



## **A Parent's Guide to Spring Break & Prom: The Must-Have Conversations with your Teen**



With spring breaks taking place and proms and graduation parties around the corner, it's easy to get caught up in all the excitement along with your high-schooler. Before you send them out the door, there are several topics you need to talk about. We've outlined some must-have conversations about safety, peer pressure, and drinking to help keep your teen safe and in control.

### **Drinking and Drug Use**

- Talk with your teen about your personal rules on drinking. Remind them that underage drinking is illegal, and drinking and driving can lead to severe consequences. Make sure that your teen understands that, while you hope they won't participate in any underage drinking, you are a safe person to call if they find themselves in a situation where they or their friends are under the influence.
- According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, prescription and over-the-counter medications and pills are the most widely abused drugs (after alcohol and marijuana) by Americans ages 14 and over. Talk to your teen about the dangers of drug use, especially abusing pills and combining pills and alcohol. Be aware of these red flag [warning signs](#) and watch our new [Teen Esteem Ed Talks](#) on this very issue.

### **Peer Pressure**

- Talking to your teen about peer pressure should be an ongoing conversation. However, your teen might feel the need to live up to certain heightened expectations on prom night or spring break, whether it involves drinking, drugs, staying out past curfew, or engaging in sexual activity.
- Talk to your teen about resisting the urge to give in to pressure and engage in activities that others may be engaging in. Role play with your teen on how to get out of uncomfortable situations.

## Sex

- For some teens, having sex on prom night might be something they feel pressured into doing. If you have not had the talk about sex, now is the time to do so. Although talking about this topic may be uncomfortable for both of you, you should discuss issues such as STDs, date rape, and how to say no.

## Safety Plan

- Establish a safety plan with your teen so he/she knows how to deal with any problems or situations that may come up. For example, what will she do if her ride home has been drinking? Or if he finds himself at a party where he doesn't feel comfortable? Make sure your teen knows that she can call you at any time, no matter the circumstances.

## Tips for Parents who Host Parties at their Home

(Source: San Ramon Valley High School's Bulletin)

- Together with your teen, decide the party's start and end times, how many guests you can handle - keeping it small (8-10- total) is best, and who will be invited. Require RSVPs in advance and make a list. Have an adult check guests off the list as they arrive.
- Get advance agreement with your teen on the party rules, such as no drinking or drugs; no smoking; no leaving the party and then returning; needing to arrive at the party by a specified time; and no turning off the lights or using rooms that you've declared off-limits. Make it clear that you'll call parents if you feel you need to do so.
- Do not serve alcohol. This may seem obvious, but some parents assume that high school students may drink on these occasions and feel it's better for them to do it under parental supervision. Serving alcohol to minors is illegal. □The Town of Danville, the City of San Ramon and Contra Costa County all have Social Host Ordinances that prohibit hosting a party where alcohol is served to anyone under 21. The penalty is a misdemeanor and fine of up to \$1000. The host can be held liable in a civil and criminal court.
- Make it clear that you won't allow gatecrashers. Plan on the party to have more attendance than expected. Invitations get broadcast using social media and attendance can quickly grow out of control. If an invited guest has been drinking when he/she arrives at the party, call the parents to come pick him/her up. Call the police if additional support is needed.
- Greet guests at the door. Your teen will want you to keep a low profile, but you need to circulate. Watch for large bags in which kids might carry alcohol. Serve food in small quantities so you can replenish supplies to keep an eye on the festivities.
- Check your yard periodically for hidden alcohol and other substances, intoxicated youth and uninvited guests.
- Invite a few other parents, both to keep you company (and awake all night!) and to help keep order. It's also smart to alert your neighbors.