

March-April 2006

AN INSIDE LOOK AT TEEN NIGHT CLUBS

-Jill Ricker

What do you do when your kids asks to go to teen night at a club? One mother recently faced that question and opted to check out the club before dropping her child and a friend off for the evening. She arrived with the teenagers a bit early and walked in to check it out. There weren't many teens there yet and her first impression was it looked okay. She drove off thinking she left the kids in a safe place where they could hang-out with other teens to dance and have fun.

A few hours later, upon her return she approached the club to see the flashing lights of a police car, fire truck, and an ambulance. She immediately went inside to gather her kids. On the way out they saw paramedics put a young girl into the ambulance. The Mom was stunned and disturbed by what she saw. The kids weren't so moved by it. It wasn't part of their night—it didn't affect them.

For this Mom, there were many disturbing things about this experience, but one thought stuck out—had she arrived just a few minutes later she never would have known that a child at this club was rushed to a hospital. Parents arriving as she was leaving never saw the ambulance, fire truck, police car or the very sick girl.

There is heightened awareness about teen clubs in Cleveland due to the tragic and disturbing death of 16-year-old Anthony Gordon, killed outside of downtown's Club Kaos. Anthony was at the club's "Teen Night" when a fight broke out in the club and quickly spilled outside; he was found dead a few blocks from Club Kaos. His death rocked the lives of his family, friends, high school, community and all of the surrounding areas. Tragedy has a way of causing a ripple effect.

Kids don't have to go downtown to find underage clubs there is Krobar in North Olmsted and Vegas in Parma. Most "teen nights" admit 13-19 year olds and no alcohol is served.

Aside from that, each club has different rules. Parma has a city ordinance that prohibits "dancing on bars" as well as "...vulgar, suggestive or immoral dancing." North Olmsted has no city ordinances for teen clubs.

News Channel 5's Duane Pohlman recently reported on North Olmsted's Krobar. A 28-year-old undercover reporter revealed underage kids exposed to things that would concern most parents. Teens dropped off wearing jeans and a t-shirt changed in the parking lot into minimal clothing; Bouncers didn't card at the door, which is how the 28-year-old reporter got in; Kids left and returned throughout the night; Girls were dancing on top of the bars.

Parents and law officials shown the news footage were shocked and appalled. One parent said it looked like a strip club. North Olmsted's Third District Commander, Andres Gonzalez said it is "...a setting designed for people 21 and over. It's not healthy to bring kids in under 21 and introduce them to a bar environment."

This reporting was on Krobar only. There was no mention of what goes on at Vegas in Parma. This club could have a completely different atmosphere, but how would a parent know?

Thanks to the Mom who shared her story about her Teen Night Club experience.

Awareness is half the battle.

Policeman and Westlake High School Resource Officer, Scott Fortkamp, offered some practical advice for parents who allow their teens to attend teen night clubs.

Visit the club yourself and trust your gut: if it seems suspicious or doesn't seem right, it probably isn't.

Speak to the manager and if the manager isn't willing to talk with you, it should tell you a lot about the place.

Ask about:

- **Security, number of bouncers, number of kids allowed in, etc.**
- **How they handle crowd control?**
- **Do they have a police presence? If so, where, how many officers?**
- **How they control alcohol or drug use and what they do if kids show up high or drunk?**
- **Do they require ID's? What is the age range allowed?**
- **Are kids allowed to leave the building and come back inside?**
- **Is there a dress code?**
- **Are there metal detectors?**

WPC LENDING LIBRARY CONTINUES TO GROW... NEW ON PORTER LIBRARY SHELVES

GET OUT OF MY LIFE, BUT FIRST COULD YOU DRIVE ME AND CHERYL TO THE MALL? -BY ANTHONY WOLF

Teenagers face a slew of challenges that many parents never had to deal with when they were growing up. Dr. Anthony E. Wolf, a practicing clinical psychologist, doesn't back down from the tough attitude teenagers put on. He offers practical advice and caring guidance for dealing with modern adolescence. The audiobook format makes Wolf's thirty years of experience accessible for busy parents, who will appreciate being able to listen to his recommendations while commuting to work or cooking dinner.

PARENTS TEENS AND THEIR BOUNDARIES: HOW TO DRAW THE LINE
-BY JANE BLUESTEIN

How you set boundaries with your teens is among the most important aspects of your parent-child relationship. Jane Bluestein, a former teacher and counselor, looks at 20 relationship-building techniques parents can use to set limits with their teens. You'll learn the essential arts of loving, motivating, accepting, negotiating, respecting, acknowledging, communicating, supporting, empowering, trusting . . . and more. These practical strategies for boundary setting help avoid conflict, resolve problems and establish a foundation of mutual love and respect. By learning to set healthy boundaries, you may actually begin to enjoy your children's teen years!

GETTING TO KNOW KATHY MCGINTY...

—Westlake Schools Prevention Coordinator

On any given day Kathy McGinty may be found coordinating leadership challenge activities; conducting a group therapy session or helping a parent with treatment plans for their child.

