Many SEHS parents have voiced concerns about the parties their daughters and sons are hosting and attending. Several years ago, the Parent Council was asked to share some ideas about how to create safe social settings. The following is a revision of the original 1998 article.

Q: My sophomore daughter has been invited to a number of parties since school started. Although I have always trusted her, I'll admit I'm worried about the high school social scene.

A: Your child's safety is your first concern, and knowing where your child is, whom she's with, and whether adults are in attendance is the place to start.

It is unlikely that we would go somewhere without telling our kids where we are and when we'll be home. Parents should expect the same level of consideration from all family members.

The SEHS Directory has names and numbers of students and parents. Make a routine of calling a host parent, offering to send refreshments, and clarifying the host's expectations about arrival and departure times. The issue is safety—not trust.

Q: My son wants to have a party at our home after the last football game of the season. I'm uncertain what my responsibilities are.

A: You are legally responsible for the kids who are in your home, and you should plan to be a presence in order to make sure everyone is safe.

Last year several high schools had problems with MIP's- "minors in possession"- which resulted in arrests. We encourage you to address this issue with your teen. (You are legally responsible whether you are home or not!) Maintain open doors within the home, but request that people do not leave and return to the party. Again, this is a safety issue. Be clear about parameters—who is invited (you and/or your teen should welcome invited guests at the door), and when the party is over.

Q: My senior daughter insists that she's the only one of her friends who has any curfew at all because, unlike me, other parents "trust" their kids. Can I really be the only one who thinks that staying out after midnight is inappropriate for a seventeen year old?

A: Every family must set limits with which it is comfortable. Many families wage the curfew battle on an ongoing basis, so your daughter is most certainly not alone.

Communication is the key here. Talk honestly with your teen, but remember that your teen's safety is your first concern. It's not a matter of trust, but of knowing that your kids are home and safe.

In Eugene, the curfew for anyone under the age of 18 is midnight. If your child is a new driver, the recently enacted Oregon graduated license laws prohibit new drivers (for the first year after receiving their licenses) from driving between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. except under very restricted circumstances. Again, communication and expressing concern for your teen's safety are the keys here.