



## **Pete's Tough Topic for today!**

Pete wants our students to have fun at prom tomorrow night!!! However, more importantly he wants them to be safe!! Did you know that according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, motor vehicle crashes are still the leading cause of death for 15- to 20-year-olds?

= In 2005, 3,467 drivers ages 15 to 20 were killed and an additional 281,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes.

= Fifty-two percent of all fatal crashes during the weekend were alcohol related, compared with 30 percent during the week.

**Furthermore, statistics show that the dangers are even more prevalent during prom season:**

**= Traffic deaths among teens during typical prom season weekends (March 1 to May 31) are higher than any other time of year.**

**= In 2003, more than half of all fatal car crashes on typical prom weekends involved alcohol.**

**(Please know - we have again borrowed Tremper's breathalyzer.**

**Hopefully it will stay right in the bag like it did last year.)**

### **Parents Play an Important Role in Prom**

Parents and guardians play a key role in creating a safe prom event. Listed below are tips and ideas for parents. Brainstorm ideas about how you can inform parents of these ideas most effectively. For templates and suggestions, see the [Think About It ... Prom & Graduation Season campaign](#).

- Recent SADD/Liberty Mutual Teens Today research shows that good communication between parents and teenagers can have a positive influence on risk-taking behavior by teens. Teens who report regular, open communication with their parents about important issues say they are more likely to try to live up to their parents' expectations and less likely to drink, use drugs, or engage in early sexual behavior. Use the [Contract for Life](#) as the foundation for your promise to communicate with each other.
- Discuss rules for the prom: your own rules, the school rules, and the consequences for violating the rules.
- Communicate with your student ahead of time about the agenda for the evening.
- Discuss the evening's curfew and what acceptable after-curfew possibilities there might be (an alcohol- and drug-free post-prom party, inviting friends back home to spend the night under your supervision, etc.)
- Recent studies show that the major source of alcohol for youth is friends and families. Some parents feel that hosting a house party where alcohol is served to minors is safer because they can control it. Allowing these parties is illegal, even with other parents' consent, and the host parents may be held responsible for consequences that result. Remember, too, that excessive alcohol consumption brings more dangers than just impaired driving. For more information, read the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's "[Parents, Parties, and Preventing Underage Alcohol Use.](#)"
- Instead, host a substance-free, post-prom party. Details for how to have one can be found [HERE](#). Remember, though, that even if the party is substance free, tired people shouldn't be driving. Recent studies have shown that people who are overworked and deprived of sleep can have the same impairment as those who have been drinking.
- Know who is driving. If your teen is riding in a limo, check the company's policy on allowing alcohol in the vehicle.
- Encourage seat belt use.
- Do not rent hotel rooms, or vacation rental properties, for prom-goers.
- Communicate with other parents about prom plans.
- Stay up for prom-goers' return home.

<http://www.sadd.org/promplan.htm#parents>