



youth service bureau

Top 10 Prom Safety Tips for Parents/Caregivers

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Prom is an exciting time for high schoolers and their parents! Keep in mind however, many teens face choices beyond what flowers to buy and which shoes to wear. To help you and your family prepare for this event - here are some tips on making this night safer and unforgettable.

(Tips adapted from SADD, MADD and The Partnership for a Drug Free America)

#1 Talk to your teen about his or her plans.

- Start talking now as prom plans are developing. Share in their enthusiasm but help them be practical.
- Make sure your teen has a plan for before and after the dance. Discuss your rules and expectations.
- Make sure you know all the details of the plan.

#2 Meet with the parents of your teen's prom group.

- Come to an agreement on curfew and pre and post-prom plans.
- Ensure appropriate parental supervision for pre-and post-prom parties by talking to the host's parents. Offer to help by bringing food to share, taking party pictures and helping to chaperone.
- Ensure all teens in the group have the same plans.

#3 Discuss Driving.

- Know who is driving and who their passengers are.
- Insist on seat belt use, no illegal substances including alcohol in the car, no driving under the influence and absolutely no riding in a car with a driver under the influence.
- If taking a limo, insist on a limo service that does not allow alcohol, tobacco or drug use by minors. Communicate directly with the driver about your expectations.

#4 Avoid hotel rooms post-prom.

- A hotel party cannot be effectively supervised. A parent staying at the same hotel in another room isn't enough.
- A teen in a hotel room has no effective means of retreat if he or she feels uncomfortable with the group, the setting or the activities.
- Hotel parties may include non-high school students who likely have very different agendas.

- A hotel room setting increases the pressure on teens to have sex, party all night or partake in activities they may regret later.

#5 Discuss your school's prom rules with your teen.

- Make sure they understand the consequences for violating them.

#6 Remove or lock up alcohol and prescription drugs in your home.

- The majority of the time teenagers drink or abuse prescription drugs they get their alcohol or medications from their own home or the homes of friends.
- Make sure older siblings and other family members and friends know they are not to buy alcohol for your child.

#7 Agree on a curfew; touch base during the evening and be awake to talk to your teen when they get home.

#8 Communicate with your teen specifically about how he/she would handle difficult situations.

- What should they do if they are offered a ride by an intoxicated driver, being offered alcohol or other drugs?
- What should they say if they are being pressured to have sex?
- Be sure to provide parental advice how best to deal with problems that may arise.
- Keep your cell phone on until your teen has arrived home safely.
- Have a code word if they want you to come get them out of a situation.

#9 Insist that there are to be no changes made to the prom plans without your approval and make that a firm rule with no exceptions allowed.

#10 Check in with your teen during the evening (remember that they will read a text before they will answer their cell) Have him/her check in with you at designated times, particularly pre and post prom times.

Resources

Tips adapted from SADD/MADD and The Partnership for a Drug Free America. For more information, visit www.sadd.org, www.madd.org, www.drugfree.org.

Visit YSB's blog for articles on Alcohol and other Chemical Use prevention: www.ysb.net/blog. Sign up for our monthly eNewsletter at www.ysb.net/newsletter-sign-up/.

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