



Celebration

Prom  Graduation 2010

A guide to help broadcasters address illegal underage drinking and promote teen driving safety.

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Prom Graduation 2010

Youth across the nation will be celebrating prom and graduation this spring.

For 27 years, the National Association of Broadcasters and stations nationwide have worked with communities to reduce illegal underage drinking and increase teen driving safety during this important time in the lives of our youth. Together, we've sent a message to millions of teens to celebrate safely and drive smart. And we've made progress. Illegal underage drinking has been on a gradual decline during the past three decades.

But there is still work to be done. Every year, an alarming number of teens lose their lives to injuries associated with alcohol, and motor vehicle crashes remain the number one killer of people ages 16 to 20. During prom and graduation weekends, teen deaths from crashes are higher than any other time of year.

These deaths are preventable. And as broadcasters, we can do something about it.

In this guide, you will find ideas on how to partner with law enforcement, schools, communities and families to further reduce illegal underage drinking and to promote teen driver safety.

Let's work together to make this prom and graduation season one of celebration and smart choices. By broadcasting lifesaving information, we can help our teens graduate into life.





The Facts

The facts paint a clear and sobering picture. Alcohol-related injuries claim the lives of more than 5,000 teens every year. Use the following information to let your community know there are real dangers involved with illegal underage drinking.

FACT: Every month, more than 10 million teens drink alcohol. In the past two weeks, one in four high school seniors has participated in binge drinking (having more than five drinks on one occasion). Alcohol is involved in the deaths of more teens than all other illegal substances combined.

FACT: On prom and graduation nights, six out of 10 high school students feel pressure to drink or use drugs. More than eight in 10 teens say that students who drink or use drugs at prom will likely get behind the wheel and drive. Car crashes kill more teens during the weekends of prom and graduation season than any other time of year.

FACT: Three in 10 high school students say they have ridden in a vehicle with a driver who has been drinking during the past month. One in 10 students admits to drinking and driving. The risk of a high school student drinking and driving is cut by more than 70 percent when parents set clear rules and stay involved in their teen's life.

FACT: Ninety-two percent of 12th graders say it's easy to get alcohol. More than 50 percent of underage drinkers say the last place they drank alcohol was a friend's house. Another 30 percent name their own home. Three in four teens say their parents are the main influence on whether or not they drink alcohol.

FACT: The legal drinking age works. When the drinking age was raised to 21, highway fatalities involving teens dropped – in some states as much as 28 percent. It is estimated that Minimum Age Drinking laws have saved more than 27,000 lives since 1975.

Programming Ideas

On the Air

- **Make it personal.** Share stories of those in your community who have personally been affected by underage drinking or drinking and driving. Include state specific statistics on underage drinking and teen crashes. Interview first responders or other emergency personnel who have seen the consequences firsthand.
- **Bring in the experts.** Invite community members to share their knowledge on how to make prom and graduation season safe. Have counselors provide teens with ways to handle peer pressure, let local businesses discuss their policies about not selling alcohol to teens, and ask police officers to highlight the legal penalties for teens who drink and parents who serve alcohol to minors.
- **Promote safe celebrations.** Air information on non-alcoholic after-prom and post-graduation celebrations going on in your community far in advance. Consider having on-air personalities deejay or broadcast live from these events.
- **Raise sobriety checkpoints awareness.** Check with local law enforcement to find out if sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols will be operating on prom and graduation weekends in your community. If so, ask local law enforcement how you can help spread the word about their efforts.
- **Say it often.** Use on-air opportunities, big and small, to help teens make smart choices. Run news stories about safe driving tips. Record PSAs featuring community leaders and local teens. Make on-air mentions about the dangers of underage drinking. Conduct "person on the street" interviews to show how underage drinking affects all community members.

In Your Community

- **Reach Out to Local Groups.** Contact Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) or other local organizations about partnering on efforts. Talk with local high schools about having a presence at one of the school rallies or drunk driving crash-site reenactments that often take place around prom.
- **Organize a town hall meeting.** Bring law enforcement, retailers that sell alcohol, parents, teachers and teens together to talk about how to keep prom and graduation celebrations safe. Broadcast live from the event.
- **Hold a PSA competition.** Help teens spread positive messages to one another by hosting a competition for the best safe prom and graduation PSA. Air winning entries during the weeks leading up to prom and graduation activities.
- **Sponsor a student/parent contract drive.** Work with tuxedo rental shops, florists or other businesses associated with prom and graduation to set up locations where teens and parents can sign "no alcohol" and "safe ride" pledges. Promote the contract drive on air, and post a downloadable pledge on your station's Web site for easy distribution.



