

*My friend's choice left me
no choice.*

By Deborah Moore

LOSING A FRIEND



Amy* was my best friend growing up. That all changed in junior high school. One day near the beginning of my eighth-grade year, I saw Amy standing with a few of her acquaintances. I went up and chatted with them. We were having fun talking and being silly when one of the other girls started to talk about getting drunk. To my horror, Amy chimed in about how excited she was to join them that night. I wish I could say that I stood up then and there and said that I didn't believe they should be drinking. Instead, I stood quietly in shock, unsure of what to do.

The bell rang, and Amy and I went to class. On our way I asked her if she was serious about getting drunk. She said that she was and seemed excited. I could tell it didn't bother her the way it bothered me.

Again I stayed quiet. I was afraid that she would be mad at me if I told her how I felt. As the day went on, I felt worse and worse. I knew I had to do something, but I wasn't sure how I should go about it. I didn't want to sound self-righteous or condescending. Plus, there was the overwhelming fact that I was scared.

Although I had made friends with a few other students at the beginning of junior high, I had lost touch with them. I

didn't want to lose the only friend I had. I finally decided to pray about it. As I did, I felt a peaceful feeling that it would be all right. I also knew what I needed to do. After school got out, I talked to Amy. I told her how much I cared about her and that I didn't think that she should be drinking. She listened to me, but when I was done, she said goodbye. I couldn't tell if she was mad or not.

I'd love to say that we hugged and that she told me she was glad that I told her how I felt. However, that's not what happened.

Amy got drunk that evening and many other evenings after that. She stopped being friends with me.

The first day of ninth grade was terrifying. I was lonelier than I had ever been. It was at that time that some girls I had once been friends with signaled me over to their table. They were all LDS or had high standards.

Even though it took me a while to muster up the courage to talk to Amy, I'm glad that I did. I know that the friends I made that year influenced my life for the better and helped me stay on the path that I knew was right. **NE**

* Name has been changed.