending time with your friends or your date is what really matters.

What to wear to grad is pretty important, but not all of us can afford to spend hundreds of dollars on something that will be worn only once. Katie Marquardt, another grade 12 student, offers her advice, "See what you can use from your closet first, before you go shopping." Who knows, maybe the dress you were looking for was lurking in your closet all along!

Prom

BY JASMIN RISK

There's a lot of pressure to fit in at grad, but do you really need that \$600 dress to have a good time?

Shop the closet of your family or friends, and borrow a dress or a suit that they aren't using. Or, check the local thrift or consignment store for a great deal on a vintage outfit to wear to grad. Not only is going vintage better for the environment, you can ensure that nobody will be wearing the same thing and it won't hurt the wallet as much as an expensive new dress or tux.

Anyone thinking of splurging on that perfect,

“You don't want to look back on it and feel that if you weren't trying as hard to fit in you would have had a better time.”

but not so economical dress or tux should consider the cost-per-wear. To calculate this, take the price and divide it by the number of times that you think you will wear the item. If it doesn't sound reasonable after this calculation, then it's probably not worth it.

As for getting nails, makeup, and hair, grade 12 student Natalie McMurdo tells us, “Nobody will be looking at your nails the night of grad, so skip the manicure! And if you are wearing a long dress, skip the pedicure. It will save you 50 bucks.” Chances are, the venue for your grad will be dimly lit, so no one will notice your nails anyways, but if they need a little something, just trim or paint them yourself.

“For makeup I would always suggest letting a friend, or sister, or mother to help with the hair and makeup,” says Natalie. “It can help you feel close to them on your special night, and it saves you the expensive labour price from professionals.” Getting a professional makeover for prom can cost more than \$150. However, if someone you know is great at that sort of thing, save your money and let them do your hair or makeup.

Getting a formal grad portrait can be nice, but can cost \$25 to \$75, depending on what you

pick. Get your mom to snap some pictures of you before you leave or, if you know any aspiring photographers, they will probably be happy to photograph you. Of course, you will bring along your digital camera. This way you will get prints for cheap, and you can take the pictures yourself.

Just remember, do not worry! Grad is supposed to be a fun way to bring the year to an end. Grade 12 student Jackie Hunter advises, “You don't want to look back on it and feel that if you weren't trying as hard to fit in you would have had a better time.”

Katherine tells us, “Don't stress about it. The night is about having fun and celebrating all we have accomplished as students. If you don't have a date, big deal! I don't. Going with a big group of friends can lead to a very fun night!”

Overall, prom is a stressful time of year. But going with a group of friends can make it a less painful experience. Consider joining one of the many Facebook groups that make sure that no one has the same dress, or create one yourself. Don't worry too much about what you are wearing because, in the end, you will remember the fun times you had with your friends. ☐

GRAD COST-SAVING TIPS

Borrow what you can. Remember that dress your older sister wore to her grad three years ago? Guaranteed that she'll never wear it again, but she'd be more than happy to let you give it a go.

Closet-shop. That pile of random things in the back of your closet is calling your name! It's about time you clean it out, and maybe you'll find some jewelry or shoes to wear.

Split the cost. Don't pay for the transportation all by yourself. Ask your friends to pitch in.

Don't take it too seriously. Grad is only one night, so don't stress too much. It is all about having fun and spending time with your friends.

Country Grad

By SHELLEY ASTILL

2010 is the year of the tiger in the Chinese zodiac calendar, the sign for bravery and excitement. I'd say that this ancient tradition has not gotten old, especially for the 147 grade 12s who will become the brave and excited graduates of Hilltop High School in 2010.

My high school in Whitecourt, a town of about 9,000 people northeast of Edmonton, celebrates graduation every year in a way that might be a little different than the typical city grad. Our festivities start in October. Some of our celebrations are traditional, but this year my grad class has come up with new activities that I hope become an outstanding legacy.

One of these new activities included a cake auction. Who doesn't love cake? Graduates signed up as either solo chefs or group cooks to bake cakes for a cake auction. All the cakes sold for more than \$10 and we even sold one for \$50. Most went to hungry teachers! The money raised went towards our various activities and decorations for the Winter Formal, a winter wonderland-themed dance for grade 12 students that celebrates the unity between graduates.

Something else that may be different about our grad way out in the boonies is our Safe Grad. The Safe Grad is the huge after-party where everyone is bussed to after the cap and gown ceremonies. There are DJs, burgers, dancing and drinking, all of it supervised by adult volunteers to help keep us safe.

