

## Tiger asked:

What do you think about organizations like DDK making a profit off teen drinking?

*"I have no problem with them making a profit, but they're making it off of something illegal"*

- Michael de la Torre, sophomore

*"As long as they sell it responsibly, there is no problem."*

- Harlan Kuo, senior

*"There are definitely two sides. They're going to be future entrepreneurs, but they have to realize the consequences of having designated parties for minors."*

- Gigi Lawrence Ventura, senior

*"I think it's fair that they charge. It's their party they can do what they want."*

- Zoe Siegel, junior

*"I think it is a bit wrong that they are trying to make a profit off of minors partying."*

- Jennifer Suh, sophomore

# A business of convenience: Turning teenage habits into a business venture

According to research done by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at the end of 2009, 38% of 9th graders, and 68% of 11th graders drink alcohol. Of these, 65% and 85%, respectively, reported that they get drunk at least once in a typical month.

Clearly, the use of alcohol among teenagers is common. It is an illegal habit that is socially acceptable, and obvious to anyone who works with high school students. In order to get their hands on liquor, teenagers turn to their older brothers, friends, parents, and a multitude of other sources (see graph below). One source that is unique to Pasadena, however, and the students of South Pasadena, is a business.

For that, essentially, is what Dirty Dena Kids is. Known fondly as "DDK" to those who attend the parties they hold almost every weekend, it is a business, run and managed by high school students to provide teenagers in Pasadena with an outlet for their binging habits. "Before DDK came along, people were afraid to have big parties," said a friend of the Pasadena students who started DDK, who spoke to Tiger on the condition of anonymity, "But they started such a smart system and made them so efficient." Now seniors, the group of five students from Pasadena High School who started the business attract hundreds of kids, (as many as 300 throughout a busy night) to their parties and are forced to turn many away. These parties, however, rarely come within South Pasadena's borders.

"A lot of them are out-of-city parties," said Detective Jason Lucas, South Pasadena Police Department's School Resource Officer



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"It's a bigger city, and the force can be stretched thin. People in the same neighborhood stop calling in on one another."

Every weekend, the seniors who run DDK compile a list of houses, where the parents will be out of town, and have not just one, but several locations to choose from. This way, they never have to have a party in the same place twice. According to those close to the DDK leaders, teenagers who offer their houses up to DDK have a trust in the group of party planners. Like any other business, DDK has garnered a reputation for itself, and in this case a positive one.

By charging five dollars at the door, DDK can not only pay to sustain itself for the next few party's alcohol, but will turn a profit of at times up to \$1000, according to a source close to their op-

erations. It is a for-profit business, but unlike most businesses, DDK has never really had to advertise their parties. They are really the

hol in his bloodstream. For the most part, all information regarding Aydin's death is on "security hold" because of the investigation that is being headed by South Pasadena Police Department. His death did give teens in Pasadena a moment to pause, for Aydin died at a party planned by a group called Apart From Society (AFC), which, similar to DDK charges five dollars admission to their parties, despite its avant-garde name. One of the main planners of DDK told Tiger that after Aydin's death, DDK had "halted" the party throwing, and it was "for the better" because "kids just need to calm down for a while."

In these situations, it is hard to know where the fault lies, or if it lies with anyone. "No one's on the hook more than the other," said Lucas, "It's the people who see things and don't do anything, it's students, it's parents. Everyone should be held responsible."

only option in a market they have created. Word of mouth is all the advertisement they need.

Early on December 13 of last year, senior Aydin Salek passed away, which law enforcement sources have confirmed was caused by the high level of alco-

