

MADD CANADA - Safe Prom - Tips for Parents to Ensure a Safe Prom

This list has been produced by the LCBO and is available through their Talk to kids about alcohol Web site.

1. **WHAT'S THE PLAN?** Know your kids' plans in advance - where they'll be and with whom. Discuss with them how they'd deal with difficult situations, what kind of security there will be at parties and how they'll be getting home so they avoid getting into a vehicle with an impaired driver. Offer to role-play with them to help them be prepared and able to make smart choices. Put it in writing by signing a contract with them before the prom. To download a copy of MADD Canada's Contract for Life click [here](#).
2. **DRY ROADS.** If your teen plans to hire a limo with friends, make sure the company doesn't tolerate drinking in the car. It's important to have a back up plan, so make sure your kids carry a cell phone and/or cash money in case of emergency. From a cell phone, they can access a taxi by calling #TAXI.
3. **TALK IT UP.** Talk with other parents and school officials about how to ensure prom activities are safe. If you're hosting a party, consult other parents about their teens' parties. Their experiences may be invaluable.
4. **GET BUSY.** If you are planning a grad party, help your kids choose a theme and organize alcohol-free activities, such as dancing, games and contests, to keep guests busy. Check out www.safegrad.com for ideas.
5. **SNACK ATTACK.** At any party, be sure to provide substantial snacks and non-alcoholic drinks. Pick up your free copy of Food & Drink at any LCBO store for inspiration and check out the LCBO's recipes for delicious, alcohol-free Mocktails at www.lcbo.com/mocktails.
6. **MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE.** Behaviour speaks louder than words. Talk all you want, but the best way to teach your kids about responsible drinking is to set a good example. Set rules about alcohol and ensure your kids know they are not to be broken. Encourage dialogue about alcohol with your teens. Always know how much alcohol there is in your home, put bottles away after use and try not to make your liquor cabinet the focus of any given room.
7. **IT'S YOUR PARTY.** Remember, it's illegal to serve alcohol to those under 19 and to allow minors to drink. Make it clear you won't tolerate underage drinking, excessive drinking by adults, drinking and driving or otherwise dangerous behaviour. If you host a party, you're responsible for your guests' behaviour until they're sober, even after they leave your party. If they are involved in a crash or hurt someone, you could be held liable. For more information, check out MADD Canada's Being Sued Can Ruin a Good Party: A Social Host's Guide. And, never hesitate to call the police if things get out of hand.

8. A NUMBER GAME. In order to keep parties manageable, it's smart to set a limit on the number of guests. Some form of adult supervision, or security for larger parties, is a must. Work with other parents, the school or community members to discourage or prevent "bush" parties, which can easily get out of hand.

9. EMERGENCY MEASURES. Be sure to keep emergency numbers handy, just in case. If, despite your precautions, someone passes out, never leave them alone. They could be suffering from alcohol poisoning. Call 911 immediately and turn them onto their side, with their head on its side as well, to prevent choking if they vomit.

10. NEED MORE INFORMATION. To learn more about alcohol and its effects, call the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's Drug, Alcohol and Mental Health Information Line at 1-800-463-6273. In Toronto, call 416 595-6111. Or visit their web site at www.camh.net.