

Grade 12  
Ludlow High School  
Chloe F

In High School, there are several cliques that you will observe and eventually fall into. As a freshman, I had no idea which clique I wanted to participate in, but at Ludlow it really wasn't your choice. Instead, students would place you into groups where they thought you belonged based on the way you presented yourself. The more outgoing and friendly students were usually the athletes, academically skilled, or the richest kids. The most popular kids were the kids who smoked marijuana and picked on other kids, and the uncool kids were just like me, shy and inexperienced. I was searching for a group of my own, and I just knew one thing; No substance-involved clique.

My mom, when I was at the age of 12 passed away from a heroin overdose, and it caused me to have a strong fear of any type of drug. However, I knew the statistics of children following along with their parents' bad habits were high, and I did everything in my power to prevent this from happening to me. Throughout my first year of high school I had been offered to smoke with some of the "cooler kids" on multiple occasions. I was considered to be very unpopular, due to my social anxiety and struggles to make new friends, so seeming cool to the kids that I envied made it difficult to say no. I had zero excuses to back up any reasoning on why I said no, and they found this hilarious, which made it more difficult to not participate. I needed an excuse, and right around the corner I would later learn about the Drug Free Club, the club that saved me from falling into my mothers tracks.

During the morning announcements, I heard the mention of this club, and I immediately knew it was something I needed to join. This club could provide me with enough reasoning to say no to the struggles of peer pressure I faced daily with my classmates. When I had my first test, standing in line I soon realized there were a lot more people like me. People who were anti-social, and needed an excuse to not let themselves fall into the manipulation of irresponsible teenagers. I met my first real best friend, Morgan, while both holding cups that would soon be full with our own urine. We both communicated about how we joined the club to keep ourselves accountable from the dangers of drug use, and eventually ended up exchanging social media. We both became our own clique for the next 3 years, and whether we were considered 'cool' or not, we were not only happy, but we were sober.

Thank you to the Drug Free Club for giving me the opportunity to keep myself healthy and away from the dangers of drug use. I am certain my mother is looking down on me with pride because I did not follow the same rough path as her. Thank you not only from me, but from her. We are forever grateful for this opportunity.