The excitement from all the celebrations continues to pulsate as the days until graduation tick down. After living in a small town for so long, most of us our whole life, the sparkling lights of the city are intriguing and enticing. You can feel the rush of enthusiasm as you walk through the rows of grade 12 lockers in my school. Everyone is eager and energized to start a new life away from the walls of Hilltop, and leave behind the legacy of festivities for upcoming students who are brave enough to attempt them. ☐



In each issue of *Grip*, we feature creative works from our readers – poetry, personal essays, short stories, illustrations, comic strips and photography.

Gecko

BY ALANNA YEE



Future

BY OLADYO OMOTAYO

Future is a word we all use, but do you know what the future is saying about you?
The future can be more of your performance, what you do, and what you are good at
Don't ever give up on yourself
The future is bright for you
when you are a positive-minded person
The future is bright for you
when you know your weakness
knowing your weakness and taking a positive step
Now think of what the future says about you

Portfolio

Winning submissions are awarded \$50, are featured in the magazine and on the website at www.griponlife.ca. Send in your submissions to creative@griponlife.ca

Untitled

BY ALANNA YEE



The Path of Life

BY KIRSTEN KIEMELE

I slowly walk down the hard worn path
watching as time flies by
rose petals wilt as baby birds learn to fly
each step I take gives me the wisdom I seek
each step I take gives me the treasures I want
for I'm walking the hard path of Life

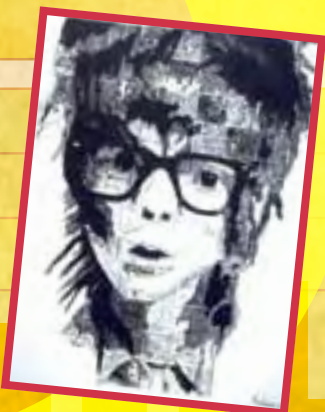
Insomnia

BY JESSIE TOLLESTRUP

relax -
sink under covers, close your eyes, welcome dreams
- or nightmares, that surface from silenced dark streams
skin crawls, sweat pours
scream for day, run away
through the closed open
doors.
stupid demons;
please wait 'till tomorrow to kill me,
i'll last
away from the people who's eyes close so fast
but i wait;
once again
i've missed the main point.
of life?
meh.
at least God doesn't die.
right?
well, too late, the bets are on now.
know what i mean?
probably not; by this time my thoughts just spin round,
lost and found
the dawn's breaking ground
goodbye

Untitled

BY ADRIENNE VANDERMEULEN





One World

BY KRISTINA BONWICK

Where
our top priorities
are last on our lists.
Where
the inhabitants
flood its soils with
toxic wastes,
and pollute its air
with harmful gases.
One world
in which
the air may someday
soon
become unbreathable,
and where days are spent
fighting
instead of living.
One world
where the inhabitants
have become
its worst
enemy.
One chance.
One chaotic world,
where little is
achieved,
but everything
is possible.

Urban Decay

BY JAN PERRIN



untitled

BY ARI MELNYK



oldPod

BY ARI MELNYK

The Driveway

BY JORDAN PHILLIPS

I could hear the crunch of gravel under my cheap, black shoes as I trudged down the driveway, my backpack heavy, filled with books. I heard the lowing of the cattle from the neighbour's pasture, the bellow of our bulls. I could hear geese flapping overhead, and the songbirds twittering in my back yard. My cat, Kipper, meowed behind me as he padded lightly in my tracks. The barn door squealed in protest as my mother opened it to let the dogs out. I heard enthusiastic barking as they made their way to the house. The smell of dew on the nearly dead brown grass was strong, a whiff of rain on the slight breeze, with the pure country air behind it. There was a smell of decaying plant matter from the nearby garden. It was a chilly day, with the sun barely up, and hidden behind grey clouds. I stepped around the dip in my driveway, then stopped at the road. My cat trotted up to me, purring loudly, his fur damp and chilly, his paws dusty, his tail twitching. A song was playing over and over in my mind, one that I had heard that morning at breakfast. A fragment of the lyrics escaped my lips as Kipper nudged my hand for a scratch behind the ears. He purred even louder as I obliged, my hand chilled by his damp

fur. My mind drifted off as Kipper curled himself cooly around my jeans and my cheap, black shoes.