Campaign to Stop Texting and Driving

At least one in four teens admits to texting and driving. It's a dangerous decision. Looking away from the road for more than a few seconds is a factor in eight out of 10 accidents, and young drivers have the highest distracted-driving fatality rate of all age groups. Start an awareness campaign in your community. Ask teens to make a pledge to put down their mobile devices when in the driver's seat on prom and graduation nights and all year long.

Spotlight on Parental Influence

They might not know it, but parents have clout. When parents talk with their children and set house rules on driving safety and alcohol use, the chance of their teen being hurt drops significantly. Pass on these parental tips in broadcasts during prom and graduation season – and all year long.

Have ongoing conversations. When parents talk to teens about the dangers of illegal underage drinking, it makes a difference. Visit MADD's resource, www.thepowerofparents.org, for tips on how to handle hard questions.

Set Road Rules. Teen drivers are four times more likely than older drivers to crash. The following driving parameters lessen the chances:

- Limit the number of teens in one vehicle. Just one extra teen in the car increases the chance of a crash by 50 percent.
- Set a driving curfew. The greatest number of accidents happen between midnight and 3 a.m. on weekends. Suggest a cab, chauffer service or parent car pool on prom and graduation nights.
- Make sure your teen buckles up and follows the speed limit. Six out of 10 teen crash victims aren't wearing a seat belt, and teenage boys are most likely to speed.
- Warn your teen about deadly distractions. Agree that there will be no loud music, texting, cell phone use or eating while driving.

Stay Involved. When parents are part of their teen's everyday life, less underage drinking and unsafe driving practices occur. Ask about prom and graduation plans. Offer to host an alcohol-free pre- or post-party or volunteer to chaperone activities.

Talk to Other Parents. Teens often get alcohol at their friends' homes. Let other parents know that you have a zero tolerance policy when it comes to underage drinking. Ask that the same rules apply when your child is in their home.

PSA Scripts

Invincible (TEEN): 10

You may think you're invincible. But all it takes is one bad decision. Celebrate safely this prom and graduation. Don't drink, and don't get in a car with someone who has been drinking. This is a message from (STATION).

Risky Business (TEEN): 15

Most high school seniors don't think binge drinking is risky business. They're wrong. On an average day, more than a dozen teens lose their life to an alcohol-related injury. Don't drink at prom. It's dangerous. It's illegal. And it has consequences. This is a message from (STATION).

Play Your Part (PARENT): 15

Drinking before 21 isn't a rite of passage. It's a bad decision that can have dire consequences. Teens point to their parents as being the main influence on whether or not they drink. Be smart. Play your part. Talk to your teen before prom and graduation. This is a message from (STATION).

Staying Alive (TEEN): 20

Did you know that alcohol kills more teens than all illegal drugs combined? Peer pressure can be intense, but you've got a lot riding on making the right call – your life. Make a pact with your friends. On prom and graduation night, keep alcohol out of your party. Your whole life is ahead of you. Keep it that way. Be safe. Be sober. Stay alive. This is a message from (STATION).

Parent Power (PARENT): 30

Would it surprise you to learn that nine out of 10 seniors in high school say it's easy to get alcohol? Or that 80 percent of underage drinking happens at home or at a friend's house. More than 5,000 teens lose their life to alcohol-related injuries every year. You have the power to keep your teen safe. Use it. Make the time to talk before prom and graduation. It could be the most important conversation you have. To learn more about how to talk with your teen about alcohol, visit www.thepowerofparents.org. This is a message from (STATION).



GRADUATION

Resources

Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking

1 Choke Cherry Road
Rockville MD 20857
Phone: 240 747 4980
www.stopalcoholabuse.gov

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)

511 E. John Carpenter Freeway, Suite 700
Irving TX 75062
Phone: 800 GET MADD (800 438 6233)
www.madd.org
www.thepowerofparents.org

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

Impaired Driving Division
400 7th Street SW, Room 5125
Washington DC 20590
Phone: 888 327 4236
www.nhtsa.gov

RADD: *The Entertainment Industry's Voice for Road Safety*

4370 Tujunga Avenue, Suite 330
Studio City CA 91604
Phone: 818 752 7799
www.radd.org

Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)

255 Main Street
Marlborough MA 01752
Phone: 877 SADD INC (877 723 3462)
www.sadd.org

In addition to the resources above, the following sources were used in creating this brochure: American Academy of Pediatrics, Monitoring the Future, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Institute on Drug Abuse, Partnership for a Drug-Free America, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



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