



Roanoke Area Youth Substance Abuse Coalition
Promoting a Safe & Drug Free Roanoke Valley

www.raysac.org

RAYSAC Radar

Study Shows 90 Percent of Teens Admit More Likely to Drink and Drive on Prom Night

Each year, spring school rituals such as prom and graduation begin with so much excitement and promise yet end in tragedy for hundreds of teen drivers and their passengers. New research from Liberty Mutual Insurance and SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) suggests this season could be no different. According to a national survey of more than 2,500 eleventh and twelfth graders, 90 percent of teens believe their counterparts are more likely to drink and drive on prom night and 79 percent believe the same is true for graduation night. Yet, that belief does not translate to concern, as only 29 percent and 25 percent of teens say that driving on prom night and graduation night, respectively, comes with a high degree of danger.

The Liberty Mutual/SADD study suggests that parents have a tremendous opportunity to enhance their role in deterring unsafe driving behaviors among teens. More than one in five teens (22 percent) say their parents have either not spoken with them about driving safety at all or have only talked with them once. Past Liberty Mutual/SADD research strongly indicates that teens who have regular conversations with their parents about driving safety are less likely to drink and drive, less likely to speed, and are more likely to wear their seat belts.

What you can do:

- **Talk with your youth** and calmly explain your feelings about him/her drinking alcohol or using illicit drugs and driving under the influence. Make it clear to your youth that you do NOT approve of substance use because it is dangerous. Be firm, but nonjudgmental. Ask them how they plan to keep safe and avoid actions they will regret. Reinforce your belief in their character and in their ability to act responsibly.
- **Allow your youth to talk** about any questions or concerns he or she may have. Remember that communication involves not only speaking, but also listening.
- Also **emphasize that the legal drinking age is 21- no exceptions**. A minor who consumes alcohol is violating the law and is risking his/her life, and possibly the lives of others.
- Give your youth the **unconditional option of calling you at any time** if he or she needs a safe ride home or for help or advice. Assure them that you always welcome being part of their making smart and safe decisions.
- **Make sure your youth has a plan for the evening and that you know it**. Ask your youth for specifics about whom she or he will be with, where they will be, and what they will be doing. Make sure you will be able to reach him or her at all times.
- **Do not serve or allow alcohol at any party you are hosting**. An adult who provides alcohol to minors is subject to arrest and is risking the lives of the youth attending the party.
- Take stock of the alcohol, and prescription drugs in your home.
- Come to a fair decision on a curfew, based upon your child's past level of responsibility in this area. Stay up for his or her return home.

Be actively involved in your teen's life. Please help protect your teen's bright future by providing a safe, alcohol and drug free season of celebrations for your son or daughter.

***Parents have the greatest influence on a youth's life and
whether their youth engages in risky behaviors!***

Parents! Use Your Voice...they are listening!

(source: Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America)