

SPRING 2021 STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS OF GRADUATING SENIORS

As schools and families are beginning to plan celebrations for graduating seniors, there continues to be uncertainty about how seniors will find ways to positively recognize such a significant rite of passage. Below are some ideas to help you and your child manage the uncertainty, while maintaining the joy and recognition of graduating and plan for safe celebrations.

- Take time to brainstorm with your senior how they would like to celebrate. Conversations about safety with regards to alcohol and other drug use may have taken a back seat to other concerns during the pandemic, but drinking and drug use impair judgment regarding safety and COVID prevention precautions. Carefully consider all the suggestions your senior makes, though some may seem unrealistic to you.
- “Social distancing and teens” is a bit of an oxymoron. Even with good intentions, there is a reasonable chance that your Senior will **not** remain socially distant when they are with their peers. Set clear expectations about substance use, mask wearing, and social distancing and brainstorm what they can do if they find themselves in an uncomfortable situation. This is even more of a concern when alcohol and other drugs are consumed and inhibitions are reduced.
- Contact the parents of your child’s friends if you plan to organize a small gathering with their friends. Whatever your thoughts are about social distancing and mask wearing, make sure they are in agreement with you.
- Discuss your thoughts/hopes for a graduation celebration with family members. As parents, it is important to recognize that you may also need to modify your “memory making moments” too. Your main role is to support your child through this and most high school seniors are mature enough to recognize that you want to celebrate too.

Please contact me if you have any questions, or want to discuss any celebration issues.

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