I thought of how my art was an escape, a release from reality. I thought of how some people get so involved in the details that they forget about the larger picture. That some people don't understand how art isn't about the amount of talent possessed, but whether or not it expresses the feelings that are foremost in the artist's mind. I thought about how my room is my sanctuary, my stability. It is my place. I thought of some people's rudeness, their indifference to anything that wouldn't benefit themselves. I wondered what there was about some people that made them cool or popular. I wondered how those people could see a difference in someone. A difference in their character, something that set them apart. I thought about how they preyed on those differences, on anything that was not the same as themselves. I thought about how there are some people, different from the rest, who stand up for the ridiculed. People who really do care about others, and want to benefit everybody with their decisions. I thought about how the world is full of so many different kinds of people.

Suddenly, the dull roar of the yellow school bus filled my ears. I looked up, my thoughts gone as I contemplated the new day of school. Kipper ran into the dying caraganas nearby. I smiled, looked at the golden sunrise behind the dust-cloud of the bus, and braced myself for what may happen that day. As the bus stopped and opened its tall door, I listened to the chug of the diesel engine, the quiet chatter on the bus, and I put my mask on, pulled up a wall around myself. Something to protect me from the world, the anger and pain. Then I smiled and climbed on, my cheap, black shoes finding purchase on the large bus steps.

Cautious Words

BY KATHERINE ABBASS

I am careful with words I use with you
An egg rolls beneath my feet
I tread lightly
Try to keep a balance
Try to keep the egg from

CRACKING

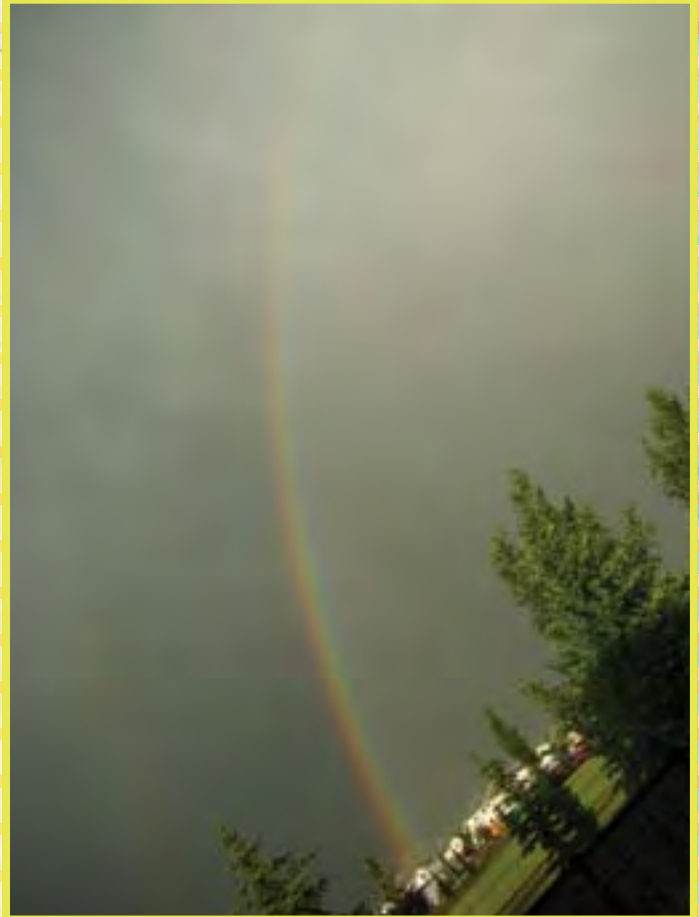
And I'm cautious
When I talk to you
I say, "I use too many words,"
You say, "I don't use enough."
I speak to fill gaps
Why do you speak?

When I run out of words
What will we do?
We pick words carefully
Like a watermelon at the supermarket
Not too soft, vulnerable or bruised
Not too hard, hollow or stiff

When we are too careful with words
Can we break this egg
And sit in the sunny yellow yolk
And
LAUGH?

Rainbow

BY MICHELLE TRUONG



Innocence

BY KRISTINA BONWICK

Italian Sonnet Revision

BY AMANDA TAYLOR

Darkness, fear, what does it mean to be free?
A tunnel of unfortunate demise,
To breathe the darkness in, fool, think, be wise.
The dire fate of the world surrounding me,
Deathly, cold hands to strangle, light will flee,
The fear and hurt eating my shallow eyes,
Looking around, this is how a soul dies,
Darkness is the only place I shall be.
Darkness is merely the absence of light!
Oh my soul, light to surround me one day,
Darkness, you will no longer bring such fright,
Dearest light, make haste, please chase it away.
For with day, there comes light, and darkness, night,
Oh, beam of faith, save my soul, I do pray.