As the Westlake Schools Prevention Coordinator, Kathy McGinty conducts programming and counseling on tobacco, alcohol and other drugs use, violence, diversity awareness and community awareness.

Students come to her through self-referral, the court system, teachers, friends, and parents.

She conducts group and individual counseling and referrals and acts as the liaison between treatment centers, probation officers, and the school district.

As the Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) advisor,

she works with students committed to peer prevention.

And as the Leadership Challenge program advisor, she helps high school students in their effort to improve the school climate. This student-led program is self-supporting through grant monies and student fundraising activities.

"We attempt to involve students who do not typically get the opportunity to function as leaders. School projects include the areas of community service, school spirit, inclusion, diversity, making new students feel welcome and school beautification

And of course she works hand-in-hand with the Westlake Parent Connection and the Parent to Parent Westside Network providing a valuable link between what tough issues are facing the students and their parents.

"One of the great things about Westlake Schools is that they are known throughout the area as being proactive in dealing with students with chemical dependency issues."

Education: Kathy McGinty is a State Licensed certified drug and alcohol counselor.

Employment: Kathy McGinty was hired in 1990, as the District's first staff person dedicated to alcohol and drug abuse prevention.



SAVE THE DATE! APRIL 29TH— WPC'S ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE

**Westlake
Parent
Connection
Rummage Sale
Saturday
April 29th**

We need your help!
Please remember us as
you clean out the closets,
basement and toy chest.



**Donation
drop off
Friday April 28
Church of the
Redeemer
23500 Center Ridge
Westlake
9AM-7PM .**

ART AUCTION BENEFITS PARENT TO PARENT WESTSIDE NETWORK

Art Auction
Saturday, April 1, 2006
7:00 - 10:00 PM
LACENTRE
25777 Detroit Road
Westlake
*Specialty Desserts, Chocolate
Fountain,
Gourmet Coffees/Teas*
\$20.00 per ticket

Adams, Agam, Altman,
Behrens, Ben-Simhon,
Benfield, Borelli, Boulanger,
Chagall, Dali, Disney
Animation Cels, Ebgj,
Emanuel, Fauchere, Kinkade,
Macwilliams, Max, Mindeli,
Moses, Neiman, Orlando, Park,
Picasso, Polak, Rembrandt,
Renoir, Rockwell, Shvaiko,
Suljakov, Szyal, Tarkay,
Toulouse-Lautrec, Warhol,
Wissotzky-Alexander, Wooster
Scott, Wyeth, And Many More!

**Also Featuring: Sports,
Entertainment And Music
Memorabilia**

**For Ticket &
Volunteer
information
contact:**

**Catherine Bailey at
899-9822
Carol Winter at
979-0168**

Our Mission

The Parent to Parent Westside Network is a non-profit group representing Westside communities of Cleveland, assembled to educate, communicate, and network with fellow parents about the tough issues confronting all school age youth.

Our vision

Create a venue for Westside families, homes, schools, and places of worship to discuss the tough issues facing our youth and seek solutions together. To give voice to the people who share this healthy vision.

A WORD FROM WPC PRESIDENT ...DANI ALTIERI MARINUCCI

As parents we have no guarantee that our children will travel safely through their preteen and teenage years. It is paralyzing to dwell on all the wrong turns they could take in their early lives.

We learn of the unhealthy choices our community's children make from our neighbors, friends and the weekly newspapers. In this decade alone, tragedy has touched this community too many times. And still the risky behaviors of our children continue.

We have a job. It is called parenting. Among our many job duties we must define boundaries, express our expectations and stand strong in our convictions. This we owe to our children.

Each year that passes, we see more and more parents turning to the Westlake Parent Connection's resources. We hear daily, stories of how the information on our website – which is visited on average 300 times a month – has helped parents and their families. Our financial support climbs each year as do requests from neighboring communities wishing to model our organization.

And the crown jewel of accomplishments – the formation of the **Parent to Parent Westside Network!** When asked to take on more duties, expand our reach, and draw neighboring communities into our embrace, the WPC founding members rose up and enthusiastically met the challenge.

We are thrilled that nine other communities see the benefit to sharing resources and human effort in our goal to educate, network and communicate with our parenting peers about the tough issues facing our kids.

This April 1, we link arms again and introduce the first of many opportunities for parents to erase the geographic boundaries between us. Dollars raised at the Art Auction will support our communal efforts; finance nationally recognized speakers; expand our website coverage; and convene a Westside healthy choices symposium in 2007.

Join your neighbors and step up to the challenge – one life lost is too high a price. Knowledge is an imposing tool for parents.



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Mon, March 6

7:00 p.m.

Westlake High
Cafeteria

**"Latest Information on
Drugs & Our Kids"**

A Show & Tell for Parents

Wed, April 26

this is a date change

7:00 p.m.

Westlake Porter
Library

"Social Hosting"

*What the law says about
hosting teen parties*

*Have a programming
suggestion? Contact us at:
parentcon@westlakeparentconnection.com*