

What can I do? What do I say?

It is within your right as a parent to know where your child is going, who they are with, how they're getting there and when they will return. Discuss your expectations and rules with your child before the event. If your child is attending a post-prom or graduation party, call the host to confirm plans and make sure there will be adult supervision. Make sure no alcohol or other drug use will be permitted or tolerated. You can also ask if alcohol will be *present*. The theory behind "I'll take the keys and at least I'll know they won't drive while drunk" only helps prevent drunk driving and actually reinforces the idea that "they let me drink, so it must be OK". Stay up until your child arrives home and let them know you'll be waiting for their safe return. As a matter of fact, let your teen know that they can call you, under any circumstances, if they find themselves at a party where alcohol/drugs are present or if they feel unsafe in any way. Remind them not to get into a car with someone who has been drinking. One talk won't do it. Keep talking.

Teen Dating Abuse/Violence

As our children grown into young adults, they will become involved in serious and sometimes all-consuming dating relationships. This happens while teens are trying to find an identity for themselves in a society full of mixed messages about relationships, love, sex, respect, violence, men and women. It is likely that some teenagers will encounter the dangerous element of abuse in their dating lives.

Dating abuse is a pattern of coercive behavior that is used by one person to control or instill fear in the other member of an unmarried heterosexual or homosexual couple. These acts may include physical, sexual, verbal, mental or emotional abuse. Many young people in a controlling relationship don't know that it's abuse. Parents are often unaware about dating violence or are unfamiliar with the warning signs. To learn more, review the Resources listed in this pamphlet. Keep alert for warning signs such as one partner who calls names and belittles the other, tries to limit friendships, controls what a person wears, where they go, and what they say. Another red flag may be revealed if an abusive partner threatens to kill or hurt you or themselves if you leave them. Ask your teen if they feel pressured to do more in the relationship than they're ready for. Prom and graduation are times to maintain personal values and standards, not to alter them to make someone else happy. Plan ahead for what to do in an uncomfortable or emergency situation. Always maintain a life line between you and your child— even if they say they don't need it!

Resources

Alcohol and Substance Abuse:

Not My Kid (notMYkid)
<http://www.notmykid.org>

Partnership for a Drug Free America
www.drugfree.org

Parents: the anti-drug
www.theantidrug.com

Parents Who Host Lose The Most
www.drugfreeactionalliance.org

Leadership To Keep Children Alcohol Free Foundation
<http://www.alcoholfreechildren.org>

Students Against Destructive Decisions
<http://www.sadd.org>

Alcohol, Peer Pressure & Underage Drinking Info
<http://www.thecoolspot.org>

Greater Nashua Community Prevention Coalition
www.gncpc.org

Safe Homes at Campbell High School
<http://www.campbellhs.org>

Teen Relationships:

National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline
1-866-331-9474, TTY 1-866-331-8453
<http://www.loveisrespect.org>

National Domestic Violence Hotline
Phone: 800-799-SAFE (7233), TTY 800-787-3224
P.O. Box 161810, Austin, TX 78716
<http://www.ndvh.org>

New Beginnings NH
www.newbeginningsnh.org

Reach Out
www.reachoutnh.com

Suicide Prevention:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

PROM &
GRADUATION TIME
IS NEAR

BE AWARE
BE CONCERNED
BE INVOLVED



This pamphlet was developed by a group of Litchfield parents & community members for all Litchfield parents and guardians. Its purpose is to share information about potential risks and good practices for safe celebrations during prom & graduation season.

Litchfield Substance Abuse
Prevention Coalition at
Campbell High School

PROM NIGHT: WHAT WILL THEY REMEMBER?

Prom and graduation are exciting and important markers in your child's development. Consider the expense and preparation to make each celebration "just right"! During these events, you marvel at the young adult standing before you, posing for pictures with friends and family. You hope the event is all they planned it would be and share their excitement for celebrations.

As a parent, you also worry about your child's safety and wonder about all the risks to their well-being. You try to push out thoughts of previous years, when you heard news reports of something going terribly wrong such as the consequences of drunk driving, sexual assault, or worse. What should they remember? We hope they remember a wonderful celebration with their friends, one that was safe and positive, unmarred by embarrassment or tragedy.

The 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

According to the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey for Litchfield high school students, 67.9% of students surveyed felt that it would be easy or very easy to obtain alcohol. Just slightly over half—52.1% - felt it was wrong if someone their age was drinking although 84.4% reported that their parents would think it was wrong or very wrong for them to drink. Another startling statistic relates to relationship safety: 11.2% of students surveyed were hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend during the past twelve months.

Protecting vs. Prying

How do we respect our child's privacy while protecting them from potential harm? The first step is to be alert and share your values and beliefs with your teen about safe relationships and underage drinking. Know the warning signs for risky behaviors and become familiar with local laws about underage alcohol abuse. Don't forget abuse of prescription and non-prescription drugs! Help your teen to recognize when a dating relationship has crossed the line and what to do if it does. Make use of local resources to obtain more information and skills in communicating with your child. Remember that *you* are the number one influence in your child's life. *It is not prying—it's protecting.*

NH Laws about Alcohol Use

179:9 Person Misrepresenting Age.

A person who falsely represents his/her age for the purpose of purchasing liquor shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. The first offense is a minimum of \$500. No portion of this mandatory minimum fine shall be waived, continued for sentencing, or suspended by the court. A second or subsequent offense shall carry a \$1,000 minimum fine. In addition, the director of the division of motor vehicles shall withdraw, for 90 days, the identification card of any person who allows his card to be used or displayed by another person for the purpose of purchasing liquor.

179:10 Unlawful Possession & Intoxication.

Any person under the age of 21 years who has in his or her possession any liquor or alcoholic beverage, or who is intoxicated by consumption of an alcoholic beverage, shall be guilty of a violation and shall be fined a minimum of \$300. Any second and subsequent offense shall be fined at least \$600. For purposes of this section, alcohol concentration of .02 or more shall be evidence of intoxication. No portion of this mandatory minimum fine shall be waived, continued for sentencing, or suspended by the court.

Refer to Title XIII Alcoholic Beverages, Chapter 179 Enforcement, Requirements & Penalties.

644:18 Facilitating a Drug or Underage Alcohol House Party.

A person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor if such person owns or has control of an occupied structure where a drug or underage alcohol house party is held and such person knowingly furthers the occurrence of party knowing persons under the age of 21 possess or intend to consume alcoholic beverages or use controlled drugs. Anyone who provides alcohol to a minor could face a \$2000 fine and up to a year in jail. To report underage alcohol violations in NH, call 1-888-8-over 21.

Refer to Title LXII Criminal Code, Chapter 644, Breaches of the Peace & Related Offenses.

Parents Who Host Lose the Most

If you're hosting a party, there are numerous resources available to help to plan ahead, create rules and structure, and choose activities that are fun but do not include mind altering substances. (Check the resources listed on the back of this pamphlet.) Aside from the basics of party planning that includes themes, food, and activities, you can provide your contact information and make sure you have all the names and contact numbers of parents or guardians of your guests as well. Make sure you have plenty of on-hand support for crowd management. Identify a start and end time and let your guests know that they are not permitted to leave the party and return. If they do leave, tell them you'll contact their parents for them to let them know their whereabouts.