

Tips for Parents: Hosting End of the Year and Graduation Parties

These tips are part of Student Assistance Services' efforts to raise the level of awareness concerning the use of alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs during prom and graduation season.

1. Discuss the reasons for not allowing alcohol or other drug use in your home and on your property. Stress the health, safety and legal reasons.
2. Know the law:
 - It is illegal to give or sell any alcoholic beverage to a person under age 21, unless you are that person's parent or guardian.
 - An adult who serves alcohol to persons under age 21 can be held responsible for injuries or damages caused by that minor's intoxication.
 - A person who allows underage people to consume alcohol in their home or on their property can be charged with a violation under the Westchester County Social Host law.
3. Set up the ground rules before the party:
 - Agree on the guest list and send out invitations
 - Only those invited will be allowed to attend
 - All guests enter from one entrance
 - Notify police about the party date and time
 - Notify neighbors
 - Coats and bags will be "checked in"
 - The party will be alcohol and drug free. (Do not assume your child knows this). Any guest who tries to bring alcohol or other drugs, arrives under the influence, or drinks alcohol or uses other drugs at the party will be asked to leave and their parents will be called so they can get home safely.
4. Vaping (e-cig use/Juuling) has increased significantly among youth. These devices may contain toxins and nicotine that are dangerous for youth and create second hand fumes. Many of these devices are also used to vape high potency THC (marijuana) concentrates. Stress that vape devices are not allowed at the party.
5. When you check bags, look for containers where students may have hidden alcohol, marijuana and other drugs. Learn what vape pens look like as they may be used to consume marijuana. Be skeptical about baked goods that may contain marijuana. Visit PowerToTheParent.org's Hidden in Plain Sight page to strengthen your detection skills.
6. Remove all prescription and over-the-counter medications from any bathroom that will be used by guests.
7. To ensure the safety of all guests a parent must be visible and present to supervise. Invite parents of your child's friends to help chaperone.
8. Patrol in and outside your house, monitor the garage, windowsills, bedrooms, and property.

You continue to play a significant role in your child's life. Clear expectations and rules will help keep your children safe at this memorable time in their lives.