Friend

BY GURPREET GILL



Live Simply

BY KENDELL REINDERS

My eyes widen to the smell of today.
The freshness injects life into my cells as I allow the corners of my mouth to turn upward.
After studying the functionalist and interactionist perspectives, I break my usual pattern on my walk home by crossing the street for a different perspective on the day.
It leaves my neural tissue vibrating with enthusiasm and wonder.
And while I continue on with my not so enthralling day of midterm preparation, I'm left fulfilled and wanting nothing more.

Shadows

BY ROB PROPP



The Dance

BY JORDAN PHILLIPS

Watch me dance to my own little beat,
Leaving trails in the dust with my cold, bare feet.
Laugh if you want, I don't really care.
I pity you really, sitting quietly there,
Being so cowardly as to only sit still
Rather than join in with passion, to dance as you will.
For dancing as this
With the soul and the hips
Can lead you new places,
And teach you new graces.
Can show you your soul,
Can tear you down and make you whole.
But you'll never know a dance such as that
If you just watch me dance to the beat of the drum.
So get up from where once you sat
Dance with me till you're made no longer numb.

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DODGE

- ILLUSTRATED BY ERIC GRAVEL -



20 MINUTES LATER...



Fast Word

The OMG of txt msging

By Caitlin Hart

Texting is becoming a language unto itself, much to the dismay of teachers and parents

LOL Noob
OMG URAOT
W/E PRW
G2G
HAND 2MI:P
P911
@> </3 GF
D8?



Haaaai u! Wat up? Nm? SAMIES!
Yeah, my grandma thought I was illiterate when I sent her an email like that. 2. But hey, y not? It's a good idea 2 shorten up what ur saying - u get ur point across fast, and then u can get back to that convo with the people you RLLY wanna talk 2. But when ur txt talk leaks in2 ur essay for social studies - OMG! U might be setting urself up for failure. My English teacher would prob just laff at me if I started writing like this!
All joking aside, this really comes down to two things: one, our generation is completely different from the one before it for many reasons, but the way we talk is a very obvious difference.

It's awkward when you're texting your mother (if she is so evolved as to know how to push the right buttons) and you LOL at her, and she's just sitting there wondering if LOL is meant to stand for Leeches On Legs or Let Out Losers. There will always be a generational gap. And what else is there to do, but try to explain to your parents that you really do well in school, but when you log onto Facebook, you can't help but let some LMAO's slip. But do you really want to explain to your dad the definition of something like **D8?** Didn't think so.

And then there's the aforementioned issue of school. It's doubtful that when some of us become teachers we'll allow our students to use BTW and FTW in their essays, but who knows? Maybe, if we get so used to this way of speaking, it will become just how we talk, like, you know how we always, like, say like? Or how only old people think that

gay means happy? Words change over time, as do phrases (who says 'the bees knees' or 'peachy keen' anymore? So fifties!), so maybe, along with words teens like us just love, like fail, epic and mad skillz ('kay, you probably don't say that unless you're uber lame) one day, ROFLMAO and NVM will be part of how we talk.

For the sake of my sanity, I really hope 12-year-old 'n00bs' (haha *wink*) keep the chat sp33k to themselves. Because as soon as things like LSHYDYT start becoming cool, I'm going to be thinking waaay harder than I want to be when I'm writing on my BFF's Facebook wall. The whole point of text talk is to NOT think, right? Just a simple BRB, instead of Umm, yeah, I need to pee, will you hold on a sec? There is a reason behind the whole chat speak.

But when someone starts using weird phrases like ROFLcopter (what does any of this have to do with helicopters?) I start to question why we ever started shortening words to begin with. Laziness? Or just so we could say quirky things like PWN'D. ☹

TEXT LINGO GLOSSARY

- RLLY:** Really
- BTW:** By the way
- LMAO:** Laugh my a** off
- NVM:** Never mind
- FTW:** For the win
- LSHYDYT:** Laughing so hard you drop your taco (I didn't make that up)
- BFF:** Best friend forever
- LOL:** Laugh out loud
- OMG:** Oh my gosh/God/goodness
- NM:** Not much
- BRB:** Be right back
- PWN:** Own/win/something
- MOS:** Mom over shoulder



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“It gave me a headache, but I got to keep the glasses”
 – Juan Dimensionale



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 Under 18 should not attend with a parent or guardian
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*refused to be in this movie

THX SOUNDTRACK BY 4TH PERIOD BAND CLASS – UNAVAILABLE ON ITUNES

WARNING: May cause dizziness, nausea, disorientation, hysterical fits of laughter, an aversion to chicken and a desire to stay in school. Also - 3D glasses are unflattering.



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