

April 1, 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Prom and graduation are exciting times in the lives of young people. The excitement and anticipation of attending these events can be a highlight of their high school years. We want to take this opportunity to encourage you to make these events positive celebrations so as to ensure that your son/daughter's prom/graduation are safe and law-abiding at the same time.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month and many proms are scheduled. It is a time when the spotlight turns to celebrations that can lead to underage drinking. Each year across the United States, hundreds of teens are killed or injured in alcohol-related accidents connected with prom celebrations. **More than one third of youth killed in alcohol-related traffic accidents occur during the months of April, May and June according to the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration.**

To ensure a safe night of celebration Melanie Foust parent and member of Drug Free Communities encourages parents to talk with their teens about the dangers of underage drinking and set ground rules before their son or daughter leaves the house for these events. She asks parents to make it clear you want to be part of their smart and safe decisions.

- Talk with your teen. Set non-negotiable rules about drinking, drugs and driving under the influence of alcohol.
- Help the kids come up with a way to say no if they are afraid of the repercussions of peers pressuring them.
- Have a code or safe word for your child who wants to come home but is embarrassed to say it in front of friends.
- Request a complete itinerary for the evening, including where they'll be going before, during and after prom.
- Ask for cell phone numbers so you can reach them, and/or establish call-in times to connect with your child.
- Check Facebook and other social media sources that your child(ren) use.
- Offer your child the unconditional option of calling you for help, advice or to pick them up at any time, day or night.
- If the kids are going as a group have the parents all be on the same page for events and have the parents have different check in times with the kids and communicate within the parent circle.

We know that 79% of our students have not had alcohol in the past 30 days. This shows our students are making good decisions. However, based upon our survey data we continue to have concerns about "students access to alcohol" shared Sarah Kirchhoff, parent and member of Drug Free Communities. "We urge parents to have discussions about alcohol with their teens as we enter prom season."

We urge parents to adopt a strict rule that no alcohol will be allowed to underage youth on your property and to also monitor the gatherings your child attends. Please talk with your youth about the dangers associated with youth alcohol use.

Continual research shows that parents are the greatest point of leverage in preventing drug and alcohol abuse. In fact, kids who learn about the risks of drugs and alcohol from their parents throughout their childhood are up to 50% less likely than their peers to use. However, less than one-third (31 percent) of Fond du Lac youth report having a discussion about alcohol with their parents in the last 30 days.

Our community provides many options for fun, safe, alcohol-free activities. Visit the Drug Free Communities of Fond du Lac County website at <https://www.csifdl.org/priorities/alcohol-drug-abuse/alcohol-use-and-abuse/> to learn more about hosting alcohol free events for youth. Like us on facebook at Drug Free Communities of Fond du Lac County. We ask that you consider the safety of your child and his/her friends during this prom season. It's equally important to set a proper example as a parent by supporting Wisconsin's drinking laws.

Yours very truly,



Julie Shively
Principal

Bill Lamb
Chief of Police