### Editorial:

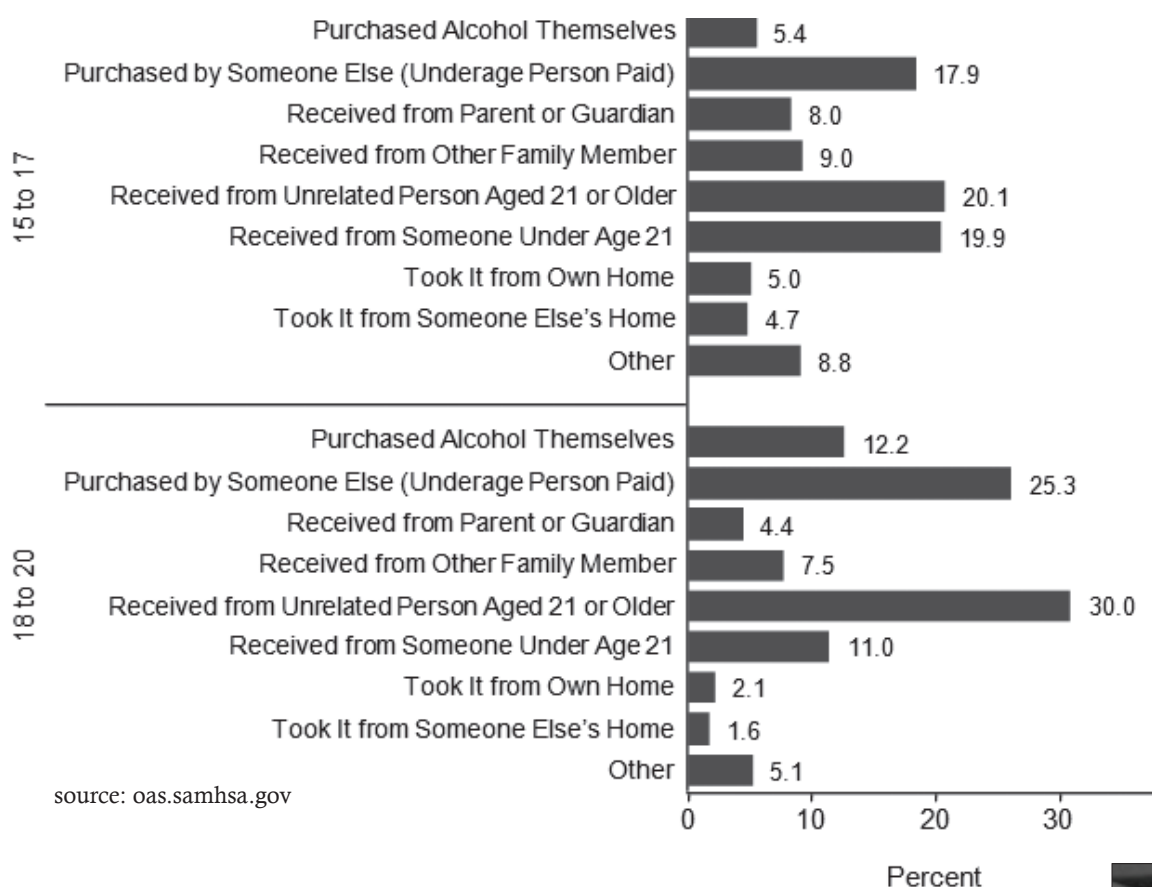
## Lowering the drinking age to 18

In the fall of 2009, a group of over one hundred college presidents publically advocated for lowering the drinking age from 21 to 18. It came as a shock to many parents that educators would advocate for a change that so blatantly supports the legal consumption of alcohol by their students. The idea, however, is in no way new, and makes sense for college students who go to universities ready to relish in their newfound freedom. For this sense of freedom they turn to partying and drinking, but are forced to do it in dangerous and secretive ways. Laws must be drafted to match the needs of the time period in which they are written, and keeping the drinking age at 21 has outlived its time. Allowing 18 year olds to legally purchase and consume alcohol will force these legal adults to be more responsible, help protect them from binging, and keep them from being reckless by taking away the thrill of alcohol.

Often, it is the things we can't have that we crave the most. This is, no doubt, the case with alcohol. Drinking is a social activity, and Americans grow up seeing their parents and other adults use, and at times abuse, alcohol. American teenagers are familiar with alcohol since childhood, and so it becomes desirable simply because of the fact that it is illegal. Drinking is something that is legally restricted to adults, and so it has become culturally connected to the young. It is a way for young adults to make friends in college, a way to fit in, and a way to feel like an adult at a time when they have suddenly left home and are accountable for their own actions. For more than half a century alcohol has become an inextricable part of youth culture.

So why should lawmakers continue to restrict legal adults from purchasing alcohol, when all the law accomplishes is making drinking more desirable? If the drinking age were lower young adults would not be forced to host parties late at night, with complete strangers, or do their drinking in secret. Alcohol would lose its novelty, and in some regards, its popularity at college. Students would still drink, and they always will, but lawmakers should give them the option of doing it in a more responsible, safe, and legal environment.

## How teenagers obtain their alcohol



## Who's Responsible?:

### The legality of throwing parties

The party that Aydin Salek attended shortly before his death this past December was promoted on Facebook by the student organization, Apart From Society (AFC), and hosted by an 18-year-old woman whose parents were not home at the time.

Now, months later, district at-

torneys are considering charges for both the party hosts and the promoters, who collected money at the door. Under California state law, anyone who provides alcohol to a minor can be prosecuted and punished. Normally, a fine and up to a year in prison are the penalties for that crime.



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