



What every parent
should know about~

**prom
night**

...and after

Remember your prom experience?



Getting dressed up, having fun and enjoying a special night with friends and classmates are all part of the prom ritual. But deciding what to wear, whom to go to prom with, whom to sit with, and what to do before and after the prom, can be stressful for teens. To cope with these pressures, some teens use alcohol or other substances to relax, to become more

uninhibited, to have more energy, to lose weight, and/or to "fit in."

Use of substances including high concentration nicotine and energy products can have unintended consequences that result in altered perception, judgment, feelings, coordination, and becoming sick from the substance. In other words, if using substances a teen may do things that they normally would not do and behave in uncharacteristic ways including making unhealthy or unwise choices about sexual behavior and other behaviors that put their health and safety at risk.

In the months and weeks before prom

Speak to your teen about the dangers of them consuming alcohol and other drugs including medical emergencies like alcohol poisoning, drug contamination, and high concentrations of nicotine or other substances. Encourage them to get help immediately if a friend or classmate is experiencing a medical situation. Tell them to call 911 immediately if someone has lost consciousness, is having seizures, vomiting, unable to walk, unable to hold up their head, or having some other medical emergency.



Before the prom, talk to your teen:

- **Tell** your teen that you love them and your primary concern is for their health and safety.
- **Ask** your teen what the plans are for post-prom celebrations.
- **Share** your thoughts on situations that might arise and discuss ways to handle them.
- **Ask** your teen to call or text you to keep you updated as to where they are and, if there are concerns, to call or text you immediately.
- **Restate** your concerns for your teen's health and safety and your expectations of them.



- **Talk** to your teen about prom and after-prom events that your teen is planning to attend. Tell your teen to contact you post-prom, and ask when you can expect them home.
- **Stress** that you will pick up your teen at any place and anytime if they want to come home, and agree on a call or a text alert with no questions asked. Leave money in case taxi is needed.

When the limousine or party van comes:



- **Speak** directly to the driver and discuss your expectations for an alcohol and drug free ride.
- **Inspect** the limousine, including the trunk, to make sure it is alcohol and drug-free.
- **Emphasize** to the driver not to allow in the limousine any non-alcoholic beverages that are open or have the seal broken.
- **Tell** the driver that you do not want any stops made along the way to or from the prom or post-prom site.

After the prom:

• **Check out** your teen when they return home. If your teen seems sleepy, has altered speech, or apparent coordination problem, smells of alcohol, has dilated or pinpoint pupils, or has obvious signs of alcohol or other drug use, don't allow them to go to sleep. Keep them in sight because some drugs can have a delayed serious and even lethal effect.

• **Talk** to your teen about the prom night experiences and problem solve around difficult situations that may have arisen.



Things to remember:

→ Accidents can happen going to and coming from the prom as well as at the beach, hotel room, club, and other after-prom sites.

→ Vomiting, passing out, and other alcohol and drug related incidents can result in health and safety risks, as well as damaged reputations, lowered self-esteem, and ruined relationships. Remember to tell your teen to call 911 immediately if someone has lost consciousness. Assure them they won't get in trouble if they call for help.

→ Driving while texting and driving while drowsy is as dangerous as driving while under the influence of alcohol and other drugs.

**For additional parenting tools,
visit this website: www.powertotheparent.org**



For more information,

Office of Drug Abuse Prevention & STOP-DWI

112 East Post Road, 3rd Floor, White Plains, NY 10601

(914) 995-4115 or email: pat5@westchestercountyny.gov

Website for Public Safety information:

<https://publicsafety.westchestercountyny.gov/prom-safety-initiative>



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