



## Parent Factor

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### Why Stay Sober on Prom Night? So You Can Remember It... So You Will Always Want to Remember It...

Based upon the recent surveys of a local high school campus, there is no doubt that students have easy access to alcohol and regular parties with alcohol are a part of their culture. The chances that your son or daughter attending a formal this spring will be offered and/or consume alcohol are very great. Presume it will happen. So what does this mean?

#### **Alcohol Related Risks for All Students Attending Prom**

- Unprotected sex and sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy (would not do so if sober)
- Sexual assault
- Damage to the brain including memory impairment and harm to the development of the brain
- Alcohol poisoning leading to coma and possibly death
- Bodily Injury Due to Violence and/Or Loss of Motor Control
- Suspension from school and/or sports
- Risk of death or injury resulting from auto crash (DUI)
- Loss of self-respect and esteem by regretful events and actions fueled by alcohol

An important distinction between “when we were that age”, and our children today is that increasingly we are seeing students drinking to excess – some as a way to self-medicate or escape, and they are starting at younger ages (cite sources). So it will be very important to establish firm ground rules and circumstances for your students prior to the event.

(Source: “Suspect Your Teen Is Using Drugs or Drinking? A brief Guide to Action for Parents” produced by American Academy of Pediatrics and National PTA.)

### Prom Night: Respect Yourself and Your Friends

1. Casual sex, drugs and alcohol are portrayed in the movies as normal. Stress to your students that, *they are valued*; and that this formal is happening so they can have a special, memorable evening as opposed to taking senseless risks with serious consequences including disease, broken hearts and relationships, violence, suspension from school, jail and death.
2. A good limousine service will pride itself in enforcing a “no substances” rule throughout the entire evening, and will operate with the expectation that they are responsible for keeping minors safe until returned home. Be sure to hire a limo service that has an agreement for students and parents to sign with rules prohibiting alcohol and drugs and who is committed to enforcing it (i.e. terminating the evening early).
3. Be sure to establish with your teen, ahead of time that there will be an approved itinerary (when you are at dinner, at the dance, etc.) and that after-prom activities are approved in advance with contact information for the supervising adult. Establish when they will check in with you throughout the evening, and what time you expect to see them home.

For more information about safe and fun after-prom parties, check out: <http://www.after-prom.org>



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