



What every parent  
should know about

**prom  
night**

...and after

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## Remember your prom experience?



Getting dressed up, looking your best, listening to the latest music, having fun and enjoying a special night with your friends and classmates are all part of the prom ritual. But between picking out the dress or tuxedo, to finding a date, to worrying about how you look, fitting in and being accepted by peers, proms can also be stressful.

To cope with these pressures, some teens use alcohol or other drugs. The use of these substances can cause relaxation, loss of inhibitions, and alter perception, judgment, feelings and behavior. In other words, a teen may do things that they normally would not do. They may behave in uncharacteristic ways including making unwise choices about sexual behavior, and other behaviors that put their health and safety at risk.

## What can parents do?

### All year long

**Speak** to your child about the dangers of alcohol and other drugs including medical emergencies like alcohol poisoning. Encourage them to get help if a friend is in trouble. Tell them to call 911 immediately if someone has lost consciousness.



## 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.

## After the prom:

- **Check out** your teen when they return home. If your teen has obviously been drinking or using other drugs, don't allow them to go back out.
- **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](http://www.powertotheparent.org)



## For more information,

### Office of Drug Abuse Prevention & STOP-DWI

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