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Dealing with Lifestyle Inequality

By Caie Kelley



Caie Kelley is an 11th grader at Miramonte High School. She enjoys swimming, playing piano, and participating in public speaking as well as tutoring elementary school kids.

unavoidable."

Another teen, Ben Chiu, agreed, "Everyone who lives here knows that they're in the 'upper end' in terms of class status and economic stability. We don't have to go out of our way to deal with it."

As lucky as we are, lifestyle inequalities exist. Having a nicer car or bigger home isn't something that causes huge problems. We value our economic situation, acknowledge the disparity, and accept it for what it is.

Betty may have a beamer while I've got an old van, and that's okay!

The opinions expressed in Teen Scene are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

While grabbing coffee or arriving at a friend's house in Lamorinda, it's normal to park my family's beige, 14-year-old Toyota Sienna van next to BMWs, Mercedes, and other luxury vehicles.

Don't get me wrong. I love my car, however, it is not exactly a Sweet 16 dream car.

Affluence abounds in Lamorinda. As teenagers living here, we receive a great education as well as many opportunities not afforded to those who live nearby. But even in our sheltered area, inequality exists. Not every family indulges in elaborate European vacations or drives new cars - and even those who do splurge are not necessarily wealthier than those who don't.

People who live in Lafayette, Moraga, or Orinda are not financially 'equal.' One family buys their daughter a customized Volkswagen Bug for her 16th birthday, while another girl walks to school.

How do teenagers around the area view these inequities?

Hannah Li, a junior at Miramonte High School, explains, "We are fortunate enough to live in an area where the majority of the population is well off. There aren't huge disparities, but examples of inequality can be found. This goes from the nonchalant purchasing of pricey cafeteria food to the new BMW 6 series rolling into the parking lot. It's

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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